Professional Guidelines

CRTA Continuing Competence Requirements & Professional Standards

Maintaining Professional Excellence in Respiratory Therapy

Competency Maintenance & Lifelong Learning

Self-Assessment and Evidence-Informed Practice Strategy

Commitment to Professional Excellence

Registrants must demonstrate an ongoing commitment to lifelong learning and maintaining currency in practice, which is inherent in the privilege of being a self-governing profession. It is required that registrants invest the time, effort, and resources needed to maintain and improve competencies required in their specific area of practice.

Organized & Focused Strategy Framework

STAGE 01 Annual Assessment	STAGE 02 Target Identification	STAGE 03 Strategy & Action
Self-Assessment & Feedback	**Competency Requirements**	**Implementation & Change**
Conduct annual competency assessments to determine current strengths and learning needs. Registrants promote self-assessment and gather feedback from others to review their practice.	Use evidence-informed practices to determine specific competency requirements. Identify precise gaps and learning needs relative to the practitioner's specific scope and area of practice.	Develop and execute a comprehensive strategy to address requirements. Undertake targeted measures based on evidence-informed practices to implement necessary changes in daily practice.

Continuing Competence Requirements

To maintain professional standing, registrants must submit evidence in a form satisfactory to the Registrar of having met specific requirements established by the Council. These dual requirements ensure that all practicing members maintain both theoretical knowledge and practical clinical experience at a standard that ensures safe and effective patient care.

2-Year Educational Target

48 Hours

Minimum educational credit hours completed in the 2-year period immediately preceding the practice permit renewal application. Regulated members on the general register may undertake various developmental activities per Council rules.

4-Year Practice Cycle

1,500 Hours

In addition to the educational credit target, registrants must fulfill practice requirements by completing a minimum of 1,500 hours within their scope of practice over the preceding 4-year cycle.

Both theoretical knowledge and practical clinical experience must be evidenced to a standard satisfactory to the Registrar upon renewal.

Approved Educational Credit Activities

Regulated members on the general register have multiple avenues to obtain educational credit hours through approved developmental activities. The Council establishes the rules governing eligibility.

Category 01

Scientific & Clinical Courses

Attendance at respiratory health-related scientific or clinical courses specifically designed to enhance professional development.

Helps registrants stay updated on clinical advancements and apply new evidence-based practices directly to care.

Category 02

PD Practice Sessions

Professional development sessions that focus specifically on respiratory therapists' clinical practice issues.

Provides targeted, practical insights to address key professional challenges and standard updates in day-to-day practice.

Category 03

Study Clubs

Active participation and attendance at a respiratory health-related study club is recognized as a valid activity.

Offers a collaborative, structured environment to share knowledge with peers and foster continuous learning.

Academic, Scholarly & Instructional Pursuits

Formal Education

Academic Studies

Registrants may earn credits through the successful completion of a course leading to a respiratory therapy baccalaureate degree or the successful completion of a course in graduate studies.

Scholarly Work

Research & Publications

Credits are awarded for presenting a research paper or abstract at a scientific meeting, or through publication in a peer-reviewed journal or the College newsletter.

Teaching & Knowledge Transfer

Instructional Activities

Providing respiratory health-related presentations to regulated members or other groups qualifies for educational credits, provided these presentations are beyond regular employment obligations.

These activities promote the advancement of the profession's body of knowledge and encourage members to contribute to the broader respiratory therapy community.

Continuing Competence & Learning Pathways

Independent Pathways

Self-Directed Study

A significant component of continuing competence is the ability to independently identify and address knowledge gaps. Registrants may engage in self-directed study to enhance professional development and earn educational credit hours.

This requires members to use an organized and focused approach to assess their level of competence, identify their specific learning needs based on evidence-informed practices, and develop a strategy to address those requirements.

Specialized Initiatives

Pre-Approved Competency Projects

In addition to standard self-directed study, registrants may pursue other specialized activities provided they secure prior approval by the Council, the Registrar, or the Competence Committee.

This flexibility ensures that registrants can tailor their professional development to their unique practice environments and career trajectories while maintaining alignment with the overarching competency standards established by the regulatory body.

