

Proposed Program:
Bachelor's Degree - Respiratory Therapy
Phase I Proposal

Submitted by:

North Central Missouri College
St. Louis Community College
Metropolitan Community College
Ozarks Technical Community College
East Central College
Moberly Area Community College
State Fair Community College
Three Rivers College

June 2020

Executive Summary

Missouri needs more respiratory therapists. The demand for respiratory therapists is expected to increase 28% in Missouri by the year 2026. The recent coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the crucial role these professionals play in the health of Missourians as they have battled on the frontlines of this disease.

Accreditation standards for respiratory care education programs, as established by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC), have changed. Beginning July 1, 2018, community colleges who seek to establish new or expand existing respiratory therapy programs must now offer baccalaureate degrees. As a result, community colleges are unable to adequately respond to Missouri's hospitals and health systems experiencing a serious shortage of qualified respiratory therapists.

In addition, the American Association of Respiratory Care, has established a goal of the baccalaureate degree being the entry requirement to the respiratory therapy profession by 2030.

Fortunately, in 2018, the Missouri State Legislature passed Senate Bill 807, which establishes that Missouri's community colleges may offer bachelor's degrees "in circumstances where the level of education required in a field for accreditation or licensure increases to the baccalaureate degree level..." The changes to the respiratory therapy profession present the exact set of conditions that exemplify why this legislation passed. Missouri's community colleges would not be seeking approval to offer bachelor's degrees in respiratory therapy were it not for these changes by the accrediting agency.

Organized discussions among Missouri's community colleges began in early 2019 about how to best adapt to the CoARC accreditation changes. With the CoARC's new standards for accreditation, the only option available to Missouri's community colleges was to gain approval to offer baccalaureate degrees in respiratory therapy. A shortage in qualified respiratory therapists had been reported by healthcare providers across the state, with increasing requests for community colleges to expand programs or establish new ones. This year's COVID-19 pandemic has only heightened the urgency of those requests for more respiratory therapists.

Community colleges have been long-trusted partners in developing the state's workforce by offering high quality, affordable educational opportunities. In 2019, community colleges served 37% of Missouri's college students. Vital to the economic health of the state, community colleges are relied upon to provide a pipeline of skilled workers.

Missouri's community colleges seek approval to offer baccalaureate degrees in respiratory therapy. For this preliminary proposal, the submitting colleges are providing evidence collectively of statewide need, demand, and capacity. If invited to move on to Phase II of the comprehensive review process, each college (or consortium of colleges) will prepare its own proposal with evidence specific to its geographic region.

Rationale for the Proposal

State of Respiratory Therapy Education in the United States

Across the nation today, the respiratory education model is in a state of transition. Respiratory therapy education functions under the oversight of three different bodies:

- The **American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC)** is the leading national and international professional association for respiratory care.
- The **Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC)** accredits programs in respiratory care at the associate, baccalaureate, and master's degree level. The mission of the CoARC is to ensure that high quality educational programs prepare competent respiratory therapists for practice, education, research, and service.
- The **National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC)** is the credentialing arm of the profession and provides the licensure examination and awards the certified respiratory therapist (CRT) and the registered respiratory therapist (RRT) credentials. These credentials are required to work as a respiratory therapist.

Two of these organizations have recently issued position statements or changed standards related to the goal of baccalaureate entry to the profession:

- In 2019, the AARC issued a position statement that sets a goal for a baccalaureate degree to be required for entry to the profession in the year 2030 and thereafter.¹
- In 2016, the CoARC announced a change to accreditation standards for new respiratory care programs. This change to Standard 1.01 went into effect July 1, 2018. It states:

“Except as provided in the following sentence, an educational sponsor must be a post-secondary academic institution accredited by a regional or national accrediting agency that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and must award graduates of the program a baccalaureate or graduate degree upon completion of the program. For associate degree programs that applied for accreditation or were accredited prior to January 1, 2018, an educational sponsor must be a post-secondary academic institution accredited by a regional or national accrediting agency that is recognized by the USDE. These programs may continue to award graduates of the program an associate degree as long as they remain in compliance with the CoARC Standards.”²

While the CoARC states that existing associate degree programs will be supported and may remain accredited, it will no longer offer accreditation to any newly-established associate degree

¹ “Entry Requirements to Respiratory Practice: 2030 and Thereafter” American Association for Respiratory Care. 1 May 2019. <https://www.aarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/statement-entry-requirements-to-respiratory-therapy-practice-2030-and-therafter.pdf>

² “CoARC Communication to Our Communities of Interest: Response to AARC Position Statement on Respiratory Therapist Education” Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care. 1 December 2017. <https://coarc.com/CoARC/media/Documents/CoARC-Communication-Min-Degree-Requirements-1-28-16-rev-12-1-17.pdf>

program. In addition, *any expansion of an existing program is considered a new program and must graduate students with bachelor's degrees*. Given this restriction, community colleges in Missouri cannot establish new, or expand existing, programs - even within their own service area. Any program “expansion” is considered a new program under current CoARC accreditation standards.

Respiratory Therapy Education in Missouri

The table below lists Missouri institutions with respiratory therapy education programs, the degree offered, and the CoARC accreditation status:

Institution	Degree	CoARC accredited
Cape Girardeau Career and Technical Center	AS	Yes
University of Missouri-Columbia	BS - entry to practice	Yes
St. Louis College of Health Careers	AAS	Yes
St. Louis College of Health Careers	BS - degree advancement	Yes
Missouri Southern State University	AS	Yes
Concorde Career College	AS	Yes
Ozarks Technical Community College	AAS	Yes
St. Louis Community College - Forest Park	AAS	Yes
University of Missouri at Mercy Hospital	BS - Satellite	Yes
Missouri Southern State University	BS - degree advancement	No
Missouri State University	BS - degree advancement	No

Legislation Regarding Missouri Community Colleges Offering Bachelor's Degrees

In 2018, Missouri passed a law that allows Missouri's community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees under the following conditions:

- the level of education required in a field for accreditation or licensure increases to the baccalaureate level or,

- in the case of applied bachelor’s degrees, the level of education required for employment in a field increases to that level, and
- when doing so would not unnecessarily duplicate an existing program, collaboration with a university is not feasible or the approach is not a viable means of meeting the needs of students and employers.³

Based upon changes of the CoARC accreditation standards to only accredit new programs which offer a baccalaureate degree or higher, Missouri’s community colleges seek to offer baccalaureate degrees in respiratory therapy. This condition meets the letter of Senate Bill 807.

Workforce Need

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that the demand for respiratory therapists will grow 21% from 2018 to 2028, much faster than the average for all occupations. The aging population will lead to an increased demand for respiratory therapy services and treatments. The most need for respiratory therapists will be in rural areas.⁴

The Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) reports that healthcare is the top industry in the state; unfortunately, the demand for qualified healthcare providers outpaces supply. This is true for respiratory therapists as well. MERIC data indicate that the demand in Missouri for skilled respiratory therapists will grow nearly 28% by 2026, with annual vacancies numbering 220 statewide.⁵ Respiratory Therapy was identified as the sixth fastest-growing occupation in the St. Louis Region in 2017-2019 with an expected need of 50 additional respiratory therapists in that region alone.⁶ The Kansas City Region indicates a 25% growth in the demand for respiratory therapists, and the Ozark Region anticipates a 38.5% growth.⁷ In fact, MERIC identifies Respiratory Therapy as a “Top Grade Career” in every region in the state of Missouri.

However, for the last three years of IPEDS completion data, Missouri institutions have produced an average of only 163 respiratory therapy graduates annually. If the community colleges expand or offer new programs, there is potential to fill the workforce pipeline gap in this industry.

