

Respiratory Therapists

Respiratory therapists assist physicians in the diagnosis, treatment and care of patients with respiratory and cardiopulmonary disorders. They are employed in hospitals, extended care facilities, public health centres and respiratory home care companies. Respiratory therapists may specialize in areas such as anaesthesia, critical care, pediatrics, cardiopulmonary diagnostics and respiratory home care.

Duties of the respiratory therapist include:

- Performing diagnostic tests, such as arterial blood gas analysis and cardiopulmonary functions tests
- Operating and monitoring respiratory equipment to administer treatments such as oxygen, oxygen-air mixtures, humidified air or medications
- Operating, monitoring, maintaining and testing a variety of diagnostic and therapeutic equipment
- Assessing patients and performing or assisting with interventions such as airway maintenance, line insertions, inductions and intubations
- Performing artificial respiration and external cardiac massage
- Assisting with transport of high-risk patients
- Supervising and training students and other respiratory therapists
- Participating in home care programs for chronic respiratory patients and providing patient and family education
- Participating in research related to cardiac and pulmonary disorders.

*This description is adapted from that provided by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, a division of the Government of Canada (2013).

(<http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/ProfileNocCode.aspx?val=3&val1=3214&val17=3214&val18=1&val19=0>)

For more information, visit the websites listed below:

Newfoundland and Labrador College of Respiratory Therapists - <http://www.nlcrt.ca/>

Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Respiratory Therapists - http://www.nlart.ca/wqview_a.asp?jobid=11