

Consumer  
ALERT

# Respiratory Care



## UNLICENSED PRACTICE ALERT

*If you or someone you know is receiving medical care at home, this message is for you.*

Advancements in health care delivery and measures to control related costs have resulted in more patients being cared for at home. Many patients rely upon care and/or equipment received through home care companies.

**WARNING:** Many home care providers are employing unlicensed and/or unqualified personnel to perform respiratory care. Some providers are even calling these personnel "respiratory technicians." Not only is this illegal, it is jeopardizing the health and safety of patients.

In California, respiratory care may only be provided by **licensed** respiratory care practitioners (a.k.a. respiratory therapists), and few other licensed personnel, regardless of the setting.

Be an informed consumer. Verify if your respiratory care provider is licensed. For more information or to report unlicensed activity, please contact our Board. We are here to serve you.

**Verify Licensure**  
Online at [www.rcb.ca.gov](http://www.rcb.ca.gov) or  
by calling toll-free 1-866-375-0386



**Respiratory Care Board**  
Department of Consumer Affairs  
State of California



## What is respiratory care?

Respiratory care includes, but is not limited to: Employing life support mechanical ventilation for patients who can't breathe adequately on their own; administering medications in aerosol

form; maintaining artificial airways (e.g., tracheostomy or intubation); studying disorders of people with disruptive sleep patterns; and conducting asthma education and smoking cessation programs.

***Respiratory therapists are one of three licensed health care professionals who most often work at patients' bedsides, with the other two being physicians and registered nurses.***

## Who are typical patients?

Typical respiratory care patients range in age from newborns to the elderly. Patients often suffer from asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), bronchitis, lung cancer, drowning accidents, heart attacks, birth defects, emphysema, strokes, cystic fibrosis, or sleep apnea.

## In which settings is respiratory care provided?

Respiratory care is provided in hospitals (e.g., emergency rooms and intensive-care, critical-care, neonatal/pediatric and acute-care units), hyperbaric oxygen facilities, homes, skilled nursing facilities, and various laboratories (e.g., pulmonary, cardiopulmonary, blood gas, and sleep-testing), and during flight transports.

## What is the Respiratory Care Board?

The Respiratory Care Board is the state regulatory agency responsible for licensing respiratory care practitioners and enforcing laws related to respiratory care. Specifically, the Board is mandated to "...protect the public from the unauthorized and unqualified practice of respiratory care and from unprofessional conduct by persons licensed to practice..." Protection of the public is its highest priority.

## Interested in a respiratory care career?

Successful completion of an intense two-year college program and competency examination are minimum requirements for licensure. For more information on this exciting career, please request a free brochure.



## Respiratory Care Board

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