

Breathing Matters

RESPIRATORY CARE BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

2021



**RESPIRATORY
CARE BOARD**
OF CALIFORNIA

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President's Message

We must recognize that 2021 was a difficult year for everyone, but even more so for those on the frontline fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. Respiratory care practitioners, along with other health care workers, have reported stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms because of the challenges associated with taking care of those afflicted with COVID-19. As a bedside practitioner of 38 years, I can attest that this has been unlike anything we have ever experienced.

Those of us in critical care had grown accustomed to enjoying moderate to high success in preventing patients from having to go on life-support and/or in liberating them when they required it. Over the past two years, we have had to adjust our expectations in the realization that so many of our patients would not be going home to their loved ones. Week after week, our patients got sicker faster and for longer than before, despite our knowledge, our sophisticated equipment, and the evolving recommendations from the health care community. All of this, while having to manage our own health, our families, and friends, during lockdowns, travel restrictions and while having to wear a mask everywhere, even in our break rooms.

Yet, the courage and determination I see every day is nothing short of amazing. Although at the end of our shifts we are exhausted and sometimes discouraged, we remain committed to do it again on our next shift and to offer greater compassion to not only our patients and their families, but also to each other as we recognize that we are in this together. As an educator for two decades, I have been a great proponent of the important role we play in the lives of our patients. Today, I am more proud to be a respiratory therapist than ever before. May we not lose heart as we head into a new year, for brighter days are ahead. We will win this fight and emerge stronger, and at the same time gentler than we used to be.

Gratefully,

Ricardo Guzman, RRT, RCP
Respiratory Care Board President



Respiratory Care Board Members

Ricardo Guzman, M.A., RRT, RCP—President

Mark Goldstein, MPA, RCP, RRT—Vice President

Mary Ellen Early

Raymond Hernandez, MPH, RRT, NPS

Sam Kbushyan

Ronald Lewis, M.D.

Michael Terry, RCP, RRT, RPFT, CCRC

Cheryl Williams

The Board would like to extend a warm welcome to Cheryl Williams, who was appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom in April 2021, and would also like to thank and bid a fond farewell to Rebecca Franzoia and Michael Hardeman for their years of service as public members of the Board.

Now Accepting Electronic Transcripts

RCB is now accepting electronic transcripts for initial applicants. Transcripts must be sent by either the college/respiratory program or recognized third-party vendor such as Parchment, National Student Clearing House, etc. Electronic transcripts must be sent directly from the school or third-party vendor to rcbtranscripts@dca.ca.gov. Electronic transcripts sent from applicants to this email address will not be accepted. The Board requires transcripts from all colleges and/or universities attended that reflect courses required for an associate degree. For additional information about the application process, visit RCB's website at www.rcb.ca.gov and click on the "Applicants" tab at the top of the page.

Disciplinary Summaries Available Online

The Board re-established the online publishing of quarterly disciplinary action summaries with links to public documents. To access this summary information, please visit our web site at www.rcb.ca.gov, select the "Enforcement" tab and the link entitled "Disciplinary Actions." You can then select the information by calendar year (2016 to present).

Reminder: Electronic Transaction Attachment Available

The Board has a BreEZe online transaction that allows licensees to attach continuing education (CE) certificates to their online BreEZe license record throughout their renewal cycle or in response to a CE audit. The attachment application feature can also be used by pending applicants to submit supplemental information, and for licensees with open enforcement cases to upload relevant documents, saving time and resources. Use this online feature to submit information to the Board.

Sunset Review 2022

Every four years, boards under the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) are scheduled to undergo sunset review. The sunset review process provides an opportunity for DCA, the Legislature, the boards, and interested parties and stakeholders to discuss the performance of the boards and make recommendations for improvements.

The Board will submit its 2022 Sunset Report to the Joint Legislative Sunset Review Committees in early January. The report will provide an overview and history of the Board and highlights its activities and achievements since its last review. The report will also answer preliminary questions, describe the Board's actions during recent years, and bring forward new and ongoing issues for consideration. Upon submission of the report, the Committees will review and respond to the report and issue a background paper addressing key issues to be discussed during a Legislative hearing anticipated to take place in the spring.

Once the Sunset Report has been presented to the Legislature, it will be available on the Board's website at [Sunset Reviews \(ca.gov\)](http://www.rcb.ca.gov). Additional information, including the background paper and the Board's response to issues raised, will also be posted as it becomes available.