Additionally, respiratory therapy is a well-paying occupation. According to MERIC, the average entry-level salary for Respiratory Therapists is \$45,020 with an average annual wage of \$56,340.

³ Senate Bills Nos 807 and 577. 2018. <https://www.senate.mo.gov/18info/pdf-bill/tat/SB807.pdf>

⁴ Occupational Outlook Handbook: Respiratory Therapists. Bureau of Labor Statistics. June 2020. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/respiratory-therapists.htm>

⁵ Real Time Labor Market Data. Missouri Economic Research and Information Center. June 2020. <https://meric.mo.gov/media/pdf/real-time-labor-market-summary>

⁶ St Louis Region Fastest Growing Occupations 2017-2019. Missouri Economic Research and Information Center. March 2018. https://meric.mo.gov/sites/meric/files/library/fastest_growing_stl_2017-2019.pdf

⁷ Regional Profiles. Missouri Economic Research and Information Center. June 2020. <https://meric.mo.gov/regional-profiles>

It is important to note that these data were compiled before the recent novel coronavirus pandemic, which has highlighted the need for skilled and highly-trained respiratory therapists who work on the frontlines of the fight against this illness. Burnout is reported to be extremely high in the profession due to the stress of long hours, shortage of ventilators, and lack of adequate personal protective equipment.⁸

Phase I Proposal

- A. Evidence that the proposing institution has explored the feasibility of collaboration with other institutions.

The submitting colleges have made and continue outreach to collaborate with colleges and universities around the state. Each college has approached its current largest transfer partners, as well as the University of Missouri system. Documentation of those conversations is offered in Appendix A.

At the present time, community colleges remain in active discussions regarding collaborative partnerships. Because of the unique circumstances in each geographic region of the state, and due to the unique partnerships between each community college and nearby four-year institution, these collaborative agreements, if reached, will be detailed in Phase II of the Comprehensive Review process. However, in all cases, community colleges seek approval to offer the baccalaureate degree, either alone or jointly with the partner institution. This is due to the coming requirement of all entering respiratory therapists to have a baccalaureate degree by 2030, as stated by the AARC. Should a university partner wish to discontinue the relationship established in a collaborative agreement, the community college will need to maintain the ability to sustain the program and offer the degree.

Collaborative agreements will be mutually-beneficial to all involved signatories to the agreements and will be created with the purpose of providing a high-quality educational experience for the respiratory therapy student in a cost-effective manner. Any collaborative agreements will also need CoARC approval.

- B. Alignment with *Blueprint for Higher Education* goals.

Missouri's community colleges have been crucial partners in Missouri's Big Goal that 60 percent of adults have a two- or four-year degree or certificate by 2025. In 2019, community college enrollments accounted for 37% of Missouri's college students.⁹ The goals of the *Blueprint for Higher Education* align with the elements of this proposal.

⁸ "Even After the Coronavirus Pandemic, America Can't Breathe Easy." US News and World Report. 1 April 2020. <https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/articles/2020-04-01/coronavirus-pandemic-exposes-need-for-respiratory-therapists>

⁹ "Trends in Headcount Enrollment, Fall 2014-2019: Public Institutions." Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development. https://dhewd.mo.gov/data/documents/Fall2019enrollmentreport_fin.xlsx

Attainment

Community colleges in Missouri wish to expand their capacity to train more respiratory therapists and serve the areas of the state where these professionals are needed most. However, without approval to offer respiratory therapy degrees at the baccalaureate level, this increased capacity will not be achieved. We anticipate providing a minimum of an additional 50 seats annually once approved to offer bachelor's degrees. This moves Missouri closer to its goal, and fills an important workforce need.

Affordability

Missouri's community colleges will offer the bachelor's degree in Respiratory Therapy at regular per-credit-hour tuition rates. According to the Missouri Comprehensive Fee Survey for Public Institutions of Higher Education (FY 2020), Missouri's community colleges consistently offer affordable educational opportunities to students. The average total tuition and required fees charged to a typical full-time, in-district student is \$3,985 per year. The average annual total tuition and required fees charged to a typical full-time, resident student at a four-year, public institution in Missouri is more than double that at \$8,653 per year. Community colleges can become the linchpin in filling the skills gap for respiratory therapists across the state in the most cost-effective manner.

Quality

Missouri's community colleges are strong drivers of the state's economy. They have a consistent track record offering high-quality education and training opportunities to produce a qualified and highly skilled workforce. Respiratory Therapy programs at Missouri's community colleges are no exception. For example, the respiratory therapy program at Ozarks Technical Community College is the only associate-level program in the United States to receive the CoARC Distinguished RRT Credentialing Success Award for the last nine years in a row. The respiratory therapy program at St. Louis Community College has recently met the standards required to achieve this distinction. Below is data from the 2019 and 2020 *Report on Current Status* as evidence of program quality:

St. Louis Community College

	Retention	Job Placement	RRT Credentialing	TMC High Cut Score Pass Rate	Employer Satisfaction	Graduate Satisfaction
2019	85%	83%	87%	91%	100%	100%
2020	83%	84%	92%	96%	100%	100%

(These data reflect a rolling three-year average).

Ozarks Technical Community College

	Retention	Job Placement	RRT Credentialing	TMC High Cut Score Pass Rate	Employer Satisfaction	Graduate Satisfaction
2019	91%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2020	93%	98%	94%	96%	100%	100%

(These data reflect a rolling three-year average)

The CoARC Entry-to-Practice Accreditation Standards state the following in regards to the qualifications of faculty in a bachelor's or master's respiratory care program:¹⁰

Standards 2.02/2.08: The Program Director (PD) and Director of Clinical Education (DCE) of a bachelor's or master's program must have earned at least a master's degree from an academic institution accredited by a regional or national accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE).

Standards 2.03/2.09: The PD and DCE must:

- hold a valid Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) credential and current state license;
- have a minimum of four (4) years' experience as a Registered Respiratory Therapist with at least two (2) years in clinical respiratory care;
- have a minimum of two (2) years' experience teaching either as an appointed faculty member in a CoARC accredited respiratory care program or as a clinical instructor/preceptor for students of such programs;
- complete the CoARC key personnel training program

Community colleges with existing respiratory therapy programs have highly-qualified faculty who **meet or exceed** the required levels of education and experience to teach at the baccalaureate level. Missouri's community colleges who seek to create new programs have made the commitment to hire those with the necessary qualifications.

Research and Innovation

Research is an important component of existing respiratory therapy programs. According to the *AARC Issue Paper - Entry to Practice in Respiratory Therapy*,

“Advances in technology, disease management, telemedicine, patient navigation, disease protocols, evidence-based medicine, palliative care, and clinical research now are mainstays in medicine and clinical practice. The future demands respiratory therapists to

¹⁰ “Accreditation Standards for Entry into Respiratory Care Professional Practice” Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care. 2020. <https://www.coarc.com/News-and-Events/CoARC-Entry-Standards-7-1-2020.aspx>

be well versed in these areas of patient care in order to remain relevant members of the interprofessional health care team.”¹¹

The AARC organized a series of conferences (2015 and Beyond Conferences) to address many issues including the roles and responsibilities of respiratory therapists in the future as well as the competencies required for RTs to succeed. In the article related to competencies that would be required of RTs, the following is stated:

“The information age of the future will be replete with changes in the scope of practice. The science of respiratory care will continue to expand at the same pace as medicine. Projections regarding the profession must incorporate new technology, new therapeutic approaches, and data management skills, which the future RT will need to be successful in the workplace. Clinical decisions will be increasingly data driven; with evidence-based medicine guiding the activities of the therapist. The need for therapists to be actively involved in research will continue to grow. The use of protocols to guide respiratory care within and outside the intensive care unit (ICU) will continue to expand.”¹²

One of the major competency areas determined essential was Competency Area III: Evidence-Based Medicine and Respiratory Care Protocols, which includes the ability of respiratory therapists to review and critique published research, explain the meaning of general statistical tests, and apply evidence-based medicine to clinical practice.

