

**Respiratory Care – A
Rich History, A Bright
Future!**

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**How many of you can honestly
say you LOVE being a
Respiratory Care Professional?**

**Hopefully, over the next few minutes
we might stoke those fires of pride in
who we are and what we do!**

What's a Professional anyway?

- "Profession" and "Professional"
 - Derived from Latin word "professio"
 - Meaning : a public declaration with the force of a promise.
 - **That promise is what we want to discuss today!**

Why am I so confident in this promise?

Because of this firm conviction. . .

We are the world's oldest profession and a profession that honors life itself!

- We are doing work that honors our Creator and Sustainer
- We are the vessels through which He works to accomplish His will. . .
- But what about this claim to be the world's oldest profession?

**“And the Lord God formed a man’s
body from the dust of the ground and
breathed into it the breath of life.
And the man became a living
person.”**

Genesis 2:7 NLT

**We’ve been around since the first
week of the world!**

Hence, the depth of my conviction!

We’re a profession that’s built to last!

**We’ve seen a lot of things come and
go . . .**

Respiratory Care Profession

• What are the benefits offered by the profession of respiratory care to the health care team and society in general?

- Unsurpassed competence in our specialized body of knowledge and skill.

Competence

- NAMDRRC statement:
“ The hours of education and curriculum required for credentialing of a RT should be the standard for all non-physician providers of respiratory care services”

Competence

- 1994 report by Indiana University comparing respiratory and nursing curriculum.
- Lewin Group, 1997
- Dr. James Stoller, 1998
- The Muse Study, 1999

Purpose

“We discovered that the important part of thoracic surgery was not so much what was done on the operating table, but what was done to prevent post-operative pneumonia by controlling secretions and breathing....It was necessary that when these patients received respiratory therapy they simply had to be supervised.”

Edwin R. Levine M.D., 1943

Purpose

- So why respiratory therapy?

To fulfill a need for:

1. Advanced therapeutic knowledge of the physiology and pathology of respiratory disease
2. The implementation and operation of complex medical equipment
3. Monitoring critically ill patients and highly complex medical equipment around the clock.

Purpose

- We are called to provide patient advocacy in the area of maintaining and restoring normal function to the respiratory system.

- **AMA** 1847
- **ANA** 1896
- **ASRT** 1920
- **APTA** 1921
- **AARC** 1947

These other professions may have gotten a head start, BUT . . .

- “People don’t remember how you start, they remember how you finish!”
- We’ve got some closing power!

Current Reality

A promise is for a future time

I believe the time for our promise to be fulfilled is rapidly approaching!

OUR DESTINY

“Creating a Vision for Respiratory Care in 2015 and Beyond”

Respiratory Care; March, 2009, Vol. 54, No. 3

- We’ve gotta get prepared!
- We’ve gotta be flexible!
- We’ve gotta be willing to boldly go where we’ve never gone before!

What trends can we expect?

- Consumerism—we’ve got to be able to respond to the needs of our consumers
- Wellness and Prevention – We already get some training. We need to dial it up a notch to create some separation through greater depth and breadth of education and training
- Pay for Performance – This ought to be in our wheelhouse!

And more trends . . .

- Evolving information technology – we’ve always embraced innovation, we’ll just take it to another level
- Flexible and innovative care – hard to find another profession better suited for this one!
- (Price Waterhouse Coopers Health Research Institute Report: “Healthcast 2020: Creating a Sustainable Future”)

The Promise of a Bright Future

- The future promise of our profession is rooted in our patient advocacy:

Get ready! We have an appointment with destiny!

The Promise

- In Change There is Opportunity!

"It's not the strongest species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the ones most responsive to change."

Charles Darwin

How do we realize our Promise? Continue to anticipate what's coming!

- Evidence based medicine replaces traditional medicine (**AARC CPG**)
- Consumer driven, patient centered healthcare (**RT reimbursement under Medicare; reimbursement for Pulmonary Rehab**)

The Promise

- Prevention of disease with emphasis on healthy aging (**RT as disease manager/patient educator**)
- Greater emphasis placed on specific data related to the quality of care provided. (**RT-driven protocols**)

The Promise

- Cross-training of non-physician healthcare workers (**Increased scope of practice**)
- Shifts in U.S. health care reimbursement (**Profit center vs. cost center**)
- Globalization of the profession

The Promise

- Next to a nurse, the Respiratory Therapist is the most frequently seen health care practitioner at the patient's bedside.
- US Department of Labor projects a 38% increase in job openings for Respiratory Therapists by the year 2012

The Promise

Result: Prominent role and recognition for the Respiratory Care profession!

We are the undisputed expert in the area of respiratory disease prevention, treatment, management and rehabilitation!