Professional Qualifications Committee Leads RCB Study Session Focused on Educational Requirements for RCB Licensure

At the beginning of this year, the Board established committees to enhance the efficacy, efficiency, and prompt dispatch of duties upon the Board. The members of the Professional Qualifications Committee are responsible for the review and development of regulations regarding educational and professional ethics course requirements for initial licensure and continuing education (CE) programs. Essentially, they monitor various education criteria and requirements for licensure, taking into consideration new developments in technology, managed care, and current activity in the health care industry.

Board members Raymond Hernandez, MPH, RRT, NPS, and Michael Terry, RCP, RRT, RPFT, CCRC, have begun work focusing on goals from the Board's 2017 Strategic Plan. Strategic Goal 2 focuses on education and ensuring the initial and continuous competency of all licensed respiratory care practitioners (RCPs). One focused strategy identifies developing an action plan to incorporate a baccalaureate degree provision in the Respiratory Care Practice Act (RCPA) to ensure education requirements meet the demand of the respiratory care field. To be intentional and thoughtful in this process, the Professional Qualifications Committee is conducting a series of study sessions to provide the Board and the public an opportunity to engage in a discovery process prior to developing an action plan for the Board's consideration. At the June 30 Board meeting, Mr. Hernandez and Mr. Terry provided a history of the respiratory care profession, reviewed the regulatory and professional organizations influencing this discussion, reviewed the Board's strategic plan goals, explored the landscape supporting increased educational requirements, and reviewed the nursing profession and educational standards as a case study. After each segment, the public was given an opportunity to comment. The Board was then invited to ask questions and discuss elements of the presentation. The study session yielded dynamic discussion and feedback, helping inform session material for a future board meeting.

The next study session is scheduled for April 8, 2022. The committee will present a case study focusing on physical therapy and its tiered licensed and trainee structure, current academic requirements for California licensure, and highlighted elements of the 2017 Respiratory Care Workforce Study. The study session will also include perspectives from various respiratory care employers from large health organizations, community hospitals, and specialized care centers. Feedback from the study session will be incorporated to the next meeting, at which time the Board will engage in discussion to inform the Professional Qualifications Committee in development of its draft action plan.

As dialogue continues over these next study and Board sessions, input will be sought from the profession and stakeholder partners. While it is still unclear what the components of the action plan will include, the grandfathering of all current licensed RCPs will be integrated.

The health care environment continually evolves, and the Board focuses on strengthening its commitment to stakeholders and encourages their participation. We invite you to attend Board meetings and engage in these important discussions to support initial and continuous competency of RCPs in California.



Does RCB Have Your Email Address?

In April, RCB implemented courtesy email notifications to respiratory care practitioners (RCPs) regarding their license renewal. Email notifications are sent approximately 75 and 30 days prior to license expiration and when a renewal application has been approved and your new pocket card is on the way. Licensed RCPs are encouraged to log into their BreEZe account and ensure their correct email address is on file to receive these notifications.

Availability of Online Initial Application

To streamline the respiratory care practitioner application process, the Board launched an online version of the initial application on the BreEZe licensing system in April.

The online application submissions allow for even faster processing times by eliminating mailing time, the time currently required to manually update the system with personal data and application responses, as well as cashing time if payments are made electronically via credit card. Another advantage of filing online is fewer application form deficiencies as the system has been designed to require certain fields be completed before proceeding with application filing. RCB's licensing staff is also able to see real-time updates, and applicants can use their online profile to follow the process and confirm if their application is "pending" or "approved."

President Guzman Recognized as RCP of the Year

The Respiratory Care Board would like to congratulate President Ricardo Guzman for being the recipient of the RCP of the Year Award for the California Society for Respiratory Care's Greater Bay Area region. This award is bestowed upon a licensed respiratory care practitioner who exhibits professionalism, demonstrates commitment through advocacy, and strives for excellence—all qualities President Guzman displays every day in the work he does as an educator, practitioner, and as leader of the Board.

Congratulations, President Guzman, on this well-deserved honor! May you continue to inspire for years to come!