Though existing respiratory therapy programs integrate research opportunities for students, current restrictions on credit hours in an associate level respiratory care program make it difficult to provide students the necessary time to learn and practice these critical research skills.

Investment, Advocacy and Partnerships

Healthcare providers across Missouri are enthusiastic supporters of this proposal. They are in the difficult position of trying to provide the best level of care to Missourians, yet they are hurting due to the shortage of qualified respiratory therapists. Health care organizations and hospitals - from large to small - continually ask community colleges to help develop a pipeline of skilled professionals by expanding existing or beginning new programs, but community colleges are now unable to respond to that need. Letters of support in Appendix B are evidence of their need and their support.

Evidence of Institutional Capacity

(I). Assessment of the institution’s capacity to offer the new program in terms of general, academic, and student service support, including faculty resources that are appropriate for the

¹¹ “Issue Paper: Entry to Respiratory Therapy Practice 2030” American Association for Respiratory Care. September 2019. <https://www.aarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/issue-paper-executive-summary-entry-to-respiratory-therapy-practice-2030.pdf>

¹² Barnes, Thomas; Gale, David; Kacmarek, Robert, Kageler, Woody. “Competencies Needed by Graduate Respiratory Therapists 2015 and Beyond” *Respiratory Care*. May 2010. American Association for Respiratory Care. https://www.aarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/2015_competencies_needed.pdf

program being proposed (e.g., faculty credentials, use of adjunct faculty, and faculty teaching workloads):

Each community college will detail its own institutional capacity in the Phase II proposal; however, Missouri's community colleges are all accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, which establishes standards for academic and student support services and faculty credentials.

The Higher Learning Commission requires accredited institutions to provide regular evidence to indicate compliance with its Assumed Practices and Criteria for Accreditation. Institutions must demonstrate that they have the resources, structures, and processes sufficient to fulfill their missions, improve the quality of their educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities (Criteria for Accreditation 5). They must also ensure that they have sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff (Criteria for Accreditation 3.C.1) and that all instructors and student services staff are appropriately qualified (Criteria for Accreditation 3.C.3/3.C.7). All institutions must demonstrate responsibility for the quality of their educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and evaluate their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement (Criteria for Accreditation 4).¹³

In addition, the CoARC accreditation standards require accredited institutions to demonstrate their capacity to meet academic and student support needs. The CoARC standard 2.01 Institutional Resources Interpretive Guideline states that sponsor institutions "should have the financial resources required to develop and sustain the program on a continuing basis" and that this includes academic support resources, in addition to qualified faculty.

Finally, all of the submitting community colleges have existing healthcare programs that are fully accredited by industry accrediting agencies. In order to maintain those accreditations, they must meet specific outcome metrics for retention, faculty qualifications, and licensure pass rate.

(II). Comprehensive cost/revenue analysis summarizing the actual costs for the program and information about how the institution intends to fund and sustain the program

It is important to note that most Allied Health training programs are expensive to implement and sustain. However, they are offered to serve the state's need for a skilled healthcare workforce, consistent with the community college mission. Most of these programs do not cover their own costs, but are supplemented with revenue from other, more profitable programs.

Budgets from the two existing community college respiratory therapy programs are provided below for a cost/revenue analysis. In each college's Phase II proposal, a comprehensive cost/revenue analysis will be provided for a bachelor's program that is specific to that

¹³ "HLC Policy: Current Criteria for Accreditation" Higher Learning Commission. June 2014.
<https://www.hlcommission.org/Policies/criteria-through-august-31-2020.html>

institution's collaborative agreement (if any) and adjusted for the tuition and fee structure of the partner institution and the corresponding increased number of credit hours and students served.

St. Louis Community College

Respiratory Therapy (114120)	Budget
Full-Time Faculty Salaries (2-FTE)	\$133,585.00
Overload Faculty Salaries	\$ 36,539.00
Part-time Faculty	\$21,067.00
Full-time Classified (.25 FTE)	\$8,374.00
PSR Fringe Benefit Group (31.88%)	\$54,236.00
NCERP Fringe Benefit Group (34.22%)	\$2,866.00
Part-time Fringe Benefit Group	\$1,854.00
Operating	\$6,800.00
Total Budget	\$265,321.00

Respiratory Therapy (114120)	Revenue
Fee per credit hour	\$113.50
Annual credit hours per student	35
Annual program capacity	50 (25 year 1; 25 year 2)
<i>Fee per credit hour x credit hours x annual capacity =</i>	
Total Estimated Revenue	\$198,625

Ozarks Technical Community College

Respiratory Therapy FY 20	Budget
Salaries and Benefits	\$214,113
Professional Development	\$4,878
Accreditations	\$ 2,100
Supplies and Services	\$15,282
Equipment	\$58,136
Total Budget	\$294,509

Respiratory Therapy	Revenue
Fee per credit hour	\$130
Annual credit hours per student	46
Annual program capacity	24
Lab Fees	\$18,400
<i>Fee per credit hour x credit hours x annual capacity + lab fees =</i>	
Total Estimated Revenue	\$161,920

Community colleges with existing respiratory therapy programs have committed to sustain those programs and any program expansions. Any collaborative agreement will also require some investment from the university partner in order for the collaboration to be a mutually-beneficial endeavor.

(III). Evidence indicating there is sufficient student interest and capacity to support the program, and, where applicable, sufficient capacity for students to participate in clinical or other external learning requirements, including library resources, physical facilities and instruction equipment;

The following data are specific to the state of Missouri and can be found in CoARC's 2019 Report on Accreditation in Respiratory Care Education.¹⁴

¹⁴ "2019 Report on Accreditation in Respiratory Care Education." Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care. 20 May 2020. <https://www.coarc.com/>

Programs by Degree Offered: There are six programs that award the entry-level associate’s degree, and there are two programs that offer the entry-level baccalaureate degree in respiratory therapy (one of those programs is a satellite of the traditional program offered at the University of Missouri - Columbia).

Respiratory Care Applications in Missouri

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Associate’s	170	103	132	164	219	242
Bachelor’s	25	25	19	28	23	20

New Enrollments in Missouri

	2018 Max Capacity	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Assoc.	243	126	78	86	120	145	149
Bach.	24	19	22	10	21	15	11

Total Graduates in Missouri

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Assoc.	98	92	96	118	110	146
Bach.	8	20	15	11	11	10

These applicant, enrollment, and graduate numbers are instructive in the following ways:

- Missouri’s respiratory therapy program applicants and enrollments are on the uptick again after a periodic lull. This indicates increasing interest in the field of respiratory care. However, a more concerted effort to increase awareness of the respiratory care profession is needed. The recent global pandemic has brought greater awareness of the profession where little may previously existed.
- Missouri’s community colleges have historically been the primary producers of qualified respiratory therapists in the state.
- The total number of graduates in Missouri is not enough to fill the estimated 220 annual vacancies.
- As the profession moves to a bachelor’s for entry requirement, those who aspire to become respiratory therapists will be required to obtain a baccalaureate degree.

(IV). Description of accreditation requirements.

In order to practice as a respiratory therapist in 49 out of 50 states (except Alaska), a state license is required. To become licensed, respiratory therapy graduates must pass the National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC) board exams. Admission requirements for the NBRC board exams state that applicants must be graduates of a program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC).¹⁵ As stated previously, the mission of the CoARC is to ensure that high quality educational programs prepare competent respiratory therapists for practice, education, research, and service.

