



Path To Becoming a Respiratory Therapist

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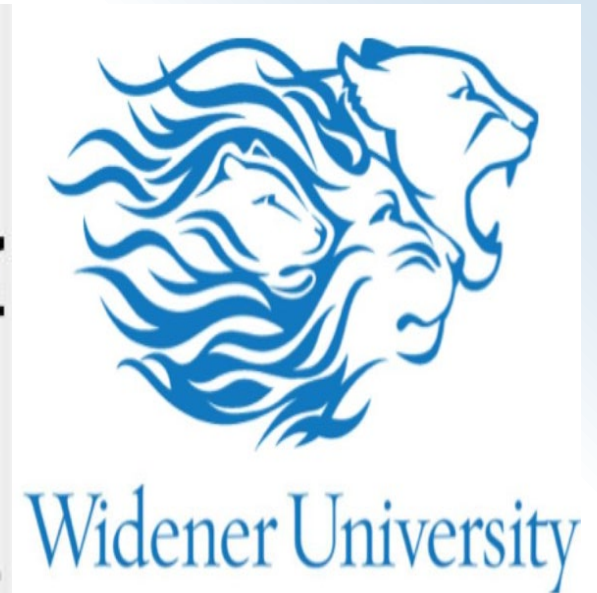
A Little About Me



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My Path to Becoming a RT:

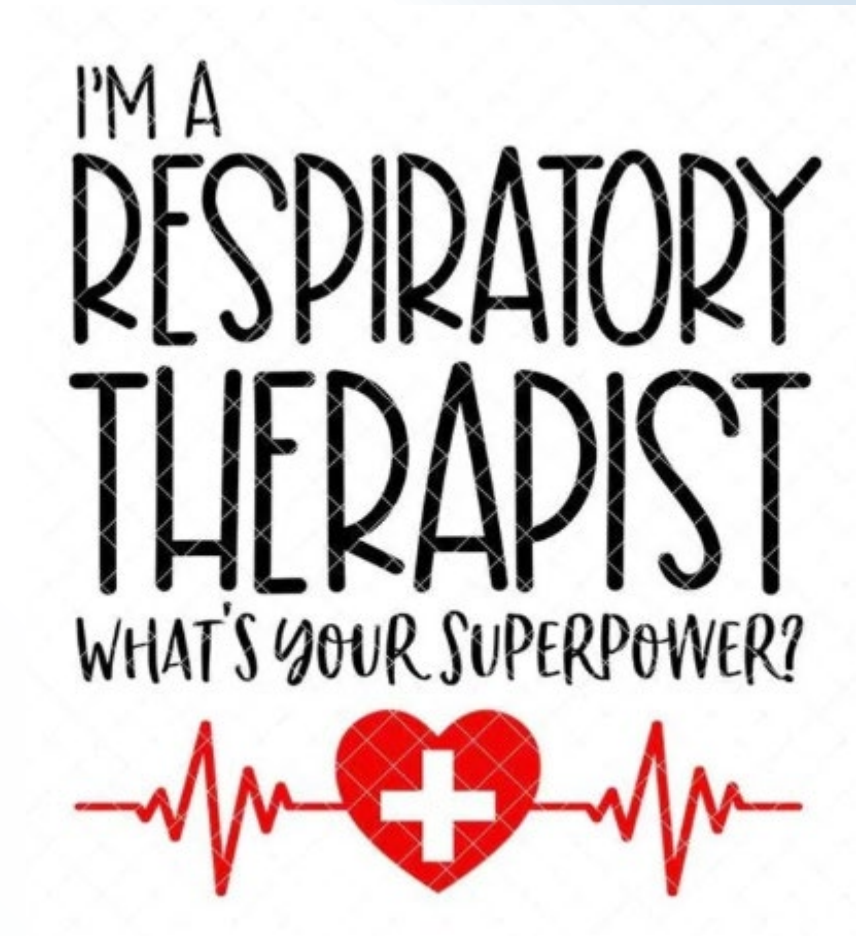
- Delaware County Community College in Media, Pennsylvania, Associate of Applied Science in Respiratory Therapy
- Widener University in Chester, Pennsylvania, Bachelor of Science in Allied Health
- Widener University in Chester, Pennsylvania, Master of Business Administration in Healthcare Management



