**RESPIRATORY CARE**
Associate Degree Program

**What is a Respiratory care?**
A respiratory therapist provides care for patients with lung and breathing problems. An RT works with mechanical ventilators and patient airways, and does analysis of blood to determine patient status. An RT may work in hospitals (intensive care units, emergency rooms, operating rooms, pediatric units, general floors), sleep laboratories, skilled nursing facilities, or in doctor’s offices. Starting salaries are $35,000-$42,000 per year. Learn more about the career at [www.aarc.org](http://www.aarc.org) The GTC Respiratory Care program requires all students to pass 3 comprehensive exams to graduate.

**Length of Program**
4 semesters (not including prerequisite courses); Program courses must be taken in sequence within the prescribed time frame.

**Semester Program Begins**
Spring Semesters; Full time; Day classes only

**Minimum Age Requirement**
18 years of age at the start of program

**General Admission Application Process**
1. Apply to Gwinnett Technical College at [www.GwinnettTech.edu](http://www.GwinnettTech.edu), submit all transcripts from high school and previous college work, and take the Accuplacer test if required. **You must be accepted into Gwinnett Technical College prior to applying to a program of study.**
2. Applicants are initially accepted into the Healthcare Science Certificate program while completing the required prerequisite courses

**Program Application Process**
1. All applicants are required to submit a program application packet. Forms are available online at [http://www.gwinnetttech.edu/enrollment/forms-documents/](http://www.gwinnetttech.edu/enrollment/forms-documents/).
2. **Spring 2018** semester admission, the program application must be turned in by **October 10, 2017**. All prerequisite courses must be completed by the end of Fall semester.

**Program Prerequisites (Minimum 2.5 GPA)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Course(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All of the following:</td>
<td>ENGL 1101</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MATH 1111 or MATH 1113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CHEM1211** and CHEM 1211/L** OR CHEM 1151** and CHEM 1151/L**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIOL 2113* and 2113/L*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIOL 2114* and 2114/L*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BIOL 2117* and 2117/L*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These courses cannot be more than 5 years old at time of program application.

**Additional Courses**
Required for completion of the degree, but are **NOT** pre-requisites.

- One elective from Area II
- One elective from Area IV

First Year Experience Seminar - FYES 1000
(Students are encouraged to take these courses prior to the program start date).

**Competitive Admissions**
Acceptance into the Respiratory Care program is based on: GPA of all prerequisite courses.

**Program Costs & Requirements**
Uniform scrubs, shoes, lab coat, stethoscope & instruments; $50 AARC membership; books; liability insurance; criminal background check; drug screening; immunizations for hospital clinicals; $500 test package at least $390 for 2 NBRC exams. Costs are approximated and subject to change.

For more information, contact: Kim Smith, Program Support Specialist, [kimberlysmith@gwinnetttech.edu](mailto:kimberlysmith@gwinnetttech.edu), 678-226-6966.

For admission and enrollment, contact:
Enrollment Support Center in Building 100 or at [healthteam@GwinnettTech.edu](mailto:healthteam@GwinnettTech.edu)

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**INFORMATION SESSIONS**

**Lawrenceville Campus:** 4th Thursday of each month at 4:00 p.m. Building 200, Room 229

**Alpharetta-North Fulton Campus:** March 8th and April 12th at 6:00 p.m.
Please call 678-226-6751 to reserve a seat for the next meeting.

**Alpharetta-North Fulton Campus:** 1st Tuesday of every month from 10 AM – 2 PM staff will be available to answer questions. Please contact Kim Smith ([kimberlysmith@GwinnettTech.edu](mailto:kimberlysmith@GwinnettTech.edu)) to make an appointment
Respiratory Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quick Facts</th>
<th>2015 Median Pay</th>
<th>$27.78 per hour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entry level education</td>
<td>Associate’s degree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of jobs, 2014</td>
<td>120,700</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Job growth, 2014-2024</td>
<td>12% (faster than average)</td>
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</tbody>
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Nature of the Work

Respiratory therapists (RTs)—also known as respiratory care practitioners—evaluate, treat, and care for patients with breathing or other cardiopulmonary disorders. Practicing under the direction of a physician, RTs assume primary responsibility for all respiratory care therapeutic treatments and diagnostic procedures, including the supervision of respiratory therapy technicians. They consult with physicians and other healthcare staff to help develop and modify patient care plans. RTs also provide complex therapy requiring considerable independent judgment, such as caring for patients on life support in ICU.

RTs evaluate and treat all types of patients, ranging from premature infants whose lungs are not fully developed to elderly people whose lungs are diseased. They provide temporary relief to patients with chronic asthma or emphysema and give emergency care to patients who are victims of a heart attack, stroke, drowning, or shock. To treat patients, RTs use oxygen or oxygen mixtures, chest physiotherapy, and aerosol medications—liquid medications suspended in a gas that forms a mist which is inhaled. Therapists connect patients who cannot breathe on their own to ventilators that deliver pressurized oxygen into the lungs.

Therapists who work in home care teach patients and their families to use ventilators and other life-support systems. In addition, these therapists visit patients in their homes to inspect and clean equipment, evaluate the home environment, and ensure that patients have sufficient knowledge of their diseases and the proper use of their medications and equipment.

Work Environment

RTs generally work between 36 and 40 hours a week, and may work evenings, nights, and/or weekends. They spend long periods standing and walking between patients’ rooms. In an emergency, therapists work under the stress of the situation. RTs employed in home healthcare must travel frequently to patients’ homes. Therapists are trained to work with gases stored under pressure. As in many other health occupations, RTs are exposed to infectious diseases.

Employment

RTs held about 120,700 jobs in 2014. About 81 percent of jobs were in hospitals, mainly in departments of respiratory care, anesthesiology, or pulmonary medicine. Most of the remaining jobs were in offices of physicians or other health practitioners, consumer-goods rental firms that supply respiratory equipment for home use, nursing care facilities, employment services, and home healthcare services.

Job Outlook

Employment of RTs is expected to grow by 12 percent from 2014 to 2024, faster than the average for all occupations. The increasing demand will come from substantial growth in the middle-aged and elderly population—a development that will heighten the incidence of cardiopulmonary disease. Growth in demand also will result from the expanding role of respiratory therapists in case management, disease prevention, emergency care, and the early detection of pulmonary disorders.

Earnings

Median annual wages of wage-and-salary respiratory therapists were $57,790 in May 2015. The lowest 10 percent earned less than $41,970 and the highest 10 percent earned more than $80,440.

Research the Career


Accreditation: The Respiratory Care program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) 1248 Harwood Road, Texas 76021-4244, phone 817-283-2835 Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care Programmatic outcomes data can be found at http://www.coarc.com/47.html