Beginning January 1, 2018, the CoARC updated its Standard 1.01, which is still current in its most recent update in the 2020 Entry to Respiratory Care Practice Standards:

Standard 1.01: Except as provided in the following paragraphs, an educational sponsor must be a post-secondary academic institution accredited by a regional or national accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and must award program graduates a baccalaureate or graduate degree.

Associate degree programs that were accredited prior to January 1, 2018, or that applied for accreditation prior to January 1, 2018 and have subsequently received accreditation, may continue to award program graduates an associate degree as long as they remain accredited by the CoARC. Sponsors of these programs must be post-secondary academic institutions accredited by a regional or national accrediting agency recognized by the USDE and must award program graduates an associate degree.¹⁶

¹⁵ Examinations. The National Board for Respiratory Care. June 2020. <https://www.nbrc.org/examinations/>

¹⁶ "Accreditation Standards for Entry into Respiratory Care Professional Practice" Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care. 2020. <https://www.coarc.com/News-and-Events/CoARC-Entry-Standards-7-1-2020.aspx>

Appendix A

Correspondence Regarding Collaborations
with Four-Year Institutions in Missouri



June 25, 2020

Commissioner Zora Mulligan
Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development
P.O. Box 1469
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Dear Commissioner Mulligan:

In May 2020, the University of Missouri System (UM) was notified by Ozark Technical College (OTC) and St. Louis Community College (STLCC) of their intent to submit a preliminary proposal to offer a baccalaureate degree in respiratory care. Both institutions expressed interest in exploring the feasibility of a collaboration with UM. MU currently offers an accredited bachelor's degree program in respiratory therapy. Following internal discussions and a conversation with the vice chancellors for academic affairs at OTC and STLCC, UM has concluded that at this point we are not interested in developing a collaborative bachelor's program with either institution.

Policy changes initiated by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) were amended and OTC and STLCC would require the authorization to offer the baccalaureate-level program to start a new or expand an existing respiratory care program. The developing COVID-19 pandemic makes the value of further investments in respiratory therapists obvious, and it is likely there will be workforce demand in both Springfield and St. Louis.

OTC and SLCC are unique from the other community colleges currently expressing interest in starting bachelor's programs. Both OTC and SLCC have existing accredited RT programs at the associate degree level and likely have the necessary equipment and faculty who could offer the program. However, we have significant concerns about other community colleges who do not have existing RT programs related to the actual market need and the necessary resources. We also have reservations about the conditions required for a collaborative partner in the original inquiries. Some of the "terms" outlined in the original inquiry were not reasonable and not in the spirit of the legislation or the DHEWD administrative rules (e.g., maximum of 30 hours of coursework from the four-year institutions and the four-year university coursework offered at community college rates).

MISSOURI

We appreciate that OTC and STLCC reached out and engaged with us from the beginning. This is an integral part of the process as outlined by statute and, just as importantly, an important way to foster productive relationships between two- and four-year institutions. Even though MU is not interested in a collaboration at this point, OTC and STLCC may want to seek opportunities with other four-institutions to see if they are interested in creating a collaborative partnership.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve Graham".

Steve Graham
Senior Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
University of Missouri System
grahams@umsystem.edu | (573) 882-3119



Missouri State

U N I V E R S I T Y

June 26, 2020

Tracy McGrady, Provost
Ozark Technical Community College
Springfield, MO 65807

CONCERNING: Collaboration on a bachelor's degree in Respiratory Care

Dear Dr. McGrady:

I am writing to affirm that Missouri State University (MSU) and Ozark Technical Community College (OTC) have been in active discussions since May 8, 2020 regarding a partnership between our two universities to deliver a B.S. in Respiratory Care.

There is a historical background that has paved the way for these current discussions in that for many years our two institutions have collaborated on a respiratory therapy bachelor's program. In this program students obtained a B.S. degree from MSU by taking a significant block of courses at MSU as well as completing the accredited Respiratory Therapy clinical program at OTC. However, requirements and expectations of the respiratory therapy accreditation process have evolved.

MSU and OTC are now working toward a more integrated curriculum between our two universities that would result in conferring a joint bachelor's degree. The goal of this joint degree is to have a reasonable distribution of courses contributed by each institution according to where program strengths now exist. Specifically, OTC will be providing the direct clinical-related curriculum and experiences that qualify students for licensure in the field. As they are now, OTC would continue to be responsible for accreditation under the Commission on Accreditation of Respiratory Care (COARC). MSU already has a diverse group of other health-care bachelor's and master's programs. MSU will draw upon its strengths and contribute primarily upper division course work that enable a balanced four-year degree curriculum. We have had several joint meetings between representatives of our two institution during the month of June and hope to soon finalize a joint curriculum plan.

We understand that the nature of this joint degree requires multiple levels of approval at the state level as well as approval by accrediting agencies for the specialization (COARC) and the region (Higher Learning Commission).

Sincerely,

Frank Einhellig
Provost

C: Hal Higdon, President
Ozark Technical Community College

Clif Smart, President
Missouri State University

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MCGRADY, TRACY M.

From: Beth Harville <bharville@drury.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 10:55 AM
To: MCGRADY, TRACY M.
Subject: Re: Respiratory Therapy - Collaboration Opportunity

Tracy,

Thank you for reaching out about a collaboration to offer a bachelor's degree in respiratory care. We greatly value the articulation agreements we have with OTC and want to continue to partner with you in the future. I have talked with Dr. Cloyd and unfortunately we will not be able to partner with OTC on this degree at this time.

I hope you and your faculty are doing well.

Beth

Beth Harville, PhD
Provost
Drury University

From: MCGRADY, TRACY M. <mcgradyt@otc.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 11:29 AM
To: Beth Harville <bharville@drury.edu>
Subject: Respiratory Therapy - Collaboration Opportunity

Good morning, Beth –

You may be aware that some of Missouri's community colleges will be submitting a preliminary proposal to MDHEWD seeking permission to offer a bachelor's degree in respiratory care. This is the result of the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) standards changing to offer accreditation to new programs *only* if they offer the bachelor's degree or higher. CoARC has affirmed their commitment to support currently-accredited associate-level programs, but any expansion we seek to do, even within our own service area, is considered a "new" program by CoARC standards. While legislation passed in Missouri a few years ago opens the door for community colleges to offer bachelor's degree when accreditation or licensure changes mandate it, it also requires attempted collaboration with four-year institutions.

If COVID-19 has taught us anything, it's the importance of a robust number of highly-skilled and qualified health care workers – especially respiratory therapists. Missouri hospitals have suffered from a shortage for several years now. While OTC (and other colleges) would like to assist in creating a strong talent pool, it is impossible to do that with our current capacity. Expansion (or creation of new programs) will be required.

The community colleges are approaching their transfer partner institutions to assess who might be interested in collaboration. Terms are: 1) up to 30 hours of coursework can be completed at the partner university; 2) the coursework is offered according to the partner community college tuition and fee structure; and 3) the degree is conferred by the community college, though a joint conferral will be considered.

Please let me know if you are interested in discussing a collaboration with OTC. Because time is of the essence, I'd request to know your interest level no later than **May 8**.

Thank you! I hope you are well.

Tracy M. McGrady, Ed.D.

Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Ozarks Technical Community College

1001 E. Chestnut Expressway

Springfield, MO 65802

417.447.8152

mcgradyt@otc.edu

MCGRADY, TRACY M.

From: MCGRADY, TRACY M.
Sent: Wednesday, May 6, 2020 2:11 PM
To: McCorcleM@evangel.edu
Subject: FW: Respiratory Therapy - Collaboration Opportunity

Hi Mike,

Just following up on my email from last week. I know you're busy, so if I haven't heard from you by the end of the week, I'll just assume that Evangel is not interested in this type of collaboration at this time. But if you are interested in discussing it, please let me know by then.

Thank you!

