



College of Respiratory  
Therapists of Ontario

Ordre des thérapeutes  
respiratoires de l'Ontario

# TEACHING OR DELEGATING?

Practice FAQs

August 2012

## QUESTION

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The hospital where I work is hiring unregulated Personal Support Workers (PSWs). The RTs have been asked to teach suctioning to the PSWs that will be caring for our complex continuing care patients who have tracheostomy tubes in place. Am teaching or delegating?

## ANSWER

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I would like to refer you to our Professional Practice Guideline (PPG) [Responsibilities of Members as Educators](#) specifically, the description on p. 8 and the table on p.9. I think these references may closely resemble the situation you are describing!

In brief, and from the CRTO's perspective, suctioning is a controlled act that requires delegation to a paid, non-regulated health care provider (e.g., a PSW) in a health care setting. RTs may be involved in teaching and delegating this controlled act. RTs are encouraged to clarify their role and standards of practice related to teaching and delegation with their employer and the interprofessional health care team. The CRTO also has a PPG [Delegation of Controlled Acts](#) to support RTs who delegate their authorized acts.