Respiratory Therapy: A Dynamic, Exciting and Rewarding Profession in the Allied Health Care Field Today
What is a Respiratory Therapist?

• A licensed medical professional who specializes in the treatment of patients with respiratory disorders resulting from many different causes.
Should you be an RT?

1) I really enjoy helping people
2) I like working with technology and I’m good in math and science
3) I would like to work in a profession where there’s lots of variety in the job
4) I want to be able to choose what type of place I work in, and the type of patients I work with
5) I’m looking for a career with opportunities for advancement
Who Do We Treat?

• The patient populations seen by respiratory therapists include:
  - premature and full term infants
  - pediatric patients
  - adults
  - elderly
Respiratory Therapists

- Therapists work at the patient’s bedside side-by-side with doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals.

- Therapists provide hands-on care that helps people recover from a wide range of medical conditions.
Respiratory Therapists

• You’ll find RTs in
  – The delivery room and newborn intensive care units
  – Pediatric units helping children with asthma and cystic fibrosis
Respiratory Therapists

• You’ll find RTs in
  – The emergency room assisting with life-saving treatment
  – Helicopters, fixed-wing airplane and other transport programs
Respiratory Therapists

You’ll find RT’s in:
• Hospitals administering breathing treatments to people with asthma and COPD
Respiratory Therapists

• You’ll find RTs in
  – Intensive care units managing ventilators that keep critically ill patients alive
Respiratory Therapists

You’ll find RT’s in:

– Skilled nursing facilities and pulmonary rehabilitation programs helping people with chronic respiratory diseases to breath easier for a better quality of life
Respiratory Therapists

- Patient’s homes providing regular check-ups and making sure people have what they need to stay out of the hospital
Respiratory Therapists

- RT’s work with patients who suffer from disorders like sleep apnea. They work in sleep laboratories helping to diagnose people with sleep apnea.
Respiratory Therapists

• You’ll find RTs in
  – Doctor’s offices conducting pulmonary function tests and providing patient education
Respiratory Therapists

– In asthma education programs helping children and adults learn how to cope with their condition, manage their medications and learn what triggers their asthma.
Respiratory Therapists

• In smoking cessation programs assisting those who want to kick the habit
Respiratory Therapists

• RTs are considered the go-to experts in their facilities for respiratory care technology
Respiratory Therapists

• They also understand how to:
  – apply high tech devices in the care and treatment of patients
  – assess patients to ensure their respiratory treatment plan is working
  – make the necessary changes in a treatment plan using patient driven protocols to arrive at the best outcome for the patient.
Respiratory Therapists

• The combination of these skills—hands on technical know-how and a solid understanding of respiratory conditions and how they are treated—is what sets respiratory therapists apart from the crowd and makes them such a crucial part of the health care team.
Respiratory Therapists provide complex therapy requiring considerable independent judgment.
All of this requires:

• Excellent communication skills
• Ability to work well with other members of the health care team.
• Good computer skills
• Compassion for those who are sick
• Enthusiasm for the medical field
Job Prospects and Salary
Job Outlook

• Faster than average employment growth has been projected by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:
  – Employment of respiratory therapists is expected to grow 19 percent from 2012 to 2022, faster than average for all occupations.
Salaries

• Starting salary in the DC metropolitan area:
  • CRT with < 1yr experience: 54,000 dollars/year
  • RRT with < 1 yr experience: 56,000 dollars/year
Prince George’s Community College Respiratory Therapy Program
The Program

• Excellent reputation among employers throughout the Maryland/DC area as evidenced by CoArc employer surveys sent out annually.

• The program prepares the student to take the national board exams for both the certified respiratory therapist and the registered respiratory therapist credential.

  – **CRT credential:**
    • Pass rates for the CRT credential at PGCC RT program: have been between 90%-100% over the past several years
    • 2 year **National** pass rate: 79%

  – **RRT credential:**
    • Pass rates for the RRT credential at PGCC RT program: have been above 85-100% over the past several years
    – 3 year **National** pass rate: 66%
The Program

• Located in the new state of the art Center for Health Studies with interactive simulation labs, advanced technology and all equipment necessary to give the student the skills necessary to enter the work force at large medical centers in the metropolitan area.

• New classes begin only in the Fall semester
  – The petitioning deadline for the program is May 1st.

• 22 months including the summer
  – Starting with the second semester, there is considerable clinical time involved

• Designed to take up to 24 students each academic year.
Licensing

• Upon graduation, students must take the national board examination for entry-level certification. There are 2 cut scores.
  – If you pass at the low cut score you will received the CRT credential
  – If you pass at the high cut score, you will be eligible to take the examination for the registered respiratory therapist credential.

• After passing their board exams, the graduate is eligible to apply for a state (or Washington DC) license
If you are interested in caring for people, challenging yourself every day and working in a fast paced setting then respiratory therapy may be for you!