Tracy M. McGrady, Ed.D.

Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Ozarks Technical Community College
1001 E. Chestnut Expressway
Springfield, MO 65802
417.447.8152
mcgradyt@otc.edu

From: MCGRADY, TRACY M.
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2020 11:33 AM
To: McCorcleM@evangel.edu
Subject: Respiratory Therapy - Collaboration Opportunity

Good morning, Mike -

You may be aware that some of Missouri's community colleges will be submitting a preliminary proposal to MDHEWD seeking permission to offer a bachelor's degree in respiratory care. This is the result of the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) standards changing to offer accreditation to new programs *only* if they offer the bachelor's degree or higher. CoARC has affirmed their commitment to support currently-accredited associate-level programs, but any expansion we seek to do, even within our own service area, is considered a "new" program by CoARC standards. While legislation passed in Missouri a few years ago opens the door for community colleges to offer bachelor's degree when accreditation or licensure changes mandate it, it also requires attempted collaboration with four-year institutions.

If COVID-19 has taught us anything, it's the importance of a robust number of highly-skilled and qualified health care workers – especially respiratory therapists. Missouri hospitals have suffered from a shortage for several years now. While OTC (and other colleges) would like to assist in creating a strong talent pool, it is impossible to do that with our current capacity. Expansion (or creation of new programs) will be required.

The community colleges are approaching their transfer partner institutions to assess who might be interested in collaboration. Terms are: 1) up to 30 hours of coursework can be completed at the partner university; 2) the coursework is offered according to the partner community college tuition and fee structure; and 3) the degree is conferred by the community college, though a joint conferral will be considered.

Please let me know if you are interested in discussing a collaboration with OTC. Because time is of the essence, I'd request to know your interest level no later than **May 8**.

Thank you! Hope you are well.

Tracy M. McGrady, Ed.D.

Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Ozarks Technical Community College

1001 E. Chestnut Expressway

Springfield, MO 65802

417.447.8152

mcgradyt@otc.edu



Southwest Baptist University
Office of the Provost

June 23, 2020

Dr. Tracy M. McGrady:

It was a privilege speaking with you about the Respiratory Therapy program at OTC. As I understand the discipline is making a push to the bachelor level. In our discussion we looked at what a partnership might look like. We are willing to explore this further but would have many obstacles to look at to accomplish this task: how are faculty resources split, how is revenue collected and distributed, how are faculty selected (we have different hiring criteria as a faith based institution), etc. It seems that OTC is well equipped to handle the transition and has faculty resources that would be capable of accomplishing this level change. For this particular degree program given the resources that are in place and the fact that partnership could prove problematic, we would lend support to your offering the Respiratory Therapy degree at the bachelor level.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. Lee Skinkle".

Dr. J. Lee Skinkle
Provost

MCGRADY, TRACY M.

From: Londre, Tristan <tlondre@Mail.Ncmissouri.edu>
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 1:23 PM
To: MCGRADY, TRACY M.
Subject: FW: Respiratory care

From: Hooyman, Jamie <JHOOYMAN@nwmissouri.edu>
Sent: Saturday, May 23, 2020 4:59 PM
To: Londre, Tristan <tlondre@Mail.Ncmissouri.edu>
Subject: Respiratory care

Greetings Tristan – I hope this finds you doing well and staying safe. Thank you for including me in the discussion about community colleges and the pursuit of the bachelor’s degree in respiratory care. Northwest would be glad to collaborate with you and any of the community colleges as we move forward with respiratory care. However, I think there are some areas that need some more reflection But I look forward to working together.

I wish you the best – stay safe.
Jamie

Dr Jamie Hooyman, Provost
Northwest Missouri State University

From: Londre, Tristan
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2020 1:22 PM
To: 'Hooyman, Jamie' <JHOOYMAN@nwmissouri.edu>
Subject: inquiry about respiratory therapy

Good afternoon Dr. Hooyman,

I hope all is well with you! I wanted to make sure you were aware of and included in discussion that is starting to occur among colleges around the state. Missouri hospitals have suffered from a shortage of respiratory therapists for several years now, and this has been worsened by the pandemic. In response, several Missouri community colleges are planning to seek MDHEWD permission to offer a bachelor's degree in respiratory care so they can start or expand RT programs. The Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) will only accredit new programs if they offer the bachelor's degree or higher. Recent Missouri legislation opens the door for community colleges to offer a bachelor's degree when an accreditor mandates it, and the law requires attempted collaboration with four-year institutions.

The community colleges are approaching transfer partner institutions to assess who might be interested in collaboration. I don't know all the detail of what this might look like, but it sounds like we are looking for the following as we approach potential partner schools: 1) up to 30 hours of coursework can be completed at the partner university; 2) the coursework is offered according to the partner community college tuition and fee structure; and 3) the degree is conferred by the community college. A joint conferral could also be considered, but we have some doubt whether CoARC will allow joint conferral based on previous communication. I am reaching out to you because the MHPC is considering a new program and it is NCMC's turn to be fiscal agent. 😊

Please let me know if you are interested in exploring a collaboration of this nature with community colleges. Kind regards,

Tristan

Tristan Londre
Vice President of Academic Affairs
North Central Missouri College
1301 Main, Trenton MO 64683

From: Londre, Tristan
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2020 1:28 PM
To: 'Davenport, Doug' <davenport@missouriwestern.edu>
Subject: inquiry about respiratory therapy

Good afternoon Dr. Davenport,

I hope all is well with you! I wanted to make sure you were aware of and included in discussion that is starting to occur among colleges around the state. Missouri hospitals have suffered from a shortage of respiratory therapists for several years now, and this has been worsened by the pandemic. In response, several Missouri community colleges are planning to seek MDHEWD permission to offer a bachelor's degree in respiratory care so they can start or expand RT programs. The Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) will only accredit new programs if they offer the bachelor's degree or higher. Recent Missouri legislation opens the door for community colleges to offer a bachelor's degree when an accreditor mandates it, and the law requires attempted collaboration with four-year institutions.

The community colleges are approaching transfer partner institutions to assess who might be interested in collaboration. I don't know all the detail of what this might look like, but it sounds like we are looking for the following as we approach potential partner schools: 1) up to 30 hours of coursework can be completed at the partner university; 2) the coursework is offered according to the partner community college tuition and fee structure; and 3) the degree is conferred by the community college. A joint conferral could also be considered, but we have some doubt whether CoARC will allow joint conferral based on previous communication. NCMC and three other colleges run several allied health programs through a consortium, which is considering adding an RT program. NCMC drew the short straw to take the lead on this program. 😊

Please let me know if you are interested in exploring a collaboration of this nature with community colleges. Kind regards,

Tristan

Tristan Londre
Vice President of Academic Affairs
North Central Missouri College
1301 Main, Trenton MO 64683

MCGRADY, TRACY M.

From: Londre, Tristan <tlondre@Mail.Ncmisssouri.edu>
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2020 1:24 PM
To: MCGRADY, TRACY M.
Subject: FW: Respiratory Therapy

From: Rita Gulstad <rgulstad@centralmethodist.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 3:36 PM
To: Londre, Tristan <tlondre@Mail.Ncmisssouri.edu>
Subject: RE: Respiratory Therapy

Tristan,

Thanks for the update.

Rita

From: Londre, Tristan <tlondre@Mail.Ncmisssouri.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 3:33 PM
To: Rita Gulstad <rgulstad@centralmethodist.edu>
Subject: RE: Respiratory Therapy

Yes, we are still hopeful that this can work out. Reps from our consortium colleges had a conversation with an official from CoARC about how we typically operate programs jointly. He said he is taking our information to the CoARC board this month to see what may or may not be feasible within their framework, and then we will reach out to you (and other potentially interested partners) with further details.

