

Alberta's Health Regions and Voluntary Organizations and the Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA)

This classification specification identifies representative duties and responsibilities, and is intended to assist in the determination of the appropriate classification level within each discipline. Some duties and responsibilities may overlap between class levels. The classification specification is not intended to provide an exhaustive list of all duties performed.

Classification Title: **Respiratory Therapist I**

Date Updated: **May 20, 2008**

Job Summary:

The Respiratory Therapist I is the working level responsible for assessment, therapeutic intervention and follow up. Educates clients, families and healthcare professionals regarding cardio-pulmonary diseases, respiratory disorders, and use of respiratory equipment.

Key Responsibilities and Typical Duties:

Core Duties

- Reviews clinical referrals, accepts, screens, and assesses client needs from a respiratory therapy perspective in cooperation with other health care providers as appropriate.
- Performs diagnostic and critical care tests/procedures.
- Develops and implements respiratory therapy care plans for clients, including discharge planning as appropriate.
- Monitors client progress, modifies respiratory care plans as required and informs appropriate individual(s) of any serious concerns.
- Takes initial action in response to unusual or complex cases, situations or concerns and attempts to resolve them.
- Operates a variety of monitoring, recording, diagnostic, therapeutic, life support and associated equipment.
- May assist in performing clinical research work for interventions including drug studies and pharmaceutical trials.
- Educates clients, families and health care professionals with regard to relevant disease, medications, equipment, and the purpose, steps, benefits and risks of treatment procedures.

Other Related Duties

- Maintains respiratory diagnostic and therapeutic equipment including notification of required repairs, routine maintenance, cleaning and packing in preparation for re-use, and maintaining adequate inventory of supplies.
- Trains and assists health care providers in the use and care of respiratory equipment.
- Participates in multidisciplinary client rounds, conferences and meetings where applicable.

Leadership

- Assists with orientation and mentorship of new staff as required.
- Serves as a preceptor for Respiratory Therapy students and instructs other healthcare students.
- Provides collegial guidance to other therapists.
- Makes decisions on student activities, workload, and caseload priorities either independently or in collaboration with other therapists.

Decision-Making

- Makes day-to-day clinical decisions regarding client needs and interventions.
- Makes decisions in the operations of various monitoring devices and respiratory therapeutic equipment including setting, adjusting and correcting problems.
- Takes initial action in response to unusual or complex cases or concerns and attempts to resolve them or refers unusual or complex cases/situations to an appropriate individual. In facilities, may act as first responder to clients in distress in the absence of a physician.

Knowledge:

Education

- Extended diploma from an accredited school of Respiratory Therapy (e.g. NAIT, SAIT).

Registration Requirements

- Registered with the College and Association of Respiratory Therapists of Alberta (CARTA).

Working Conditions:

Physical Demands

- Considerable time is spent standing, walking and in close supportive contact with clients.
- Required to bend, pull, lift, perform variable movements and position changes (may be required to assume awkward positions).
- Must be able to transfer and/or assist with lifting adults/children.
- Some physical demands when transporting equipment.

Work Environment

- Primarily clean, air controlled indoor environment.
- Exposure to needle sticks, bodily fluids and bio-hazardous materials.
- Community, work, home or school visits will have variable conditions.
- Travel in all weather/road conditions.
- May be subject to verbally and/or physically aggressive clients and family.