

## Insertion and Maintenance of Vascular Catheters by Respiratory Therapists

The American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) endorses the use of qualified and appropriately educated Respiratory Therapists to insert and perform maintenance of vascular catheters.

Vascular access catheters (VAC) are important instruments in the care of acute and critically ill, and those with chronic illnesses.

Increasing needs for more timely VAC insertion as well as the need to manage adverse events of mal-positioned catheters, pneumothorax, pulsatile blood flow, and daily site maintenance provides impetus for respiratory therapists to perform these tasks. Because respiratory therapists are available around the clock seven (7) days a week they are excellent resources for inserting and maintaining vascular access devices.

The respiratory therapist's education provides extensive training in cardiorespiratory anatomy, physiology and pathophysiology. These fundamentals of Respiratory Care education make the respiratory therapist uniquely qualified to undertake further education to be competent in this procedure.

The requisite education for a respiratory therapist to be qualified to insert and maintain VACs should include specific training, proof of competence and continuing education as outlined by those institutions that use respiratory therapists to perform this procedure.

**Effective 07/2015**