



Message from the CRTO to RT Students Working in a Healthcare Setting During the Pandemic

The services of Registered Respiratory Therapists (RRTs) are in high demand during this pandemic, so much so that they may require the assistance of non-regulated personal, such as students who are currently registered in the 1st or 2nd year of a Respiratory Therapy educational program. While this type of aid has the potential to ease the burden placed on our Members, RT students must work within the limitations of both their legal authority and competencies to ensure optimal patient care.

1st or 2nd year RT students are not a regulated health care professional and have no legal authority to perform any controlled acts outside of their educational program. The **controlled acts authorized to RRTs** are:

- *Performing a prescribed procedure below the dermis* (e.g., ABG, IV & arterial line insertion)
- *Intubation beyond the point in the nasal passages where they normally narrow or beyond the larynx* (e.g., ETT, Nasogastric tube & nasal airway insertion)
- *Suctioning beyond the point in the nasal passages where they normally narrow or beyond the larynx.*
- *Administering a substance by injection or inhalation* (e.g., Intravascular, intramuscular, intradermal & sub-cutaneous injections, inhaled gases, medication administration, invasive and non-invasive mechanical ventilation)
- *Administering a prescribed substance by inhalation.*

Therefore, just as with any other non-regulated healthcare providers (NRHCP), RT student must refrain from performed any controlled acts unless they obtain the proper authorization through one of the following mechanisms:

- [Delegation](#) – the process of transferring the authority to perform a controlled act; or
- An Exception in the *Regulated Health Professions Act* (RHPA) – for example:
 - rendering first aid or temporary assistance in an emergency
 - assisting a person with his or her routine activities of living

Even with proper authorization, it is still essential that RT students only perform procedures if they are competent to do so safely.

There are many tasks within the public domain (non-controlled acts) an RT student can perform that would assist their RRT colleagues, such as:

- stocking equipment
- circuiting and testing ventilators
- administrative functions such as contacting staff to cover shifts, etc.



**College of Respiratory
Therapists of Ontario**

**Ordre des thérapeutes
respiratoires de l'Ontario**

For RRTs seeking more information, please see the CRTO webpage entitled [Working With Non-Regulated Health Care Providers](#), or contact Carole Hamp RRT, Manager of Quality Practice at hamp@crto.on.ca.