

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
STATE BOARD FOR RESPIRATORY THERAPY

Meeting Minutes
Thursday January 13, 2022
10:00-12:00 PM

WebEx conference

Board Members present by WebEx: Kathleen Beney, RT, Vice Chairperson; Rebecca Albright, RT; Cynthia Gottlieb, RT; Edward Schrager, RT; Thomas McManus, RT; Peter Papadakos, MD; Russell Rozensky, RT; Kevin Brinson, RT

Extended Members present by WebEx/phone: Steven Smith, RT; Paul Goldiner, MD; Iva Westbrook, RT
Excused: Stanley John, RT Chair; Barbara Deluca, RT

Guest Observers: Thomas Harvie, New York State Society of Respiratory Care (NYSSRC); Chris Slocum, Government Affairs Chair, NYSSRC.

Board Office Staff: Suzanne Sullivan, RN, Acting Executive Secretary; Ann Bentzen, RN Associate in Nursing Education; Eileen Avery, RN Assistant in Nursing Education; Keith Westerling, Administrative Assistant Trainee 1

Call to Order and Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes: The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. Minutes from October 2021 meeting were not approved due to lack of quorum at beginning of meeting.

News and Reports

Ms. Sullivan described recently enacted New York State laws that impact respiratory therapists and other health professionals. She described a law that requires respiratory therapists and other health professionals to provide NYSED with practice information when they renew their registrations to practice. She explained that the practice information would be used for health care workforce studies and policy development. Ms. Sullivan described two laws that would make services provided by clinical social workers and licensed mental health practitioners eligible for Medicaid reimbursement, thereby increasing access to mental health care. She described a law that expands the types of vaccines pharmacists may administer pursuant to an order from a physician or nurse practitioner.

Ms. Sullivan updated RT Board Members on several New York bills, including a bill that would require cultural awareness training for health professionals. RT Board Members requested a copy of the bill.

Ms. Sullivan updated RT Board Members on the status of Governor Hochul's Emergency Executive Orders that relate to health care worker shortage. She noted that the Executive Orders will remain in effect until January 25, 2022 and may be renewed. She also noted that current information regarding the Executive Orders is available on NYSED's website.

Ms. Sullivan responded to questions from RT Board Members regarding the RT Board's recommendation concerning an amendment to New York State Law or a Governor's Executive Order to allow graduates of New York State Education Department registered respiratory therapy education programs to practice respiratory therapy under physician supervision for 180 days immediately upon graduation, provided that they have applied for a New York State Respiratory Therapy license and a limited permit, and they practice at the medical facility listed on the permit.

RT Board Members expressed concern regarding the lack of progress being made on this important issue.

Discussion of the Commission of Accreditation for Respiratory Care's (CoARC's) proposed changes to Standard 1.01

Ms. Sullivan sought feedback from RT Board Members on CoARC's proposed changes to Standard 1.01. RT Board Members engaged in a discussion of current advantages and disadvantages to increasing the minimum education requirements for RT licensure to a bachelor's degree. Several RT Board Members stated that the bachelor's degree requirement would improve the quality of care that RTs provide to patients. They acknowledged that many associate degree respiratory therapy education programs are working with universities and colleges that can offer bachelor's or higher degrees in respiratory care. RT Board Members also considered the impact of bachelor's degree requirement might have on the RT workforce in New York State. Members noted considerable challenges to recruit and hire respiratory therapists, particularly in rural upstate New York. RT Board Members noted that the New York State Society for Respiratory Care Society (NYSSRC) has not changed its position although they are clarifying the requirements for the bachelor's degree.

Ms. Sullivan provided an update on RT Board membership, noting that most voting members are serving their second term and that the RT Board lacks a public member. She encouraged the Board Members to recruit candidates for the public and professional membership positions on the RT Board, especially from upstate New York.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:22 AM.