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My History of Being a RT:

- Bayhealth: System Director of Respiratory Therapy, Pulmonary Diagnostics, & Sleep Services
- Main Line Health: Director of Respiratory Care, Pulmonary Diagnostics, & Sleep Services
- Main Line Health: Clinical Supervisor of Respiratory Services
- Main Line Health: Registered Respiratory Therapist



Educational Path to Becoming a RT



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Regional Respiratory Programs:

- Associate Degree: Delaware Technical Community College (option to continue at WU for a bachelor's)
- Bachelor Degree: Salisbury University, West Chester University, and Gwynedd Mercy University



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Respiratory Program Curriculum (4-year):

<u>Fall First Year</u>			<u>Spring First Year</u>		
Course #	Course Name	Credits	Course #	Course Name	Credits
CHEM 101/103	Introduction to Chemistry with Lab	4	UBIO 121/123	Anatomy & Physiology I with Lab	4
UMAT 101 or UMAT 117	Fundamentals of Mathematics or Elementary Functions	3	UBIO 101	Principles of Biologic Systems	4
UENG 101	Reading, Thinking & Writing	3	UALH 111	Medical Terminology	3
UASC 101	Thinking Through	3	UALH 220	Health Care & the Law	3
UCS 102	Introduction to Undergraduate Continuing Studies Civic Engagement	1	UPSY 105	Introduction to Psychology	3
TOTAL		14	TOTAL		17

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Respiratory Program Curriculum (4-year):

<u>Fall Second Year</u>			<u>Spring Second Year*</u>		
Course #	Course Name	Credits	Course #	Course Name	Credits
UBIO 122/124	Anatomy & Physiology II with Lab	4	BIO 219/220	Microbiology with Lab	4
UCOM 305	Communication in the Professional World	3	UCS 200	Becoming a Civically Engaged Professional (W)	3
UENG 115-127	Choose one course	3		Humanities	3
	Humanities	3		Humanities	3
	Social Science	3		Social Science	3
UALH 115	Introduction to Patient Care (Interdisciplinary)	1			
	TOTAL	17		TOTAL	16

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Respiratory Program Curriculum (4-year):

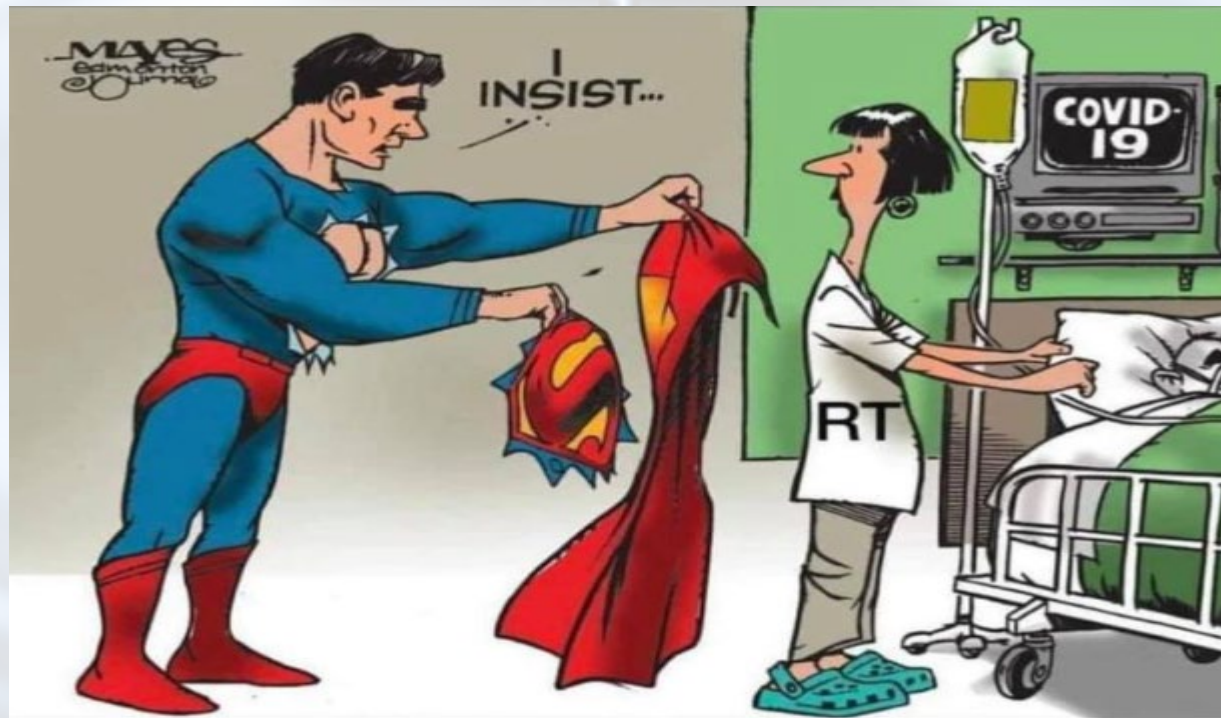
<u>Fall Third Year</u>			<u>Spring Third Year</u>		
Course #	Course Name	Credits	Course #	Course Name	Credits
	Medical Gas Therapy	3		Cardiopulmonary Diseases & Management	3
	Foundations in Respiratory Care	3		Technology in Respiratory Care	3
	Cardiopulmonary Anatomy & Physiology	3		Community Health Promotion and Wellness	3
	Pulmonary Therapeutics	3		Neonatal & <u>Pediatric Respiratory Care</u>	3
	Principles of Pharmacology	3		Simulation & Competency Lab	3
	TOTAL	15		TOTAL	15

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Respiratory Program Curriculum (4-year):

<u>Summer I Fourth Year*</u>			<u>Summer II Fourth Year*</u>		
Course #	Course Name	Credits	Course #	Course Name	Credits
	Clinical Education I	4		Clinical Education I	4
	TOTAL	4		TOTAL	4
<u>Fall Fourth Year</u>			<u>Spring Fourth Year</u>		
Course #	Course Name	Credits	Course #	Course Name	Credits
	Critical Care Monitoring	3		Respiratory Care Capstone*	3
	Cardiopulmonary Diagnostics	3		Clinical Education III	9
	Mechanical Ventilation	3			
	Mechanical Ventilation Lab	3			
	Clinical Education II	2			
	TOTAL	14		TOTAL	12

What Does a Respiratory Therapist Do



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What Settings Do RTs Work:

- Acute Critical Care Units
- Emergency and Trauma Departments
- Helicopter Transports
- Neonatal ICUs
- Pediatrics
- Pulmonary Function Testing Labs
- Pulmonary Rehabilitation Centers
- College-Level Respiratory Programs
- Hospital Administration
- Sales and Product Education



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Responsibilities of Respiratory Therapists in Critical Care Units:

- **Ventilator Management:**
 - Making sure the mechanical ventilators are delivering an adequate amount of support to the patient.
- **Airway Maintenance:**
 - Managing and securing artificial airways (endotracheal tubes or tracheostomies), clearing airway obstructions, and suctioning secretions.
- **Bronchoscopy Assistance:**
 - A procedure allowing physicians to view air passages and the lungs; the role of a respiratory therapist during bronchoscopy is to be first assist.



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Responsibilities of Respiratory Therapists in Emergency and Trauma Departments:

- Bag-Valve-Mask Ventilation:
 - Main responsibility of RTs during traumas is to perform bag-valve-mask ventilation (BVM).
- Performing Intubations:
 - Depending on the facility and their specific credentials, RTs may directly perform the intubation in emergency or routine scenarios.
- Airway Maintenance:
 - Managing and securing artificial airways (endotracheal tubes or tracheostomies), clearing airway obstructions, and suctioning secretions.



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Responsibilities of Respiratory Therapists During Helicopter Transports:

- Bag-Valve-Mask Ventilation:
 - Main responsibility of RTs during traumas is to perform bag-valve-mask ventilation (BVM).
- Performing Intubations:
 - Depending on the facility and their specific credentials, RTs may directly perform the intubation in emergency or routine scenarios.
- Ventilator Management:
 - Making sure the mechanical ventilators are delivering an adequate amount of support to the patient.