We did learn something unforeseen from our call with him. To qualify as an entry-to-practice program, the degree must be conferred as soon as the technical portion is completed and the student is ready to test. This means that at least one of our previous ideas would not work: we could not do the technical portion and then hand off to a four-year partner for additional gen ed, leadership courses, etc. Another idea we are exploring is an upside-down model like Maricopa's nursing, where students could complete the first two years either at various two-year schools or at CMU, for example. If admitted to RT, they would complete the RT degree through the consortium. Otherwise, they could continue at their home school in a different program. Hope to talk more soon, once (if) we can get further clarity from CoARC. Regards,

Tristan

From: Rita Gulstad <rgulstad@centralmethodist.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 2:19 PM
To: Londre, Tristan <tlondre@Mail.Ncmisssouri.edu>
Subject: RE: Respiratory Therapy

Good afternoon, Tristan,

I was reviewing the CBHE agenda and saw the notification for the Comprehensive Review for the program. I am pleased to see that it is moving forward. I look forward to learning more as it progresses.

Sincerely,

Rita

From: Londre, Tristan <tlondre@Mail.Ncmisouri.edu>
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2020 11:19 AM
To: Rita Gulstad <rgulstad@centralmethodist.edu>
Subject: RE: Respiratory Therapy

Great – I will get back with you as I have more details, and be sure to loop you in on any larger conversations. My understanding would be that partner universities might have upper division health science or leadership courses, or additional general education coursework that would be appropriate. We are still navigating some ambiguities in CoARC regulations on how many sites can be operated within a partnership. NCMC would be participating through our Missouri Health Professions Consortium with East Central, State Fair, and Moberly Area, and NCMC agreed to take the lead on this potential program for the consortium. That is why I am the one who reached out to you, even though I am not the most connected person with other state conversations. ☺ Will be in touch again soon,

Tristan

From: Rita Gulstad <rgulstad@centralmethodist.edu>
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2020 9:41 AM
To: Londre, Tristan <tlondre@Mail.Ncmisouri.edu>
Subject: RE: Respiratory Therapy

Tristan,

Yes! CMU would love to be a part of this conversation. We are excited about the possibilities of a collaboration.

Sincerely,

Rita

From: Londre, Tristan <tlondre@Mail.Ncmisouri.edu>
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2020 8:28 AM
To: Rita Gulstad <rgulstad@centralmethodist.edu>
Subject: Respiratory Therapy

Good morning Dr. Gulstad,

I hope all is well with you! I think you may have already heard that some of the Missouri community colleges will be submitting a preliminary proposal to MDHEWD seeking permission to offer a bachelor's degree in respiratory care. This is the result of changes in the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) standards. CoARC will offer accreditation to new programs *only* if they offer the bachelor's degree or higher. Recent Missouri legislation opens the door for community colleges to offer a bachelor's degree when an accreditor mandates it, and the law requires attempted collaboration with four-year institutions.

We recognize the importance of having enough highly-skilled and qualified health care workers – especially respiratory therapists. Missouri hospitals have suffered from a shortage for several years now. We would like to assist in building

this talent pool by creating a new program, so the community colleges are approaching transfer partner institutions to assess who might be interested in collaboration. I don't know all the detail of what this might look like, but it sounds like we are looking for the following as we approach potential partner schools: 1) up to 30 hours of coursework can be completed at the partner university; 2) the coursework is offered according to the partner community college tuition and fee structure; and 3) the degree is conferred by the community college, but a joint conferral could also be considered.

CMU has been a great partner for the community colleges in many ways, and we want to be sure you are aware of and included in any discussion about new partnerships. Please let me know if you are interested in exploring a collaboration of this nature with community colleges. Kind regards,

Tristan

Tristan Londre
Vice President of Academic Affairs
North Central Missouri College
1301 Main, Trenton MO 64683

From: Phillip Bridgmon <bridgmon@ucmo.edu>
Date: June 25, 2020 at 2:27:37 PM CDT
To: "Bates, Brent" <bbates@SFCCMO.EDU>
Subject: [External] Re: Respiratory Proposal

Brent,

We indeed received your request. At this time, we do not have plans to add a baccalaureate degree in Respiratory Care. We do look forward to our future collaboration in other areas.

Sincerely,

Phil

Phillip Bridgmon, Ph.D., Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
University of Central Missouri
Administration 203
Warrensburg, MO 64093
bridgmon@ucmo.edu
660-543-4084

On Wed, Jun 24, 2020 at 8:50 AM Bates, Brent <bbates@sfccmo.edu> wrote:

Hi Phil,

We are finalizing material for the Respiratory Care proposal and DHE has asked that we document that we reached out to university partners for collaboration. Do you mind sending me an email that confirms we talked and that UCM is not interested in collaborating on this degree? It can be a brief one sentence email.

Thanks. "See" you Friday.

Brent

Dr. Brent Bates

Vice President

State Fair Community College

Sedalia, Mo.

660.596.7252

From: "Sanders, Alphonso" <SandersA@lincolnu.edu>

Date: June 24, 2020 at 2:22:08 PM CDT

To: "Bates, Brent" <bbates@SFCCMO.EDU>

Subject: [External] Respiratory Therapy

Brent,

Based on our last meeting, I am more inspired about collaborating with the Community College Consortium to provide Respiratory Therapy training to our students in Missouri. I'm looking forward to our next discussion.

Degrees related to health will have more importance moving toward the next decade. Thanks for reaching out to include Lincoln University in the initial talks. Best wishes and be safe - Alphonso

Alphonso Sanders, Provost
Lincoln University
206 Young Hall
Jefferson City, MO 65109

From: Beatty, Kimberly
Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2020 8:04 AM
To: Mauli Agrawal <agrawalcm@umkc.edu>
Cc: Johnson, Dreand R <Dreand.Johnson@mccckc.edu>; May, Tammie <Tammie.May@MCCCKC.EDU>;
Lee, Tyjaun A <Tyjaun.Lee@mccckc.edu>
Subject: RE: RTA Program Development

I neglected to include/remind you that this would be a Bachelor's degree in Respiratory Therapy that we are striving to offer as the requirements for respiratory therapists have changed.

Thanks again for your consideration.

Dr. Kimberly Beatty
Chancellor
Metropolitan Community College
Office: 816.604.1401
3200 Broadway, Kansas City, MO 64111
www.mccckc.edu

From: Beatty, Kimberly
Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2020 8:00 AM
To: Mauli Agrawal <agrawalcm@umkc.edu>
Cc: Johnson, Dreand R <Dreand.Johnson@mccckc.edu>; May, Tammie <Tammie.May@MCCCKC.EDU>;
Lee, Tyjaun A <Tyjaun.Lee@mccckc.edu>
Subject: RTA Program Development

Hello Mauli,
I am just writing to provide you with an update to our conversation a couple of months ago regarding MCC's progress toward developing a Respiratory Therapy degree program. As I mentioned, this will be a new degree for us. The community college collaborative has submitted a letter of intent and will be submitting a draft proposal to MDHE. I see this as an opportunity for us to collaborate to meet the need in KC. Since we are making positive steps, do you think it's time for us to get our teams together to discuss?

Let me know. July is tight for me, so maybe we should target August?

Dr. Kimberly Beatty
Chancellor
Metropolitan Community College
Office: 816.604.1401
3200 Broadway, Kansas City, MO 64111
www.mccckc.edu

From: "Lee, Tyjaun A" <Tyjaun.Lee@mccck.edu>
Date: June 29, 2020 at 7:09:15 PM CDT
To: "sue.willcox@avila.edu" <sue.willcox@avila.edu>
Subject: Follow up

Dr. Wilcox,

I noticed that it was still in my draft folder ☹.

