

Registered Respiratory Therapists (RRTs)

Background

Respiratory Therapy has been a regulated health care profession in Canada since 1964 providing Canadian patients with respiratory and cardio-respiratory care.

RRTs are among the first health professionals to arrive on the scene when patients are critically ill. For example during the current Influenza A (H1N1) outbreak, many RRTs are on the front-lines treating patients in the Emergency Department and Critical Care Units.

There are approximately 2,700 Registered Respiratory Therapists (RRTs) currently working in Ontario with the majority working in acute/critical care. RRTs are found in an ever increasing number of other health care settings such as home care, diagnostics, research, rehabilitation, medical sales/service, patient education, hospital administration, family health teams, educational institutions, chronic ventilation and government. Respiratory Therapists treat people of all ages from newborns to seniors.

One in five (approximately 600,000) Canadians suffers from some form of lung disease. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis, as well as asthma are two of the most common chronic respiratory illnesses.

Diseases/Illnesses/Accidents Treated by RTs

- Asthma
- Chronic bronchitis
- Emphysema
- Pneumonia
- Respiratory distress
- Croup
- Chest trauma – broken ribs, etc.
- Pulmonary fibrosis
- Heart failure
- Drowning victims
- Car accident victims
- Spinal cord injured individuals
- Strokes
- Head injuries
- Premature infants with underdeveloped lungs

College of Respiratory Therapists of Ontario (CRTO)

Since 1994, the College of Respiratory Therapists of Ontario has been one of 23 health regulatory colleges in Canada. The CRTO's role is to ensure that respiratory care services provided to the public by its members are delivered in a safe and ethical manner. The CRTO sets out requirements for entering the practice, standards for the practice and carrying out disciplinary action against registrants who fail to meet the standards of practice for the profession.

Respiratory Therapy Society of Ontario (RTSO)

The RTSO represents, advocates and advances the professional interests of RTs in Ontario by providing leadership and direction. They encourage the professional growth of members by supporting educational opportunities. Participating in the planning and delivery of high quality health care, the RTSO promotes the profession of Respiratory Therapy and represents the professional interests of Respiratory Therapists in Ontario.