

RCP Role in Ground Transport: CE Course

NCRCB Approval # 4142016

Preceptor/Facilitator: Determined by facility

Course Description: This preapproved NCRCB CE course is intended for formal and informal educational settings. The course is designed to be a group discussion after reviewing the accompanying material and answering the questions regarding the **RCP's Role in Ground Transport**.

Credit Hours: 2 Continuing Education Credits-Please be advised that all participants claiming credit must complete the web based test located at:

<https://www.classmarker.com/online-test/start/?quiz=hgm57168127c76cc>

Credit may be claimed provided that the questions are completed and correct. You must print your results as your record. When claiming direct interaction credit, you must have the preceptor or facilitator submit a roster at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/S9Z57GP>

Objectives: Participants will be able to:

- 1) Recognize the roles and responsibilities of the RCP during ground transport.**
- 2) Determine the level of competency required to provide ground transport.**
- 3) Discuss roles and responsibilities of the RCP Supervisor and Manager for ground transport.**
- 4) Understand the impact and implications of qualified practice by the RCP as related to the statute requirements to protect the public.**

Disclaimer:

In establishing the North Carolina Respiratory Care Board, the General Assembly noted that mandatory licensure of respiratory care practitioners is necessary to ensure competency in our profession. The respiratory care profession which is evolving rapidly in terms of the techniques applied and settings where it is practiced. NCRCB has launched a number of initiatives to bring attention to issues that merit continuing emphasis for practitioners. One particularly critical area is ambulance transportation, and the role of the respiratory care practitioner in those transports.

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In the Summer of 2013, a teenage boy died after an ambulance transport in eastern North Carolina. During the transport he had been re-intubated by a respiratory care practitioner who was on the ambulance. This case was resolved in a confidential settlement between the family and the sending hospital and there was no judicial determination of fault; but his family has concluded that his death was a result of a faulty re-intubation.

The young man's family has established The Do-it-for Drew Foundation in his memory, and the foundation has commissioned videos on the subject of his ambulance transportation and the intubation of patients. Although NCRCB does not endorse the conclusions reached in the videos about the care that was provided to this young man, the Board recognizes how important it is that all respiratory care practitioners, and particularly those who are new to the profession, have a clear understanding of the critical importance of their services. In addition, the Board believes that the videos can be a valuable adjunct to a respiratory care training curriculum. Therefore, the NC Respiratory Care Board is providing this link to the videos to heighten awareness and promote discussion about the responsibilities of respiratory care practitioners in emergency settings.

The Do-it-for Drew videos are recommended by the Board as an educational tool in the formal and informal educational settings. The NC Respiratory Care Board does not endorse the accuracy of the videos. The videos are recommended in a formal or informal educational setting to promote discussion about the responsibilities of the respiratory care practitioners in emergency settings. The videos and accompanying course material are offered to you, the user ("User"), conditioned on acceptance of the terms, conditions, and notices contained herein, without modification. User access and use of this material constitutes acceptance of these terms and conditions.

While NCRCB makes every effort to present accurate and reliable information on this web site, the NCRCB does not endorse, approve, or certify such information, nor does it guarantee the accuracy, completeness, efficacy, timeliness, or correct sequencing of information contained within the Do-it-for Drew foundation website or videos. Use of such is voluntary, and reliance on it should only be undertaken after an independent review of its accuracy, completeness, efficacy, and timeliness. Reference herein to any specific commercial product, process, or service by trade name, trademark, service mark, manufacturer, or otherwise does not constitute or imply endorsement,

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recommendation, or favoring by NCRCB. The NCRCB (including its employees and agents) assumes no responsibility for consequences resulting from the use of the information herein, [or from the use of the information obtained at linked Internet addresses,] or in any respect for the content of such information, including (but not limited to) errors or omissions, the accuracy or reasonableness of factual or scientific assumptions, studies or conclusions, the defamatory nature of statements, ownership of copyright or other intellectual property rights, and the violation of property, privacy, or personal rights of others. NCRCB is not responsible for, and expressly disclaims all liability for, damages of any kind arising out of use, reference to, or reliance on such information. No guarantees or warranties, including (but not limited to) any express or implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular use or purpose, are made by NCRCB with respect to such information.

- ☐ Before reviewing the guidelines below, Please watch the following video at <https://vimeo.com/126979781>
- ☐ You may also read the patient story at http://doitfordrew.org/?page_id=151
- ☐ The Board would like your department to use these videos to stimulate conversations regarding the practices at your facility.
- ☐ Note: Once complete, go to: <https://www.classmarker.com/online-test/start/?quiz=hgm57168127c76cc> to complete the test.

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Respiratory Care patients transported by Ambulance Providers licensed under Chapter 131E of the North Carolina General Statutes often require the services of the Respiratory Care Practitioner licensed by the NC Respiratory Care Board. The facility from which the patient is being transported (the “Transporting Facility”) typically makes the transportation arrangements and is responsible for safe transfer of the patient to the Receiving Facility. Transports often arise in an urgent situation which may require the provision of one or more of the following procedures during the transport of the patient: mechanical ventilation, inhaled Nitric Oxide, high frequency jet ventilation, helium/oxygen therapy and advanced airway care. Due to these specialized care needs, the patient’s attending physician may request that a licensed RCP participate as a member of the transport team.