OUR CHALLENGE

Challenges for the Profession

- Challenge defined:
A test of one's ability and/or resources in a demanding but stimulating undertaking or situation.

The way to avoid challenges is to

Challenges for the Profession

There is no way to avoid challenges!

There is no opportunity without opposition

There is no winning without working

There is no open door without an obstruction to keep us from entering

There is no victory with out vigilance

Therefore, how we react to these challenges will determine the outcome.

Challenges of the Past

- 1975: Rad Techs challenge over the use of AART logo in court
- 1976: Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare proposed legislation essentially rendering us DOA
- 1983: Advent of DRG's
- 1986: State level AHA not receptive to RT's taking ACLS
- 1987: Airline smoking survey results in the Durbin Amendment establishing a smoking ban on flights less than two hours.

Challenges of the Past

- 1987: AMA Proposes Registered Care Technologists (RCT)
- 1988 CLIA '88 threatens to exclude RT's and their medical directors from rendering ABG and PFT services.
- 1993: JRCRTE changes their bylaws eliminating appointment provisions of reps to the committee by the AARC.
- 1996 : First discussions on "managed care" which becomes a major issue.

Challenges of the Past

- 1998: Balanced budget act's cost reduction affects RCP jobs in skilled nursing facilities
- 1999: Licensure/credentialing of sleep lab personnel to become a major issue.
- 2001: Unlicensed Assistive personnel issues develop.
- 2004: AARC challenges revised CDC guidelines related to infection control of nebulizers.

Guess What?

- Through all these challenges and many more –
- WE SURVIVED!!!!!!!
- It's in our DNA!

Technology Marker Moments – My Point of View. . .

- Mid 1980's – Pressure Support Ventilation
- Late 1980's – Artificial Surfactant Therapy
- Early 1990's – Non-invasive Ventilation
- Late 1990's – Breath-Actuated Nebulizers
- Mid 2000's – Impedance Threshold Device (ITD)

Professional Markers

- Currently have licensure/registration in 48 contiguous states
- Inclusion on key Joint Commission Panels
- Continued and strengthening support from Physicians and other professional groups
- Movement in obtaining Officer status for RT's in military
- Movement to Associate Degree entry-level
- Pulmonary Rehab reimbursement beginning 2010 nationwide
- Current pending legislation – HR 1077, SB 343
- Respiratory Therapy – 2015 and Beyond Project

Challenges of the Future

- What will be your legacy?

“A person who doubt’s himself is like a man who would enlist in the ranks of his enemies and bears arms against himself. He makes his failure certain by himself being the first person to be convinced of it”

Ambrose Bierce

Challenges of the Future

Do you believe in your profession enough to be undeterred by what you see and instead believe in what you could be?

Challenges of the Future

What if we just let go of our:

Fears and insecurities

Disappointments and
bitterness

Anger and resentment

Guilt and shame

Challenges of the Future

But instead assertively
reaffirmed our identity
as patient advocates
and really stepped into
it!

Here's the deal . . .

We're better positioned to
hit the home run than we've
ever been before!!!!

Challenges of the Future

Our mantra being the patient deserves the best possible care therefore :

I NEED TO KNOW
I NEED TO HAVE
I NEED TO DO
I NEED TO SAY
I NEED TO GO

I TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAKING IT HAPPEN!

Challenges of the Future

In making it happen, I am:

Aggressive but not arrogant
Questioning and not accepting
Validated and no longer needy
Acting and no longer waiting
Focused on the solutions rather than being stuck on the problems

Folks, We've got to chunk the "victim" mindset we've harbored for years!

What are you going to be?

The Hammer or The Nail?

Challenges of the Future

- To continually reinvent the profession
 - Avoid doing today's work with yesterday's skills
 - Have a clear vision of RCP 2015 and beyond
 - Attract new practitioners
 - Research and promote new technologies and patterns of care.
 - Expand our skill set to meet health care needs

Challenges of the Future

- To stay true to the purpose for which we were created, Patient Advocacy:

The future of our profession depends upon fulfilling our individual and organizational promise as patient advocates:

The Power of One Therapist:

The commitment of an individual therapist, at all times and in all venues, to the well being of patients with respiratory disease.

We Need for You to “Get In The Game!”

- Own your responsibility as the patient advocate
- Own your responsibility as the lung health expert
- If you're not a member, please join us!
- If you are a member, help us make a difference!

RELEVANCE

Some closing thoughts . . .

- Life isn't about how to survive the storm – It's about how to dance in the rain!
 - Author unknown
- A strong, positive attitude will create more miracles than any wonder drug –
 - Patricia Neal

**“To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under Heaven.”
Ecclesiastes 3:1**

This is our season folks!
Let's grab the brass ring and
do the right thing!

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Thanks!
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