2022 Board Meeting Dates and Locations

April 8: Sacramento

June 9: Southern California

October 27-28: Sacramento (Will include strategic planning)



During These Unprecedented Times, We Remain Steadfast in Our Commitment to Serve You

As a means for cost savings, Governor Gavin Newsom has directed state workers to continue to work remotely whenever possible. The Board assures you there will be no interruption in services and it continues to have staff members in the office answering phones and assisting visitors at the public counter from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Staff also continuously monitor and respond to all email communications, and updates the website to reflect the most current information related to the Board's activities.

If you need assistance, call our office at (916) 999-2190, send an email to rcbinfo@dca.gov, or visit the Board's website at www.rcb.ca.gov.

Waiver Postponing Continuing Education Scheduled to Expire in Early 2022

In response to the COVID-19 State of Emergency, orders waiving the required 30 hours of continuing education were issued and extended several times. The waivers provided for the following:

- For licenses that expired between March 31, 2020, and September 30, 2021, any waived continuing education requirements must be satisfied by January 26, 2022.
- For licenses that expire on October 31, 2021, any waived continuing education requirements must be satisfied by March 28, 2022.

Please ensure that any CE postponed pursuant to these waivers are completed by the dates above.



In Memoriam: Charles 'Bud' Spearman

In August, the Board and the entire respiratory care profession lost a longtime advocate, leader, and friend with the passing of Charles "Bud" Spearman. Bud served on the Board from 2006 to 2014, during which time he served as president and as a member of several Board committees. He was instrumental in representing the Board on a national level, always ensuring California had a "seat at the table." Bud was highly respected and admired for his hard work and dedication, but also for the exceptional person he was. He will be truly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him and whom his life touched. Beginning on the following page is an article published by the American Association for Respiratory Care acknowledging the exceptional life and career of Charles "Bud" Spearman.

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Longtime AARC Member Charles ‘Bud’ Spearman Passes Away

The profession lost another leading member in August, with the passing of Charles “Bud” Spearman, MEd, RRT, FAARC. Spearman, who was 74, was living in Loma Linda, CA, where he had retired from his position as a clinical assistant professor in the department of cardiopulmonary sciences at Loma Linda University in 2014.

Onward and upward

Bud Spearman began his career in respiratory care as an “on-the-job” trainee at Tucson General Hospital in Tucson, AZ, in 1968. Eighteen months later, he enrolled in the RT program at Tucson Medical Center, which soon affiliated with Pima Community College, graduating in 1971.

After earning his RRT in 1972 — he was Registry Number 1646 — he decided he would need a bachelor’s degree to further his career. He opted for what was then one of the few bachelor’s degree programs in respiratory care in the nation at Loma Linda University. The move would shape the rest of his career.

After moving back to Tucson for a couple of years following graduation, he ultimately landed at Loma Linda, where he worked as both a clinical specialist and an educator in the respiratory care program.

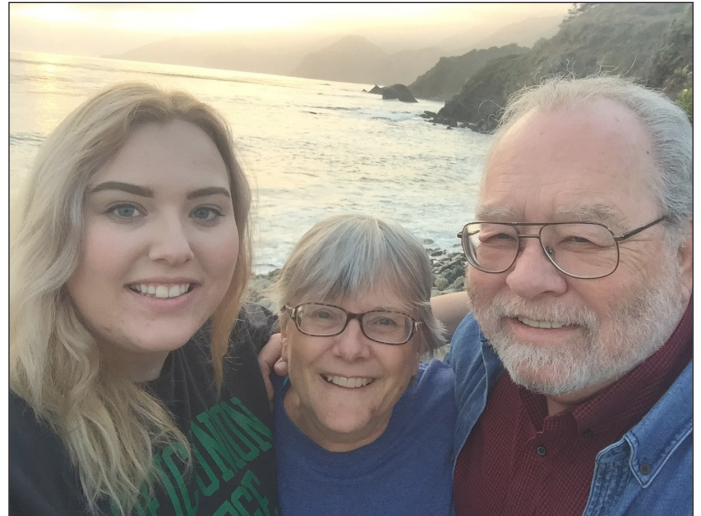
He received his master’s degree in health professions education from the University of Southern California in 1994.

A lifetime of service

An AARC member since 1970, Spearman was an active volunteer with his professional organizations, serving as a trustee for the NBRC, a peer reviewer for Respiratory Care, and a founding member of the Coalition for Baccalaureate and Graduate Respiratory Therapy Education.

