

Respiratory Therapy Application Questions

What reasons or experiences influenced you to choose a career in respiratory therapy?

What skill have you mastered? Describe the actions you took to develop the skill. How did you know you mastered the skill, and how do you continue to maintain the skill?

Think of a situation where you had to interact with a difficult person (as a peer, customer, employee, etc). Describe the circumstances of the situation and how you dealt with the person and situation in order to resolve the conflict. Is there anything you would have done differently?

Respiratory therapists work in critical, lifesaving/threatening situations. These require respiratory therapists to make split-second decisions. Describe a time when you had to make a split-second decision. What skill did you use to keep your composure? What was the outcome?

Respiratory therapists work with patients from newborn through geriatric ages. These patients often times succumb to their disease process or condition. How will you handle working with patients during end-of-life circumstances?

Name two to three specific qualities or attributes you possess that you believe will make you an excellent respiratory therapist? Why do you feel these qualities will contribute to your success as a respiratory therapist?

If accepted into the Respiratory Therapy Program, what are you most excited about and what are you most anxious about? How do you see yourself overcoming this anxiety?

Respiratory Therapy Physical and Technical Requirements

In compliance with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), careful consideration is provided to all applicants entering the Respiratory Therapy Program. Reasonable accommodation shall be provided to an applicant who is able to perform the essential functional requirements of the program, provided that the applicant follows the college's procedures for seeking an accommodation and that those accommodations do not interfere with the performance of any essential functions of a respiratory therapist's duties.

Respiratory Therapy is a special field where the healthcare provider or practitioner is responsible for providing life supporting therapies and diagnostic services. The applicant should carefully review the essential functional requirements of 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.

The individual must be capable of performing the job function of a Respiratory Therapist without placing himself/herself at risk, and/or without jeopardizing the patient.

Below is a list of the essential functional requirements of a Respiratory Therapist:

Physical Skills:

- Standing and walking 6-12 hours and performing diagnostic and therapeutic procedures in a clinical facility or hospital
- Performing sustained repetitive movements such as CPR
- Walking fast or running for emergencies including resuscitation
- Reaching above shoulder level (to manipulate equipment)
- Reaching below waist level (to manipulate equipment and patient care)
- Moving upper and lower extremities, back, hips, and knees without restriction
- Lifting, adjusting and positioning adults and children for therapeutic procedures
- Lifting and transferring patients from bed to chair, from chair to bed, or from bed to stretcher for transport to other departments
- Lifting, adjusting and positioning medical equipment for patient care; pushing, pulling 50 pounds (oxygen cylinders, beds, patients, ventilators, equipment, etc.)
- Quickly maneuvering in narrowed spaces during emergencies
- Adjusting minute incremental controls or settings on medical devices
- Manipulating high precision medical devices such as bronchoscopes
- Performing arterial puncture using needles and syringes for blood collection

Observation and Sensory Skills

- Ability to see details at close range (within a few feet of the observer) and at a distance; including differentiating colors and shades, various degrees of light (from dark to bright) and reading fine print and hand-writing
- Distinguishing and describing patient's body language and physical responses which the patient cannot verbally relay (i.e., facial expressions, seating, trembling, color change, bleeding, etc.)
- Distinguishing or differentiating normal and abnormal breath sounds, adventitious sounds and heart sounds during chest auscultation
- Hearing auditory alarms – such as monitors, ventilator alarms, call bells, fire alarms
- Distinguishing color, appearance and intensity such as skin color during physical assessment
- Identifying proper placement of airway tubes, chest tubes and digital displays on medical equipment in low light intensities

Mental Ability and Emotional Stability

- Concentrate on a task over a long period of time without being distracted
- Function effectively with integrity, poise and emotional stability under stress (emergency, critical or dangerous situation) in actions with all (peers, patients, staff and faculty)
- Performing mathematical calculations – such as medication preparation, ventilator setting and adjustments and weaning criteria
- Comprehending graphic trends on digital displays on ventilators and other medical equipment / devices
- Reading measurement marks found on respiratory / medical devices
- Making quick decisions during emergencies and other critical situations
- Adapting to changing environment / stress
- Dealing with unexpected crisis situations such as deteriorating patient's condition and emergencies
- Coping with strong emotions such as the death of a patient and the grief of family members

Communications and Ethics

- Communicating effectively in English (both orally and in writing), using correct grammar, vocabulary and medical terminology

- Comprehending verbal and written directions from physicians and other healthcare providers
- Communicating with individuals from diverse backgrounds
- Instructing patients how to do correct breathing during therapy, during pulmonary function testing (PFT) and when using small devices (such as nebulizers and metered dose inhalers)
- Comprehending clinical and scientific reports
- Displaying flexibility and adapting to change behaviors
- Accepting responsibility for own behavior and for being forthright about errors or uncertainty; and developing mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients, staff, coworker, etc.
- Refusing to or participate in illegal, unethical or incompetent acts including (but not limited to): falsifying or making incorrect entries into a patient's record or related document; copying other students written assignments; cheating on a quiz or examination; making untrue statements to a faculty member or administrator