



Nova Scotia College of Respiratory Therapists

Registrar's Report to the Annual General Meeting

June 12, 2010

It is with great pleasure that I present the Registrar report to the 2010 Annual General Meeting of the Nova Scotia College of Respiratory Therapists. The Registrar is appointed and contracted by the Board of the NSCRT to provide the daily operations of the College and insure compliance with our regulatory mandate of protection of the public. The Registrar is fully accountable to the Board and in particular reports directly to the President of the Board.

Although the daily operations of the College are executed by the Registrar, the College can only fully function through governance from the committed volunteers who serve on the Board and the work of the committed volunteers who serve on the committees of the College. These volunteers continue to work tirelessly to develop the infrastructure of policy and governance that is crucial for the ongoing operation of the NSCRT.

The NSCRT is engaged in two significant stakeholder groups; provincially, the Regulated Health Professions Network; and nationally, the National Alliance of Respiratory Therapy Regulatory Bodies (NARTRB). These strategic relationships provide us with a voice in the ongoing development of healthcare in Nova Scotia and Canada and as well the quality of the Respiratory Therapy profession.

Governments, both Provincial and Federal, continue to develop legislation and agreements that directly impact professional regulation. The Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) requires that full labor mobility among regulated professions exist across all provincial and territorial borders in Canada. In December 2009 the Provincial Government introduced the Fair Registration Practices Act (FRPA) which requires that registration policies of all regulated professions be transparent, objective, impartial, and fair. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development is currently preparing to implement FRPA and the NSCRT will be required to account to the Review Officer on our registration policies and processes. These and other legislative developments continue to impact the amount of work that takes place within all regulatory bodies.

Registration

There were 272 Respiratory Therapists licensed to practice in Nova Scotia in March 2010. Registration renewal was completed by March 31st and 245 licenses were renewed.

The CSRT offered Nova Scotia RTs, who are CSRT members, a program where the CSRT pays the NSCRT fees and the member pays the CSRT in monthly installments. There was some misunderstanding regarding the CSRT process and the NSCRT will clarify the details of their process before the next registration renewal. The CSRT is doing an internal review of their process and we await the outcome of that review.

Plans are in place to provide on-line registration renewal for our members via the NSCRT website next year. This is part of a website upgrade we will undertake over the summer months. Members will receive information on how to renew their registration on-line with their renewal package early in 2011.



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An audit of members' continuing education credits was performed and those who were audited received a letter once the audit was completed.

The Credentials Committee (registration committee) has been very active this year executing its mandate to insure registration applicants meet the criteria for registration. The details of their work can be found in their report to the AGM.

Provincial Activities

The NSCRT continues to be represented at the Regulated Health Professions Network of Nova Scotia. This group is made up of all of representatives from health professions that are currently self regulated and representatives from Department of Health. It provides a platform for two way dialogue among regulators and government.

The Regulated Health Professions Network provides input into legislation such as the proposed Personal Health Information Act and the recently proclaimed Personal Directives Act and Fair Registration Practices Act. Members of this organization are currently commenting on a proposed new Medical Act. Through the Regulated Health Professions Network the NSCRT participates in the sharing of best practices in regulation and collaborates with other regulatory bodies and government in issues of common interest.

The NSCRT has forwarded a report to Department of Health on the proposed provincial role description for Respiratory Therapists. The role description was originally developed by a group of Respiratory Therapy managers under the direction of the Model of Care Initiative of Nova Scotia (MOCINS). Input from the regulatory body was required for the role description to move through the final steps for approval, adoption, and implementation by DOH. The role description was thoroughly reviewed by the Professional Practice Committee where a report was developed. The NSCRT Board approved the report and it was forwarded to the co-chair of the MOCINS project of Department of Health. Further details regarding this report can be found in the Professional Practice Committee report to the AGM.

The NSCRT is pleased to present a new Continuing Competency Program for Respiratory Therapists. The program contains all of the legislated requirements of a Respiratory Therapists professional portfolio. The Credentials Committee completed extensive work on this project and will introduce the new program to members at this AGM.

The H1N1 influenza pandemic presented challenges to most of you throughout the province. Although the Pandemic turned out to have less than the anticipated impact on the healthcare system, preparation was intense. The NSCRT in partnership with the CSRT and the Regulated Health Professions Network made every effort to provide our members with current information on our website as well as links to websites of particular interest. This health emergency also prompted the NSCRT to develop a Pandemic Plan to insure our ongoing operation throughout a Pandemic, and an Emergency Registration Policy that will be reviewed annually.