He participated in the AARC’s 2015 and Beyond Conferences and regularly attended the AARC Congress, presenting during the Open Forum on several occasions.

Dean Hess, PhD, RRT, FAARC, managing editor of Respiratory Care, remembers working with Spearman on several fronts over the years.



Spearman with his wife Doreen and daughter Kelsey.

“I knew Bud through our shared participation in AARC activities back in the 1980s and 1990s,” he said. “Two come to mind. The first was a Journal Conference in 1987, and another was the very first AARC Professors Rounds about 1990.”

Spearman was a member of the Respiratory Care Board of California from 2006 to 2010 and from 2010 to 2014. He served the group as vice president in 2012 and president in 2013-2014.

He was named a Fellow of the American Association for Respiratory Care in 1999.

The equipment guru

Dr. Hess notes Spearman was a co-author on three editions of Egan’s Fundamentals of Respiratory Care, and he published several articles in Respiratory Care and other publications.

He also contributed to Respiratory Therapy Equipment, the first text to delve into devices used by RTs.

Mark Rogers, BS, RRT, FAARC, global marketing and product manager at Nihon Kohden OrangeMed, Inc., first met Spearman during his orientation at Loma Linda and took classes with him when he was working toward his bachelor’s degree at the university.



Spearman, right, participated in the first AARC/ACHS program: “The COPD Patient in Trouble,” with Dean Hess, PhD, RRT, FAARC, left, and David Pierson, MD, FAARC.

He believes Spearman’s work on Steve McPherson’s seminal equipment text was one of his major contributions to the profession. He noted that Spearman had a remarkable ability to explain how ventilators operated in a way that went far beyond what was in any manual that came with the vents.

That focus on technology spilled over into his work with students as well.

“It would not be uncommon for Bud to have detailed Technical Documents from the engineering and clinical teams on his desk when preparing lectures or manuscripts,” recalled Rogers. “Bud’s drive was to ensure all RCPs not only knew what to do but why we do it. Not just set the ventilator setting, but understand what the ventilator was doing.”

David López, EdD, RRT, an associate professor and department chair at Loma Linda who was also once a student of Spearman’s, agrees.

“Getting the first truly dedicated equipment book for respiratory therapists along with Steve McPherson was extremely important, as most information in regards to respiratory therapy equipment was from whatever departments and school would write,” he said.

Dr. López says Spearman was regularly sought out for his expertise on equipment and how to improve on what was already available. He conducted bench studies on devices to deliver more data and immersed himself in the schematics of the equipment used by RTs.

“He could easily look at one and see if there were issues or problems and offer suggestions on how to improve,” said Dr. López. “As students, we had to learn this information. As professionals, we wanted to know and learn the information.”

Friends and fans

In an interview with The Coalition Chronicle just last September, Spearman was asked what advice he would have for new RTs. He highlighted the value that education and service could play in their careers.

“As you settle into the respiratory care profession, think of how you can serve your patients by expanding your knowledge, experiences, credentials, education, and membership in professional organizations,” he said.

“Volunteer and take advantage of opportunities that come your way. Invest in yourself and your profession, and you will reap benefits for yourself and your patients.”

Spearman’s colleagues say they will remember him as a true professional who was always willing to help others achieve their professional goals.

“Bud cared deeply for the profession and RCPs,” Rogers said. “His genuine kindness and thoughtfulness were there at the end. In the week before his passing, I visited him in the

hospital, and the conversation turned to the school. He said how proud he was that a faculty member — Abdullah Alismail — just finished his PhD. And that it was such great recognition that the department earned the AARC’s Zenith Award. Up until the end, that’s what he was thinking about!”

Dr. López cites Spearman’s kindness as one of his most endearing qualities, recalling how he would always ask everyone he met how they and their families were doing and what was happening in terms of their professional development.

“He remembered so many small things about each person — they were amazed,” Dr. López said. “I heard a few individuals state his many friends and fans would miss him.”

And that made him think: Yes, Bud Spearman didn’t just have friends. He had fans too.

MISSION

To protect and serve consumers by licensing qualified respiratory care practitioners, enforcing the provisions of the Respiratory Care Practice Act, expanding the availability of respiratory care services, increasing public awareness of the profession, and supporting the development and education of respiratory care practitioners.



Respiratory Care Board of California

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