Dr. Wilcox,

Thank you for meeting with me (virtually) yesterday. Again, thank you for your verbal support of MCC and Avila University partnering on a Bachelor's degree in Respiratory Therapy. As discussed the accreditation standards have changed and the industry demands support MCC pursuing this degree. In addition to this, we discussed the following:

The community colleges are approaching their transfer partner institutions to assess who might be interested in collaboration.

1. Up to 30 hours of coursework can be completed at the partner university;
2. The coursework is offered according to the partner community college tuition and fee structure; and
3. The degree is conferred by the community college, though a joint conferral will be considered.

I will have my assistant set up another call in the coming weeks for discuss this partnership in more depth. I wanted to circle back to you based on our initial conversation.

Be well,
Tyjaun

Tyjaun A. Lee, Ph.D.
President

Metropolitan Community College – Penn Valley Campus
Office: 816-604-4203
3201 Southwest TrafficWay, Kansas City, MO 64111

Tyjaun.Lee@mccck.edu | www.mccck.edu

Preparing students, serving communities, creating opportunities

Appendix B

Letters of Support from Missouri Healthcare Providers



April 21, 2020

Hal Higdon, Ph.D.
Chancellor
Ozarks Technical Community College
1001 E Chestnut Expressway
Springfield, MO 65802

Dear Dr. Higdon:

CoxHealth is pleased to support Ozarks Technical Community College's (OTC) proposal for the expansion of respiratory therapy program to the bachelor's degree through the Missouri Department of Higher Education. The College's proposed expansion of its health professions workforce programs is a timely and practical way to address the critical shortage of health care professionals in the Southwest Missouri area.

CoxHealth is a not-for-profit, community hospital and the largest employer in Springfield MO, an area leader in healthcare and community involvement, with six hospitals, more than 80 clinics and five ERs throughout twenty-five counties in Southwest MO. As an employer of more than 12,000 health care professionals, we can attest to the dire need for qualified registered respiratory therapists.

CoxHealth will actively support OTC in this endeavor by offering clinical locations, and interviewing qualified candidates who complete.

The discernment and ability to be nimble to adequately meet the needs of the healthcare workforce, is something that OTC has been at the forefront of in our community and truly in our state. With healthcare and education noted to be the two most important drivers of our local economy we look forward to supporting this program, and working with OTC as they continue to address our region's health sciences workforce pipeline issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven D. Edwards".

Steven D. Edwards
President and CEO



Mercy
Springfield
1235 E. Cherokee
Springfield, MO 65804
phone 417-820-2000
www.mercy.net

June 19, 2020

Hal Higdon, Ph.D.
Chancellor
Ozarks Technical Community College
1001 E Chestnut Expressway
Springfield, MO 65802

Dear Dr. Higdon:

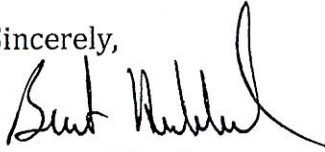
Mercy Hospital Springfield is pleased to support Ozarks Technical Community College's (OTC) proposal for the expansion of the respiratory therapy program to the bachelor's degree through the Missouri Department of Higher Education. This is a timely and practical way to address the critical shortage of health care professionals in the Southwest Missouri area.

Mercy Springfield Communities is comprised of Mercy Hospital Springfield, an 866-bed referral center; an orthopedic hospital; a rehab hospital; a children's hospital; four regional hospitals in Lebanon, Aurora, Cassville, and Mountain View, Missouri; and Mercy Clinic, a physician clinic with nearly 700 doctors and locations throughout the region. It is part of [Mercy](#), named one of the top five large U.S. health systems for four consecutive years (2016 to 2019) by IBM Watson Health, which serves millions annually. Mercy includes more than 40 acute care, managed and specialty (heart, children's, orthopedic and rehab) hospitals, 900 physician practices and outpatient facilities, 45,000 co-workers and 2,400 Mercy Clinic physicians in Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma. Mercy also has clinics, outpatient services and outreach ministries in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. In addition, Mercy's IT division, [Mercy Technology Services](#), and [Mercy Virtual](#) commercially serve providers and patients from coast to coast.

OTC has actively worked to meet the needs of our healthcare workforce in our community and state. With healthcare and education as primary industries in our

area, we look to continue our collaboration and support of this and other health science programs offered through OTC.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brent Hubbard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "H".

Brent Hubbard

President/COO

Mercy Hospital Springfield Communities



June 29, 2020

Tracy M. McGrady, Ed.D.
Provost & Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Ozarks Technical Community College
1001 E. Chestnut Expressway
Springfield, MO 65802

Dear Dr. McGrady

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of community colleges being able to provide baccalaureate degrees in respiratory therapy. This ability will enable new RT programs to open throughout the state of Missouri.

As a respiratory therapist, I have always made it a priority to collaborate with area respiratory therapy programs by offering my skills as a specialty lecturer and by providing clinical rotations to students. As a respiratory care manager, I was interested in the evidence showing baccalaureate degree educational programs provide improved opportunities for development of the psychosocial, critical thinking, and critical decision-making skills that are essential for RTs to improve the quality and effectiveness of the care they provide to patients. Finally, as a board member for the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC), I collaborated with my colleagues to recommend that respiratory therapists entering into practice beginning in 2030 must obtain a minimum of a baccalaureate degree in respiratory therapy or health sciences with a concentration in respiratory therapy.

There are 8 accredited programs in Missouri, only 2 of which offer a Baccalaureate degree. Missouri H.B. 1465 allows the Missouri Coordinating Board for Higher Education to authorize community colleges to offer bachelor's programs when such degrees are necessary to meet accreditation, licensure, or employment requirements. With the AARC leadership calling for baccalaureate prepared therapists and the Commission on Accreditation of Respiratory Care (CoARC) mandating that all new respiratory care programs must offer baccalaureate degrees, now is the ideal time for Missouri to authorize community colleges to award baccalaureate degrees in respiratory care.

I fully support Ozarks Technical College in the development and implementation of a baccalaureate degree program for respiratory care. In today's uncertain health care environment the need for the specialized care provided by respiratory therapists is critical. Baccalaureate degree programs that can prepare respiratory therapists to become better leaders and make better care decisions will benefit our patients and our communities at large.

Cheryl A. Hoerr MBA, BSRT, FAARC
Vice President – Internal Affairs, American Association for Respiratory Care
Director, Respiratory & Sleep Services
Phelps Health
1000 W. 10th Street
Rolla, Missouri 65401

Richard J. Liekweg
President and Chief Executive Officer

April 21, 2020

Jeff L. Pittman, Ph.D.
Chancellor
St. Louis Community College
3221 McKelvey Road
Bridgeton, MO 63044

Dear Dr. Pittman:

BJC HealthCare is pleased to support St. Louis Community College (STLCC), and its partner community colleges, proposal for the expansion of respiratory care to the bachelor's degree through the Missouri Department of Higher Education. The College's proposed expansion of its health professions workforce programs is a timely and practical way to address the critical shortage of health care professionals in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

BJC HealthCare is one of the largest nonprofit health care organizations in the United States, delivering services to residents primarily in the greater St. Louis, southern Illinois and mid-Missouri regions. Serving the health care needs of urban, suburban and rural communities, BJC includes 15 hospitals and multiple health service organizations. Services include inpatient and outpatient care, primary care, community health and wellness, workplace health, home health, community mental health, rehabilitation, long-term care and hospice. BJC's nationally recognized academic hospitals, Barnes-Jewish and St. Louis Children's hospitals, are affiliated with Washington University School of Medicine.

As an employer of more than 31,000 health care professionals, we can attest to the dire need for qualified registered respiratory therapists.