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The scope of practice of Respiratory Care, as defined in the North Carolina Respiratory Care Practice Act § 90-648 (10), is not limited to institutional settings. Non-institutional settings like a Ground Ambulance certainly can be appropriate settings for the Practice of Respiratory Care. Medical literature recognizes that respiratory care practitioners are among the clinical personnel who may play an important role on the multidisciplinary team that is involved in transporting patients from one institution to another.¹⁻⁹ In addition, the rules promulgated by the Office of Emergency Medical Services (“OEMS”) in the Division of Health Service Regulation of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services recognize that respiratory therapists are among the care givers who may play a role in the transportation of patients. See 10A NCAC 13P .0301 (b).

The North Carolina Respiratory Care Board determined in 2015 that so long as the criteria set forth in this Declaratory Ruling are followed, the performance of any of the following Respiratory Care procedures (“the Approved Ground Ambulance Procedures”) by an RCP during a Ground Ambulance transport is within the scope of practice defined by the North Carolina Respiratory Care Practice Act under N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-648:

- Mechanical ventilation;
- Inhaled Nitric Oxide,
- High frequency jet ventilation;
- Helium / oxygen therapy; and
- Advanced airway care.

The Board is charged by law under N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-647 with protecting the public from the unqualified practice of respiratory care and from unprofessional conduct by its licensees. Thus, the Board’s fundamental mission and foremost concern is the health, safety and welfare of the public. The transport of critical care patients and provision of Respiratory Care to a patient during a Ground Ambulance transport requires a well-organized plan in place. Therefore, the Board concludes that the following guidelines must be followed by any RCP who provides Respiratory Care to patients who are being transported by Ground Ambulance must comply with the the Ground Ambulance Declaratory Ruling:

- The RCP and the Respiratory Care Director or Manager at the Transporting Facility or their designee must assess the patient’s clinical needs and communicate with the patient’s attending physician before the transport begins, to review any clinical or safety concerns that relate to the transport, including the presence, accessibility and proper function of any Respiratory Care Equipment that is anticipated to be needed in providing care to each patient on the

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ambulance. This is a shared responsibility with the other health care providers involved.

- During any Ground Ambulance transport, the RCP must act under the direct orders of a physician and under written policies, procedures or protocols established by the Transporting Facility for each procedure that can reasonably be expected to be required during the transport.
- Any RCP who provides any of these Approved Ground Ambulance Procedures must closely monitor patients receiving Respiratory Care and must be able to recognize the associated complications, consult immediately with a physician within the EMS System when indicated, and take appropriate actions under Medical Direction.
- Any RCP who provides any of these Approved Ground Ambulance Procedures must:
 - have an active unencumbered license issued by the Board, and
 - be credentialed as an advanced level respiratory therapist with the National Board for Respiratory Care as a Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT); or
 - be credentialed as a respiratory therapist with the National Board for Respiratory Care as a Certified Respiratory Therapist (CRT); and
- Any RCP who is expected to provide any of these Approved Ground Ambulance Procedures must also have completed a Baccalaureate Degree in Respiratory Care; OR in the case of an RCP who has an Associate Degree from a recognized Respiratory Care Program, must have a minimum of two years' experience in critical and emergency care after graduation; OR in the case of an RCP who has a Certificate from a recognized Respiratory Care Program, must have a minimum of four years' experience in critical and emergency care after graduation.
- The Respiratory Care Director or Manager at the Transporting Facility must ensure that the RCP selected for the transport has demonstrated, on an annual basis, competency to perform each procedure that can reasonably be expected to be required during a particular transport and that the competency is documented on file. The RCP and the Transporting Facility must each maintain any documentation required by this ruling for a period of at least three years, and upon request by the Board, provide a copy of all certifications and competencies required by this ruling to the Board.

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- The Respiratory Care Director or Manager or their designee at the Transporting Facility should select the RCP for a transport by taking into account an RCP's training, experience with particular types of patients (e.g. Pediatric, NICU, Adult), other clinical needs at the Transporting Facility, as well as other medically indicated criteria relating to the circumstances of the particular patient:
 - An RCP who is expected to provide any of these Approved Ground Ambulance Procedures during a transport for adult patients must have an Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) certification by the American Heart Association.
 - An RCP who is expected to provide any of these Approved Ground Ambulance Procedures during a transport for pediatric patients must have a Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) certification by the American Heart Association.
 - An RCP who is expected to provide any of these Approved Ground Ambulance Procedures during a transport for a neonatal patient must have a Neonatal Resuscitation Protocol (NRP) certification by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- The RCP may only be given primary responsibility for the Respiratory Care procedures provided and the Respiratory Care equipment utilized during the transport.