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National Activities

The President and Registrar represent the NSCRT at the National Alliance of Respiratory Therapy Regulatory Bodies (NARTRB). This organization provides a structured liaison among regulatory bodies to share information, encourage consistency in registration practices, and develop, promote and evaluate national standards within the profession. In October 2009 the NARTRB received a grant from the Federal Government (HRSDC) for the project Phase II – Assessment Tools for Regulation of Canadian and Foreign Trained Healthcare Practitioners Seeking to Practice Respiratory Therapy in Canada.

This project is broken down into three components:

- 1) Development of a common national process for credential assessment, prior learning assessment and bridging program for internationally educated healthcare professionals who want to enter the Respiratory Therapy profession in Canada.
- 2) Update an agreement among provincial Respiratory Therapy regulators to register Respiratory Therapists from unregulated jurisdictions. The Agreement on Internal Trade provides full labor mobility for RTs working in regulated jurisdictions. The NARTRB agreement will provide labor mobility for RTs from unregulated jurisdictions while enhancing the level of scrutiny used among the regulatory bodies. This component will also work towards harmonizing registration practices and policies among the regulatory bodies.
- 3) Evaluate equivalency between Canadian and American entry to practice examinations. This component is examining criteria for eligibility to write these exams as well as the equivalency among the exams.

The NSCRT President and Registrar sit on the steering committees that oversee each of these components. The outcomes of this project will greatly assist the NSCRT with international applicants and to develop tools to support registration policies.

The NARTRB recently released the 2011 Respiratory Therapy National Competency Profile, a job analysis of the practice of Respiratory Therapy across Canada. This NCP will impact education programs curriculum beginning in the fall of 2011 and will impact the entry to practice exam beginning in 2014. The President represented the NSCRT on the steering committee overseeing the development of the NCP. Copies of the NCP are available through the NARTRB and an electronic version will be housed on the NARTRB website.

The NARTRB has a representative on the Allied Health Committee of the Canadian Anesthetologists Society. The CAS is preparing to release a document outlining Foundation Knowledge for Anesthesia Assistants and has requested endorsement by the NARTRB. A motion to endorse this document did not pass at the recent meeting of the NARTRB on May 14th in St. John's. The NARTRB was not satisfied that the level of knowledge outlined in the document would meet entry to practice standards currently in place for Respiratory Therapists. The NARTRB will develop a strategy to support the development of this critical role in the healthcare system.

The Registrar is currently representing Respiratory Therapy regulators on a national working group of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC). This working group is comprised of representatives from Educational Institutions, Professional Associations, Accrediting Bodies, Employer Groups and Regulators. We are working together to develop a Pan Canadian Approach to Sustaining the



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Allied Health Workforce through the development of an Educational Blueprint and Innovation Tools. This project will be completed by March 31, 2011.

The NSCRT was, once again, very busy over the past year. The committed volunteer members of the Board and committees continue to build the infrastructure of our College. Pathfinder Group continues to provide invaluable resources to us such as a physical location, administrative support, accounting services, registration services and website design and maintenance. As Registrar, I am confident that we consistently meet our regulatory mandate to the highest standard. Through our provincial and national relationships we are collaborating to insure the quality of standards for the practice of Respiratory Therapy in Nova Scotia.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Barbara MacDonald as she completes her term as President. Barb has provided thoughtful and strategic leadership to the NSCRT over the past two years. She worked tirelessly to see Respiratory Therapy become self regulated in Nova Scotia and continued to commit herself to this fledgling organization from its beginning. Through her leadership the NSCRT very quickly became a respected regulator among our peers. Barb will continue to guide the NSCRT as Past-President as she mentors our new leader Raj Makkar. I want to personally thank Barb for always being available as a sounding board as I faced challenges as Registrar.

We are now in the third year of the NSCRT and although there is still much work to be done we are proud of the accomplishments thus far. Please update your contact information at the College any time that changes. In the interest of cost containment we will continue to use email and our website as our primary methods of communication. Our website will become a greater communication tool as it is re-designed.

Respectfully Submitted by

Shannon McDonald
Registrar, NSCRT