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Responsibilities of Respiratory Therapists in the NICU:

- **Ventilator Management:**
 - Making sure the mechanical ventilators are delivering an adequate amount of support to the patient.
- **Neonatal Resuscitation Team:**
 - Attending high-risk deliveries and L&D emergencies to assess breathing immediately after birth and initiate positive pressure ventilation.
- **Medication Administration:**
 - Delivering specialized respiratory medications, such as surfactant replacement therapy



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Responsibilities of Respiratory Therapists in Pediatrics:

- **Ventilator Management:**
 - Making sure the mechanical ventilators are delivering an adequate amount of support to the patient.
- **Medication Administration:**
 - Delivering oxygen therapy, aerosolized medications (via nebulizers or inhalers), and specialized treatments such as inhaled nitric oxide
- **Diagnostic Testing:**
 - Conducting pulmonary function, exercise, and methacholine challenge tests to assess lung capacity and identify breathing restrictions.

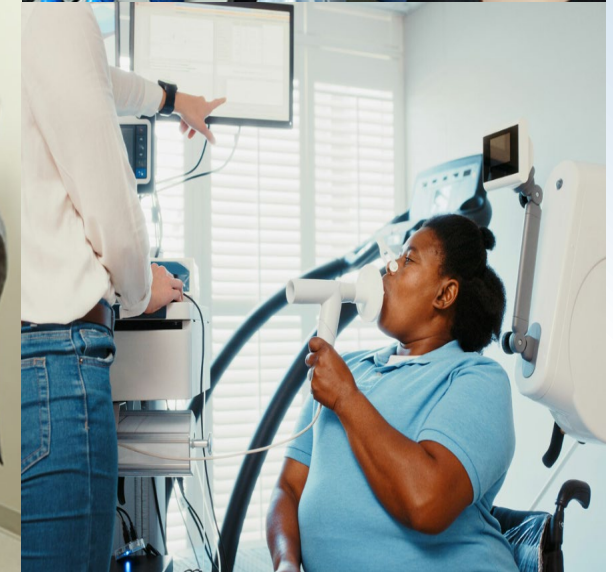


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Responsibilities of Respiratory Therapists in Pulmonary Function Testing:

➤ Diagnostic Testing:

- Spirometry: Measuring airflow and the volume of air an individual can inhale and exhale.
- Lung Volume Testing: Using body plethysmography or nitrogen washout to measure the total amount of air the lungs can hold.
- Diffusion Capacity (DLCO): Measuring how effectively the lungs transfer gas into the bloodstream.
- Bronchodilator Studies: Repeating PFTs after administering medication to evaluate how a patient's airways respond to treatment.
- Methacholine Challenge Tests: Using a medicine to monitor patients' reactive airway sensitivity (Asthma).



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Responsibilities of Respiratory Therapists in Pulmonary Rehabilitation:

- Exercise Monitoring:
 - Guiding patients through tailored cardiovascular and strength-training routines.
- Breathing Retraining:
 - Teaching patients effective breathing techniques, such as pursed-lip breathing and diaphragmatic breathing.
- Patient Education:
 - Educating patients on managing their medication. This includes ensuring proper use of inhalers, adjusting supplemental oxygen, and teaching strategies to conserve energy.



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Responsibilities of Respiratory Therapists in College-Level Respiratory Programs:

- Program Directors:
 - Oversight of the entire curriculum's compliance with national standards set by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC).
- Clinical Preceptors:
 - Experienced RTs working in local healthcare facilities mentor students during hands-on hospital rotations.
- Simulation Lab Instructors:
 - In college campus labs, RTs teach students how to safely operate and troubleshoot medical devices like mechanical ventilators and blood-gas analyzers.



