

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Janet Wood](#)
Subject: FW: Texas Sunset Advisory Commission: Respiratory Therapist Deglutition
Date: Thursday, June 12, 2014 8:03:05 AM

From: Jordan Dewberry
Sent: Thursday, June 12, 2014 6:25 AM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Texas Sunset Advisory Commission: Respiratory Therapist Deglutition

June 12, 2014

The Honorable Senators, Representatives and Members of the Public:

I am a registered nurse currently practicing in the State of Texas. In May 2014, the Sunset Advisory Commission Staff Report recommended to discontinue 19 regulatory programs currently housed at the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) which includes Respiratory Care Practitioners Program (Page 4, Issue 3 and Pages 106-108, Appendix E).

Licensed RCPs' must complete a rigorous specialized, college-based educational training program from an accredited college, and must successfully complete a national credentialing process consisting of rigorous examinations before they are eligible to apply for a state license.

The organization that provides the credentialing examinations does not regulate the profession, nor does the organization that accredits the RT educational programs. The RCPs' are regulated by the Texas Respiratory Care Practitioners Program with the DSHS.

The scope of practice for a licensed RCP is complex. The following are just a few procedures in an RCP's scope of practice:

- Directly manages highly technical mechanical ventilators providing necessary life support for patients who are unable to sustain life on their own.
- Routinely administers prescription medications, including bronchodilators, antibiotics, analgesics, and opioids.
- Assists the physician in diagnosing cardio-pulmonary disease by performing diagnostic procedures and patient assessment
- Performs CPR in all types of health care facilities and on patients of all ages
- Administers medical gases such as oxygen, nitric oxide and helium
- Provides counseling and rehabilitation to patients with cardio-pulmonary diseases
- Functions as members of the Extracorporeal Life Support team
- Works with critically ill patients in all intensive care units (ICUs)
- Serves as an invaluable member of land and air transport teams.

There are numerous reasons to not deregulate RCPs'. Public health and safety is the greatest concern. Licensed RCPs' are direct patient care providers in a profession where extensive specialized skills and training are required and a significant potential risk of harm to the public exists from lack of training education and incompetence. The lack of a formal state licensure process in Texas would mean that RCPs' whom are incompetent, engaged in

criminal activity, or have lost their license to practice in another state can work in Texas without any review or screening to protect the citizens of Texas.

As a practicing RN I heavily rely on an experienced RCP's training when I make decisions alongside physicians to extubate a patient, start BiPAP, adjust inhaler medications. I regularly do rounds with RCPs and consider them a vital part of the medical team. This deregulation could potentially affect the lives and safety of thousands of patients per year and ultimately raise the cost of healthcare expenditures in the ICU if the patients are not cared for by professionals in a timely manner. This matter is of high importance and needs to be immediately addressed as it poses great risk to the public safety. The first rule of medicine is "do no harm", and as healthcare providers we are called to advocate for our patients in all setting. Respiratory Care Practitioners are a vital part of our healthcare team and are absolutely needed to ensure safe and effective patient care is provided.

To the physicians on staff: As a fellow healthcare provider, you know personally the first rule of medicine, "do no harm". We have all taken that Oath and we all have that duty to uphold that Oath in all we do, inside and outside of the workplace. To protect the public and do what is in the best interest of public safety. The deregulation of RRT's poses a risk for increased patient airway complications, delayed care due to nurse and doctor overload and lack of RRT specialized team with proper training to ensure that patient needs are being met and that patients are safe. Most of all, we will jeopardize the immense in depth knowledge and skill that respiratory therapists possess and because maintaining the airway and regulation of breathing is necessary for sustaining life. When you take a step back and put things into perspective, doesn't a professional that maintains human life of upmost importance? I believe that we have a duty to ensure these individuals are highly trained professionals that do not pose a threat to patient safety. I want to know that I can trust my respiratory therapist when a code blue is called, when I have to transport my NICU baby via the Neonatal Transport Team at Dell Children's Medical Center and when my family member is in the hospital. I have all of the confidence in the world that you all can come up with a plan to find other ways to make significant budget cuts that will not place the safety of the public at such a high risk for harm. I hope that you will stand up for what you went into medicine for and continue to persevere, always remembering the Oath we all have taken and the bond we all share, "Do No Harm".

"Sometimes the questions are complicated and the answers are simple."

My recommendation is not to deregulate RCPs', but for the Respiratory Care Practitioners program to either remain with the DSHS or to be transferred to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation.

Respectfully submitted,
Jordan Dewberry, RN, BSN

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Janet Wood](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Thursday, June 12, 2014 8:02:42 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Thursday, June 12, 2014 7:06 AM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Thursday, June 12, 2014 - 07:06

Agency: DEPARTMENT STATE HEALTH SERVICES DSHS

First Name: Jordan

Last Name: Dewberry

Title: RN, BSN

Organization you are affiliated with: Seton Medical Center Austin

City: Austin

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or Opposed:
June 12, 2014

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Respectfully submitted,
Jordan Dewberry, RN, BSN

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

I recommend that the advisory board look at other areas to make budget cuts in that do not jeopardize the safety of the public. The healthcare system needs Registered Respiratory Therapists as they are just as an integral part of the healthcare team as a nurse or a physician. They keep people alive that cannot breathe. I believe that there are many areas that can be deregulated that are not of such importance as this and I have faith in the board that they will come up with a solution to this issue. I cannot imagine what my job would be like without high quality respiratory therapists. I want only the best for my patients. Many patients don't get to see what these healthcare providers do for them, as they are often not recognized enough. But, they should be. They are essential for our healthcare

system to work and to keep our patients safe. If you can ask yourself "if my son, daughter, spouse, mother, father, sister, brother, or anyone close to you were hospitalized, God forbid, and had to be on life support, would you be ok with a random, unregulated respiratory therapist taking care of your family member. Would you want someone that has not passed an exam testing the knowledge base, clinical skills, and patient safety regulating and maintaining your family members airway. [without the ability to maintain an airway, to breathe, there is no life]. Would you be ok with not knowing the extent of education that a respiratory therapist has that is taking care of your loved one in one of the most vulnerable and trying times of your life?"

If you can honestly answer yes to all of these questions, then by all means, go ahead and deregulate RRT. I, however, believe that we should all adopt the Oath of "do no harm". I believe that we should always do what is best for others. Budget cuts can be made and I understand they are necessary; however, compromising the safety of fellow human beings, your family and mine, is not the answer.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree