

AARC Position Statement of Continuing Professional Education

It is critical for all health care practitioners to participate in continuing education to maintain currency and enhance their knowledge, improve their clinical practice, and meet state licensure and national credentialing requirements. Practitioners have a responsibility to participate in life-long learning. Participation in continuing education, whether mandatory or voluntary, provides health care professionals the opportunity to refine their skills, stay current with evidence-based practice, achieve professional growth, and enhance abilities to work within interprofessional teams. These efforts contribute to delivering the highest quality patient care. The American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) encourages respiratory therapists to select continuing education activities relevant to their personal and professional needs. Continuing education may also include degree advancement for those individuals who have completed the required entry-level education.

A variety of continuing education opportunities are available that can be in-person, online, live, or recorded, making it convenient for individuals to participate based on their preferences and schedules. Some examples include:

- **Lectures:** Educational talks on specific topics.
- **Panels:** Discussions with multiple experts sharing their insights.
- **Workshops:** Interactive sessions focused on hands-on learning.
- **Seminars/Conferences:** Larger gatherings that often include multiple sessions and networking opportunities.
- **Curricula at accredited educational institutions.**

The AARC recognizes the value of, and need for, participation in continuing education and recommends that practitioners participate in educational activities on a continual basis. AARC members may utilize the Continuing Respiratory Care Education (CRCE) system as the mechanism for recognition and documentation of such activities. The National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC) allows practitioners to maintain their credentials through quarterly assessment, continuing education, or examination. The quarterly assessments are a component of continuing education, allowing practitioners an opportunity to demonstrate their competency and knowledge.

Providers of continuing education activities, including clinical institutions, educational institutions, public and private associations or organizations, and proprietary corporations, are encouraged to conduct needs assessments to design and develop valuable educational activities

that will enable practitioners to meet their professional goals. In addition, providers of continuing education are encouraged to review, evaluate, and measure their activities. Providers are also urged to apply current research-based learning and assessment theories to foster critical thinking and promote effective learning. For further guidance, the AARC offers a FAQs for course sponsors in designing and evaluating continuing education courses: <https://www.aarc.org/crce-accreditation/faqs-for-course-sponsors/>

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P.O. Box 630007, Texas 75063

T: 972.243.2272 W: www.aarc.org

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