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Responsibilities of Respiratory Therapists in Hospital Administration (Director Level):

- Departmental Oversight:
 - RTs in management direct the day-to-day operations of inpatient and outpatient respiratory and pulmonary function services. This involves recruiting, hiring, and evaluating clinical staff.
- Budget Management:
 - Directors are responsible for budget preparation, monitoring daily expenses, and justifying the purchasing of medical technology
- Quality Assurance and Compliance:
 - Administrative RTs develop and monitor clinical performance standards. They review clinical outcomes to ensure high-quality patient care and safety, helping to reduce hospital readmission rates



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Responsibilities of Respiratory Therapists in Sales and Product Education:

➤ Clinical Expertise in Sales:

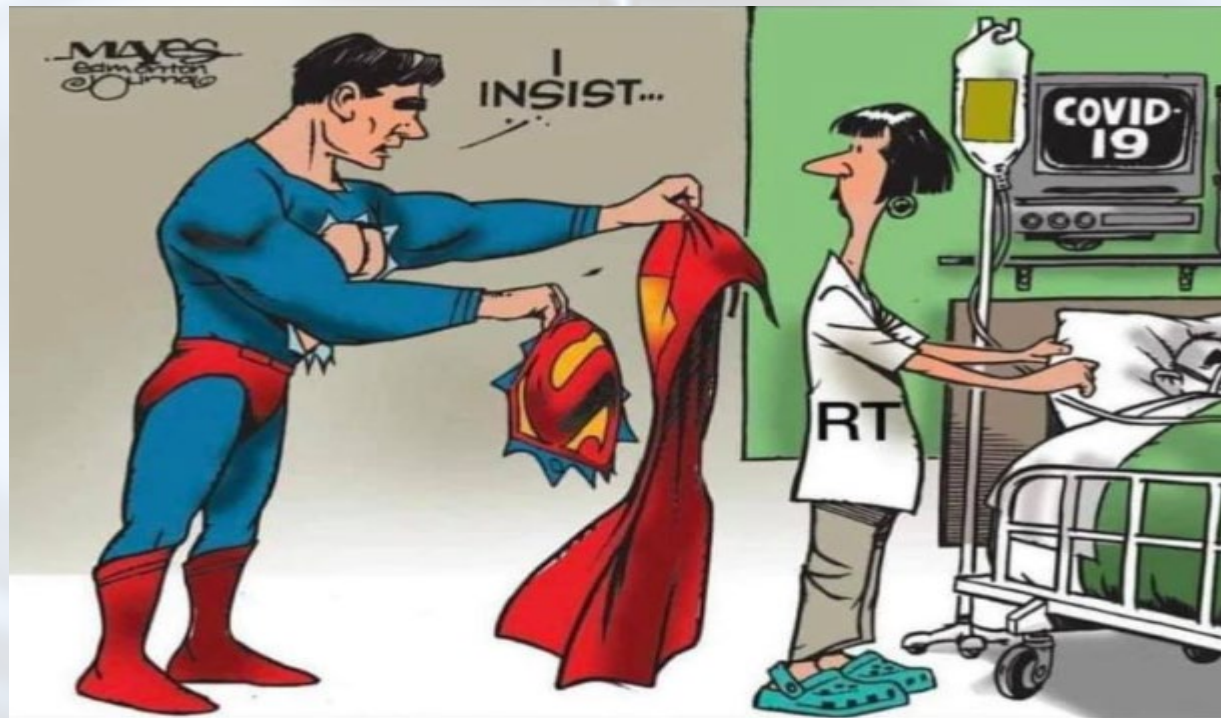
- RTs utilize their deep understanding of respiratory equipment, such as ventilators, CPAP/BiPAP machines, and oxygen concentrators, to demonstrate devices, articulate clinical benefits, and drive product adoption among physicians, therapists, and hospital administrators.

➤ Product Education & Training:

- RTs conduct hands-on product in-services, training medical staff on proper device usage, troubleshooting, and the latest pulmonary disease management protocols.



Hear From Some Respiratory Therapists



[Being a Respiratory Therapist](#)

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Current Job Trends for Registered Respiratory Therapists:

- 9th Best Healthcare Career
- 25th In Top Jobs Nationally
- Can Start Work With An Associate or Bachelor's Degree
- Starting Annual Salary After Graduation With An Associate's Degree Is \$73,000.





ANY
QUESTIONS
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Our Commitment Runs Deep