



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR RESPIRATORY CARE  
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April 14, 2021

Keith Siegel, MBA, RRT, CPFT, FAARC  
Executive Director  
US COPD Coalition  
P.O. Box 86  
Union, ME, 04862

Dear Mr. Siegel,

I am pleased to offer this letter of reference for the *Learn More Breathe Better 2021 proposal* from the US COPD Coalition (the Coalition) to increase awareness about chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) as a serious lung disease and cause of death and disability in the United States.

The American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) has been a member organization of the Coalition since its founding in 2004. As a member organization, AARC has developed a collaborative partnership with the Coalition to improve the lives of people living with COPD through education, awareness, and public policy efforts. AARC participates in the Coalition's monthly Public Policy Workgroup, where representatives from many Coalition member organizations collaborate on efforts to raise awareness of COPD and implement provisions of the COPD National Action Plan. Most recently, AARC and the Coalition, along with several other Coalition members, worked to expand the role of respiratory therapists in telehealth and to address the shortage of supplemental oxygen systems that has occurred because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are enthusiastic about the Coalition's proposal to create specific lung health protection guidelines that will empower and protect people living with COPD. At AARC, we understand the importance in advocating for programs that provide patients and their families with the information needed to empower them as disease self-managers. We also see the need to provide people living with chronic conditions, like COPD, with tools to best protect their lung health as we continue to see effects from the COVID-19 pandemic.

We look forward to hearing more about the Coalition's efforts in reducing the burden of COPD for people living with the disease. The award of a subcontract from NHLBI will allow the Coalition to further serve the COPD community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheri Tooley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sheri Tooley BSRT, RRT, RRT-NPS, AE-C, CPFT, FAARC  
President and CEO 2021-2022