Record-Keeping & Audit Compliance

5-Year Record Retention Requirement

Strict record-keeping is a mandatory component of the continuing competence program. Complete activity records and supporting documentation must be kept for a period of 5 years after the registration cycle in which they are developed.

Annual Audit Verification Process (5%+ Selection)

To verify compliance, the regulatory body conducts an annual audit process where up to 5% or more of the membership is audited annually. During this audit, selected members must provide their complete activity records and supporting documentation to verify the submitted hours and developmental activities.

Registrant Responsibility & Compliance Findings

It is the responsibility of the registrant to ensure that all documentation is accurate, well-organized, and readily available upon request. Failure to maintain these records for the full 5-year period can result in non-compliance findings during the annual audit process.

Continuing Competence Program

Program Confidentiality & Protection

"The regulatory body recognizes the sensitive nature of professional assessments and learning plans. Therefore, all information related to a registrant's participation in a continuing competence program is strictly confidential."

Protected Record Details

All details submitted regarding continuing competency, including annual competency assessments, identified learning needs, and specific developmental activities undertaken, remain strictly confidential and are protected.

Trust & Professional Growth

This confidentiality ensures that registrants can engage in honest and thorough self-assessments, accurately identifying areas for improvement without fear of the information being used inappropriately.

The protection of this competency assessment data is foundational to maintaining trust in the continuing competence program and encouraging genuine professional growth and lifelong learning among all regulated members.

Continuing Competency Non-Compliance

Adherence to the continuing competency requirements is mandatory for maintaining the privilege to practice. Members who fail to submit evidence in a form satisfactory to the Registrar of having met the requirements, including the minimum 48 educational credit hours, will be subject to a mandatory review process before any permit renewal can be considered.

Mandatory Review & Permit Renewal Withheld

Registrants who do not meet the continuing competency requirements will not be granted a practice permit renewal until they have met with the Registration/Continuing Competence Committee.

This committee is responsible for reviewing cases of non-compliance and determining the appropriate course of action. The committee's review process is designed to address deficiencies in a member's continuing competence portfolio and ensure that all practicing respiratory therapists meet the established standards for safe and effective care.

Non-Compliance Decision Pathways

STAGE 1

Conditional Permit

Permit issued subject to conditions imposed by the Registrar, or specific timelines for continuing competency requirements.

STAGE 2

Suspension

Practice permit suspended until the registrant successfully completes competency requirements or is enrolled in studies.

STAGE 3

Permit Refusal

In severe non-compliance cases, the committee may refuse the application for a practice permit entirely.

TRANSPARENCY MANDATE

Mandatory Written Reasons Required

If the Registrar, Registration Committee, or Competence Committee suspends or refuses a practice permit, or imposes conditions upon it, they must explicitly include written reasons in the official decision.

Mandatory Escalation to the Complaints Director

Statutory Referral Triggers

Certain behaviors and unresolved issues within the continuing competence program trigger mandatory escalation. These referrals ensure that serious issues of misrepresentation, unresolved incompetence, or unprofessional conduct are handled through the formal disciplinary and complaints process.

Trigger 01

False or Misleading Information

Mandatory referral where a registrant has intentionally provided false or misleading information regarding their continuing competence activities.

Trigger 02

Unremedied Lack of Competence

Referrals are required if a registrant displays a lack of competence that has not been remedied by participating in the continuing competency program.

Trigger 03

Registrant Incapacitation

Referral to the Complaints Director must be made if there are reasonable grounds to believe or indications that the registrant may be incapacitated.

Trigger 04

Unprofessional Conduct

Required if a registrant displays conduct constituting unprofessional conduct that cannot be readily remedied through the continuing competence program.

Continuing Competence Governance

Regulatory Governance

Council Rule-Making Authority

The Council holds authority to establish rules for the continuing competence program, including:

- • Eligibility & credit hour value of activities
- • Categories of required professional development
- • Caps on credit hours within specific activity types

Member Engagement Mandate

To ensure member engagement, proposed rules and amendments must be distributed to all regulated members on the general register for review prior to adoption.

Member Consultation & Rule Adoption Workflow

1. Distribution
Proposed rules distributed to members on general register.

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2. 30-Day Review Period
A minimum 30-day window allowed for feedback and comments.

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3. Council Establishment
Rules established after considering all member feedback.