

Career Focus on...

# Respiratory Care

## Introduction

- Do you think the breathing process is important?
- Would you be comfortable around individuals who have cardiopulmonary problems such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)?
- Are you looking for an exciting career where you can use your communication skills, scientific knowledge, and the ability to diagnose and assess problems in stressful situations?

If you answered “yes” to these questions, you may want to consider a career in Respiratory Care.

## Did You Know... ?

- Employment of respiratory therapists is expected to grow by 28% from 2010 to 2020, which is considered faster than average.
- Respiratory therapists care for patients who have trouble breathing; for example, from a chronic respiratory disease, such as asthma or emphysema. They also provide emergency care to patients suffering from heart attacks, stroke, drowning, or shock.
- Students in the QCC Respiratory Care program are eligible to work in the field after one year in the program, and are also eligible to apply for a student license after successful completion of the second semester. This license allows students to work as therapists while they continue their education in Respiratory Care.
- Prior to graduation, QCC Respiratory Care students earn Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and American Academy of Pediatrics- Neonatal Resuscitation certifications, providing graduates with necessary credentialing to work in the field.
- QCC Respiratory Care students receive clinical training in Adult, Pediatric, and Neonatal Intensive Care Units as well as Sleep Laboratories, Home Care and Rehabilitation Hospitals.

## Respiratory Care @ QCC

Respiratory Care is an 18-month program which prepares its graduates for employment as allied health practitioners in the specialty area of pulmonary medicine.

Respiratory Therapists are providers of direct patient care to those with disorders which affect the lungs and impair the ability to breathe normally. Respiratory Therapists may choose to be employed in a variety of settings, including: acute and chronic care hospitals; long-term care and rehabilitation centers; sleep disorders laboratories; pulmonary diagnostic clinics; medical home care agencies; and medical equipment sales-service companies. Whatever the setting, Respiratory Therapists are essential members of the healthcare team who use their expertise and highly sophisticated medical equipment to assist clients of all ages with breathing problems.

## Career Options

### RESPIRATORY THERAPY TECHNICIAN

Median Annual Salary: \$45,210

Recommended Education: High School diploma (H.S.) or G.E.D. and on-the-job training (OJT)

[www.onetonline.org/link/summary/29-2054.00](http://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/29-2054.00)

### CARDIOVASCULAR TECHNOLOGIST

Median Annual Salary: \$49,410

Recommended Education: H.S. or G.E.D. and OJT, Associate's Degree (A.S.)

[www.bls.gov/ooh/Healthcare/Cardiovascular-technologists-and-technicians.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/Healthcare/Cardiovascular-technologists-and-technicians.htm)

### RESPIRATORY THERAPIST

Median Annual Salary: \$54,280

Recommended Education: A.S. and licensure

[www.bls.gov/ooh/Healthcare/Respiratory-therapists.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/Healthcare/Respiratory-therapists.htm)

## Worcester Area Employers

- UMass Memorial
- Saint Vincent Hospital
- Fairlawn Rehabilitation Hospital
- Reliant Medical Group
- Harrington Memorial Hospital
- Heywood Hospital
- Apria Healthcare
- New England Medical Home Care
- The Greenery Extended Care Center

## Positions Entered by QCC Graduates

- Respiratory Therapist
- Sleep Technician
- Neonatal/Pediatric Therapist
- Asthma Educator
- Home Care Respiratory Therapist

## Professional Associations

- American Association for Respiratory Care:  
[www.aarc.org](http://www.aarc.org)
- American Respiratory Care Foundation:  
[www.arcfoundation.org](http://www.arcfoundation.org)
- National Board for Respiratory Care, Inc.:  
[www.nbrc.org](http://www.nbrc.org)
- American Academy of Sleep Medicine:  
[www.aasmnet.org](http://www.aasmnet.org)

## Next Steps

Wondering if the Respiratory Care field is right for you?

- Take a Career Assessment to match your interests with potential careers: [www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#careerassess](http://www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#careerassess)
- Research the web links on this page and more: [www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#careerinfo](http://www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#careerinfo)
- Conduct an Informational Interview. Speak with a live person employed in this field: [www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#infointerview](http://www.qcc.mass.edu/t3/ort/sites.html#infointerview)
- Attend a Career Planning Session: [www.QCC.edu/images/capsession.pdf](http://www.QCC.edu/images/capsession.pdf)
- Speak with an Advisor: [www2.qcc.mass.edu/advising/adVCal/advCal/asp](http://www2.qcc.mass.edu/advising/adVCal/advCal/asp)
- Speak with QCC Faculty who teach Respiratory Care courses.

## Sources Used

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2012-13 Edition*:

- Respiratory Therapists: [www.bls.gov/ooh/Healthcare/Respiratory-therapists.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/Healthcare/Respiratory-therapists.htm)
- Cardiovascular Technologists: [www.bls.gov/ooh/Healthcare/Cardiovascular-technologists-and-technicians.htm](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/Healthcare/Cardiovascular-technologists-and-technicians.htm)

Employment & Training Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, O\*NET Online, Summary Reports for:

- Respiratory Therapy Technicians: [www.onetonline.org/link/summary/29-2054.00](http://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/29-2054.00)

Quinsigamond Community College, "Respiratory Care," *2011|2012 Catalog*.

## Looking for employment, co-op, internship, or service learning opportunities?

Contact the Career Placement Office:

[www.QCC.edu/pages/Career\\_Placement.html](http://www.QCC.edu/pages/Career_Placement.html)

## Looking for Specific Transfer Information?

- Start at the QCC Transfer web site: [www.qcc.mass.edu/transfer](http://www.qcc.mass.edu/transfer)
- Make an appointment online with the Transfer Advisor: [www.qcc.mass.edu/transfer/calendar](http://www.qcc.mass.edu/transfer/calendar)
- Email questions to: [transfer@qcc.mass.edu](mailto:transfer@qcc.mass.edu)