

Essential Functions for Respiratory Therapy Students

The following activities are examples of the types of activities which a student in the Respiratory Therapy program will be required to perform in order to successfully complete the program. Please note that these examples are not all inclusive.

1. **Critical Thinking:** Respiratory Therapy students should possess critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment. For example: students must be able to identify cause and effect relationships in clinical situations; develop and/or participate in the development of respiratory care patient plans.
2. **Interpersonal Skills:** Respiratory Therapy students shall possess interpersonal abilities sufficient for interaction with individuals, families, groups, etc. from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds. A student must be able to establish rapport with patients, families and other health care members.
3. **Communication Skills:** Respiratory Therapy students shall possess communication skills sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form. For example: explain treatment procedures, initiate health teaching, document and interpret therapeutic interventions and patient/client responses.
4. **Mobility:** Respiratory Therapy students shall possess physical abilities sufficient to move room to room and maneuver in small spaces, stand and walk extensive periods of time. For example: move around in patient's rooms, work spaces and treatment areas, administer cardiopulmonary procedures.
5. **Motor Skills:** Respiratory Therapy students shall possess gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective respiratory care procedures. For example: set up, calibrate and use equipment, position patients/clients, perform CPR.
6. **Hearing:** Respiratory Therapy students must possess auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs. For example: hear monitor alarms, emergency signals, auscultatory breath and heart sounds, cries for help.
7. **Visual:** Respiratory Therapy students shall possess visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary for patient care. For example: observe patient/client responses, see calibration and alarms for equipment, patient assessment.
8. **Tactile:** Respiratory Therapy students shall possess tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment. For example: auscultation, percussion, palpation and the therapeutic modalities related to therapeutic interventions. For example: insertion of arterial lines, chest tubes, perform percussion and vibration treatments.
9. **Weight-Bearing:** Respiratory Therapy students shall possess the ability to lift and/or manipulate 45-50 lbs. For example: position patients/clients, move equipment.
10. **Cognitive Abilities:** Respiratory Therapy students shall possess ability to be oriented to time, person and place, organize responsibilities, and make decisions. For example: student shall assess patient/client complaints and implement appropriate treatment.
11. **Occupational Exposures:** Respiratory Therapy students may be exposed to communicable diseases and/or body fluids, toxic substances, medicinal preparations and latex. Students shall use appropriate precautions at all times. For example: student may be assigned a client/patient with a communicable disease and shall provide total care using universal precautions.