

Technical Standards and Essential Functions

Department of Respiratory Care San Jacinto College

All individuals, including persons with disabilities, who apply for admission to the respiratory therapist program, must be able to perform specific essential functions with or without reasonable accommodation. Essential functions are the basic activities that a student must be able to perform to complete the curriculum and function as a respiratory therapist. These standards are not conditions of admission, but reflect the performance abilities and characteristics necessary to successfully complete requirements for respiratory care.

The applicant should carefully look over the technical standards for the program and ask questions if not familiar with the activities or functions listed. The applicant must decide if he or she has any limitations that may restrict or interfere with satisfactory performance of any of the requirements. It is ultimately the applicant's responsibility to meet these technical standards if accepted into the respiratory therapist program.

The applicant should consult with the program director or the director of clinical education to discuss any individual situation if he or she may not be able to meet these essential performance requirements.

• **Hearing** - Able to hear and understand patients and staff; assess and monitor patient sounds.

1. Communicate and interact with patients, staff and families from a variety of cultural backgrounds.
2. Follow verbal instructions.
3. Use a stethoscope to hear heart and breath sounds.
4. Detect and discriminate between sounds of normal conversation.
5. Hear percussion sounds during patient assessment.
6. Ability to hear sounds of a variety of equipment alarms.

• **Mobility** - Physical endurance ability sufficient to work in a clinical setting for eight (8) to twelve (12) hours performing physical tasks requiring physical energy without jeopardizing patient safety. Mobile and strong enough to support and move patients. Examples: Remain standing and walking between patient care areas for at least an hour.

1. Support and transfer patients safely from bed to wheelchair, and modify patient position in bed.
2. Move in and out of treatment areas.
3. Respond to emergency situations in a timely manner.
4. Reach equipment and parts of patient's body.
5. Reach above shoulder height to manipulate equipment.
6. Reach below waist level to manipulate equipment.
7. Able to move quickly from place to place to perform patient care.

•**Visual**- Able to monitor and assess patient and equipment function; to provide safe and effective respiratory care.

1. Read written instruction/orders.
2. Read fine print, monitors, and gauges.
3. Differentiate color/character of sputum for signs/nature of infection/disease.
4. Chart (write) procedures and observations legibly in a permanent medical record.
5. Ability to see and discriminate between a variety of equipment visual alarms.
6. Ability to observe demonstrations and patients close up and at a distance to learn skills and to gather patient data (e.g., observe a patient's gait, appearance, posture, etc.).

•**Motor Skills** (fine and gross) - Perform multiple motor tasks simultaneously. Fine and gross motor skills sufficient to handle equipment and provide safe and effective patient care; steady arm and hand movements while manipulating objects or assisting patients.

1. Operate and manipulate equipment; multiple operations may be required.
2. Prepare blood collection syringes; draw venous and arterial blood samples.
3. Manipulate a syringe and needle to prepare medications.
4. Administer aerosols, suction patients, and adjust pressure gauges.
5. Lift and transport oxygen cylinders; attach regulators; move in and out of treatment areas.
6. Push/pull hospital beds; transport patients.
7. Lift and move patients safely.
8. Perform airway management.
9. Perform chest compressions during CPR. Manually ventilate a patient for at least 30 minutes during resuscitation.
10. Ability to exert 20 to 50 pounds of force occasionally, and/or 10 to 25 pounds of force frequently.

•**Tactile** - Able to assess patient's response to therapy tactilely.

Distinguish textures, degrees of firmness, temperature differences, pulse rate, vibrations and strength.

•**Communication**: Candidates must be able to communicate in English effectively and sensitively with patients. In addition, candidates must be able to communicate in English in oral and handwritten form with faculty, allied personnel, and peers in the classroom, laboratory,

•**Intellectual and Cognitive Abilities**: Candidates must have the ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize data. Problem solving and diagnosis, including obtaining, interpreting, and documenting data, are critical skills demanded of respiratory therapists which require all of these intellectual abilities. These skills allow students to make proper assessments, sound judgments, appropriately prioritize therapeutic interventions, and measure and record patient care outcomes. Candidates must have the ability to learn to use computers for searching, recording, storing, and retrieving information.

Behavioral/Social Skills and Professionalism:

Candidates must demonstrate attributes of empathy, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation. Candidates must possess the emotional well-being required for use of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of sound judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the evaluation and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients. Candidates must be able to adapt to ever-changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties and stresses which are inherent in the educational process, as well as the clinical problems of many patients.

Candidates must be able to maintain professional conduct and appearance, maintain client confidentiality and operate within the scope of practice. Candidates must also have the ability to be assertive, delegate responsibilities appropriately, and function as a part of a medical team. Such abilities require organizational skills necessary to meet deadlines and manage time.

I understand that my patient _____ is enrolled in the clinical portion of the Respiratory Care Program at San Jacinto College and that the information contained in this 3 page document is summary of the physical requirements of the program. Based on this summary, my patient is

- _____ released to return to classroom activities
- _____ released to return to classroom and laboratory activities
- _____ released to return to all program activities including clinical rotations

Physician's Printed Name

Physician's signature

Date