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TITLE: DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE OF RESPIRATORY THERAPISTS IN THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

AUTHORS (LAST NAME, FIRST NAME): Armaghan, Rebecca¹; Greeseey, Brittany^{2, 3}; Juby, Jerin⁴; Amador-Castaneda, Javier⁵; Bollinger, Allison⁶; Roberts, Karsten⁵; Newberry, Rachel^{7, 8}; Harshberger, Mandy⁹; Radabaugh, Nathan³; Pierce, Margie⁵; Napolitano, Natalie¹

INSTITUTIONS (ALL):

1. Respiratory Therapy Department, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA, United States.
2. Respiratory Therapy Program, Millersville University, Millersville, PA, United States.
3. Respiratory Therapy Department, Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Hershey, PA, United States.
4. Respiratory Therapy Department, Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Philadelphia, PA, United States.
5. Respiratory Therapy Department, Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, United States.
6. Respiratory Therapy Department, VA Medical Center, Lebanon, PA, United States.
7. Respiratory Therapy Department, Wellspan York Hospital, York, PA, United States.
8. Respiratory Therapy Program, York College, York, PA, United States.
9. Respiratory Therapy Program, Reading Community College, Reading, PA, United States.

PRESENTATION TYPE: Original study

CURRENT CATEGORY: Management

Open Forum Poster Consideration: No

ABSTRACT BODY:

Abstract Body: Introduction: The Pennsylvania Respiratory Research Collaborative (PRRC) formed in January 2017 for the purpose of providing mentorship and opportunities to participate in statewide research, quality improvement, and evidence-based practice projects. The inaugural project was designed to investigate and describe the practice of respiratory therapists in Pennsylvania.

Methods: A survey related to the practice and business of inpatient respiratory therapy departments was developed and sent to managers/directors of every hospital within the state of Pennsylvania. Survey period was October 2017 – April 2018. Survey committee members connected with Pennsylvania hospitals to determine contacts for the respiratory therapy department and to ask the manager/director to complete the electronic survey. A total of 188 hospitals with inpatient Respiratory Therapy departments were contacted and we were unable to obtain contacts for the manager/director 29 of the hospitals.

Results: Out of 188 hospitals in the state, 101 (53.7%) responded. Of the hospitals that responded, 52% were academic centers. Clinical ladders are utilized in 29% of hospitals, 72% of which are academic centers. For staff positions, 50% prefer BS degree and 78% prefer RRT. Protocols are utilized in 74% of hospitals with the most common being: Ventilator (92%), Bronchodilator (79%), Airway Clearance (56%), Hyperinflation (41%), and Disease-Specific (23%). Nontraditional procedures are performed by respiratory therapists in 84% of the hospitals. The most common being: EKG's (35%) and advanced procedures including Intubation (20%), Arterial Lines (14%), Blind BAL's (14%), and EEG's (12%). Respiratory Therapists are utilized in 42% of hospitals. The most common alternative roles are: Patient Educator (29%), Outpatient clinics (21%), Patient Navigators (19%), Transport (14%), ECMO (6%), Case managers (5%), Research (5%), and Telehealth (2%).

Conclusion: The practice of respiratory therapists in the state of Pennsylvania varies greatly with a small number of hospitals practicing at the apex of the profession. Additional research is needed to understand variations in practice.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST: No financial interest

IRB & HIPAA DECLARATION: No

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