



aarc American Association
for Respiratory Care
Those helping
the world breathe P.O. Box 630007
Irving, TX 75063-9998

Dr. Candice Chen
Associate Administrator
Bureau of Health Workforce
Health Resources and Services Administration

Re: One-Year Faculty Contract Limitation for Loan Repayment Eligibility

Dear Dr. Chen,

On behalf of the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC), thank you for meeting with our leadership team to discuss workforce challenges and opportunities to expand access to HRSA programs for respiratory therapists. We greatly appreciated your insights into the National Health Service Corps, Faculty Loan Repayment Program, and related initiatives.

During our discussion, Jefferson Mixell highlighted an important barrier that limits respiratory therapy faculty participation in HRSA's Faculty Loan Repayment Program. Specifically, many community colleges which serve as the entry point for a significant proportion of respiratory therapy students employ faculty on one-year contracts. These faculty members are effectively full-time educators, but the short-term nature of their contracts makes them ineligible for loan repayment support under current program criteria.

This barrier not only disadvantages respiratory therapy educators but also undermines the stability of the workforce pipeline at a time when shortages are acute. As you know, respiratory therapists play a critical role in acute and chronic care, emergency preparedness, and public health response, yet the profession lags behind nursing and other disciplines in access to HRSA workforce programs.

We respectfully request that HRSA consider options to ensure that respiratory therapy faculty employed under one-year contracts at accredited institutions are not excluded from eligibility for the Faculty Loan Repayment Program. We would welcome the opportunity to provide additional data, examples from the field, or potential policy solutions that could help address this issue.

Thank you again for your time, your leadership, and your continued partnership. We look forward to collaborating with you and your team on strengthening the allied health workforce, including respiratory therapy.

Sincerely,

Dana Evans, MHA, RRT, RRT-NPS, FACHE, FAARC
President
American Association for Respiratory Care

cc: Daniel Garrett, Executive Director, AARC
Miriam O'Day, Senior Vice President, Government Affairs, AARC