We look forward to partnering with you on this endeavor and working with you to address our region's health sciences workforce pipeline issues.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Liekweg



May 7, 2020

Joanna Anderson, President
State Fair Community College
3201 W. 16th Street
Sedalia, MO 65301

Dear Dr. Anderson:

Bothwell Regional Health Center is pleased to support the State Fair Community College, and its partner community colleges, proposal for the expansion of respiratory care to the bachelor's degree through the Missouri Department of Higher Education. We have an immediate and critical need for Registered Respiratory Therapists in our region. The COVID-19 crisis has certainly exacerbated the already crippled respiratory workforce. It is an ongoing challenge to find appropriately qualified skill levels for respiratory positions, especially in rural areas like Sedalia. The vacancy rate for respiratory therapist in our area ranges from five to 17 percent with up to a 38 percent turnover rate. The SFCC and community college proposal is timely and practical.

Providing high-quality, cost-effective and compassionate health care has always been the priority of Bothwell Regional Health Center. Our healthcare center has 108 beds and employs more than 900 people in 12 different locations. Over 100 physicians provide care in more than 30 specialties, including diagnostics, medical and surgical services, cancer care, emergency services, orthopedics, cardiovascular care, neurodiagnostic, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, outpatient services, medical equipment, and community outreach and education.

As a community hospital we have very personal reasons why our care needs to be the safest, the best and the friendliest. It is because we are providing care to our neighbors, teachers of our children, our parents, our friends, and our co-workers. Bothwell Regional Health Center is accredited by The Joint Commission and meets the exacting standards of multiple regulatory agencies. Bothwell also operates a network of clinics, outpatient service facilities and rehabilitation therapy.

Healthcare today is constantly changing; organizations are struggling to improve and maintain quality of care at an affordable cost. By having a local Respiratory Care program, our regional residents can be educated in this skill set and work close to home while helping to meet the demand for the respiratory healthcare workforce.

On behalf of Bothwell Regional Health Center, I am pleased to provide this letter of support for State Fair Community College's pursuit of a Respiratory Care Bachelors of Applied Science program.

Sincerely,



Lori Wightman, RN, FACHE

CEO

GET WELL. STAY WELL. BOTHWELL.

601 East Fourteenth Street | Sedalia, MO 65301 | PHONE: 660-826-8833 | WEB: www.brhc.org



2401 Gillham Road
Kansas City, Missouri 64108
(816) 234-3000

Paul D. Kempinski, MS, FACHE
President and Chief Executive Officer
Phone: (816) 234-3650
Fax: (816) 842-6107

June 30, 2020

Dr. Kimberly Beatty
Chancellor
Metropolitan Community College
3200 Broadway Boulevard
Kansas City, MO 64111

Dear Chancellor Beatty,

Children's Mercy, Kansas City is pleased to support the proposal by Metropolitan Community College (MCC) and its partner community colleges for the development of a respiratory care program at the bachelor's degree level through the Missouri Department of Higher Education. The College's proposed expansion of its health professions workforce programs is a timely and practical way to address the critical shortage of healthcare professionals in the Kansas City metropolitan area.

Children's Mercy is recognized as one of the nation's top pediatric hospitals, according to U.S. News & World Report's 2020-2021 "Best Children's Hospitals" report. Being a leader in children's health means doing our part to make sure the Kansas City region is a healthy place to grow up. Children's Mercy engages in meaningful programs, opportunities, and partnerships that improve the lives of children beyond the walls of our hospital. These initiatives help support the hospital's mission and bring solutions to some of our community's most pressing health issues.

The Children's Mercy Respiratory Care staff actively works in all patient-care settings, including the intensive care units, emergency department, and certain outpatient clinics. Services are provided 24 hours a day in all departments at both our Adele Hall and Kansas campuses. Respiratory therapists work closely with the Sections of Neonatology, Pulmonology and Critical Care Medicine, as well as provide routine care on the medical/surgical floors. As an employer of more than 8,500 healthcare professionals, we can attest to the dire need for qualified registered respiratory therapists.

Children's Mercy will actively support MCC in its endeavor by offering clinical rotations and other appropriate support.

We look forward to working with you in addressing our region's health sciences workforce pipeline issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Kempinski", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Paul Kempinski, MS, FACHE
President and Chief Executive Officer
Alice Berry, DDS, and Katharine Berry, MD Endowed Chair
in Executive Leadership



Executive Office

May 6, 2020

Kimberly Beatty, Ph.D.
Chancellor
Metropolitan Community College
3200 Broadway
Kansas City, MO 64111

Dear Dr. Beatty:

Truman Medical Centers (TMC) is pleased to support Metropolitan Community College (MCC), and its partner community colleges, proposal for the development of respiratory care program at the bachelor's degree level through the Missouri Department of Higher Education. The College's proposed expansion of its health professions workforce programs is a timely and practical way to address the critical shortage of health care professionals in the Kansas City metropolitan area.

TMC is an essential hospital and academic medical center, delivering services to residents primarily in the greater Kansas City area. Serving the health care needs of urban, suburban and rural communities, TMC includes two hospitals and multiple health service organizations. Services include inpatient and outpatient care, primary care, community health and wellness, workplace health, home health, community mental health, rehabilitation and long-term care.

As an employer of more than 4,500 health care professionals, we can attest to the dire need for qualified registered respiratory therapists.

TMC will actively support MCC in this endeavor by offering clinical locations, offering internships, and interviewing qualified candidates who complete.

We look forward to working with you in addressing our region's health sciences workforce pipeline issues.

Sincerely,

Charlie Shields
Chief Executive Officer

May 20, 2020

Dr. Jeffery C. Lashley
101 College Avenue
Moberly, Missouri 65270

Dear Dr. Lashley:

Samaritan Hospital is pleased to support Moberly Area Community College (MACC), and its partner community colleges, proposal for expansion of respiratory care to the bachelor's degree through the Missouri Department of Higher Education. The College's proposed expansion of its health professions workforce programs is a timely and practical way to address the critical shortage of health care professionals in Northeast Missouri.

Samaritan Hospital is a 25 bed Critical Access Hospital located in Macon, Missouri. The Hospital performs over 60,000 outpatient tests and procedures and has over 5,000 patient days per year. Our service area includes Macon, Shelby, Linn, Adair and Randolph Counties.

Respiratory Therapies are an integral part of our healthcare team. Establishment of a training program that will result in an increased supply of Registered Respiratory Therapists, would be helpful in addressing the shortage.

As an employer of more than 250 health care professionals, we can attest to the dire need for qualified registered respiratory therapists.

We look forward to partnering with you on this endeavor and working with you to address our regions health sciences workforce pipeline issues.

Sincerely,



Bernard A. Orman, Jr. MS, FACHE
Administrator / CEO

RECEIVED

MAY 20 2020

BY: CS



Northeast Regional Medical Center

The Founding Osteopathic Institution

315 S. Osteopathy
P.O. Box C 8502
Kirksville, MO 63501-8599
(660) 785-1000

www.nermc.com

May 20, 2020

Dr. Jeffery C. Lashley
101 College Avenue
Moberly, Missouri 65270

Dear Dr. Lashley:

Northeast Regional Medical Center is pleased to support Moberly Area Community College (MACC), and its partner community colleges, proposal for the expansion of respiratory care to the bachelor's degree through the Missouri Department of Higher Education. The College's proposed expansion of its health professions workforce programs is a timely and practical way to address the critical shortage of health care professionals in Northeast Missouri.

NRMC is a regional referral medical center servicing a combined service area of over 65000 in a 6 county area of the state of Missouri. As a certified Chest Pain Center and designated hospital to receive time critical diagnoses of STEMI and Stroke patients, respiratory care is an essential part of our healthcare team.

As an employer of more than 450 healthcare professionals, we can attest to the dire need for qualified registered respiratory therapists.

We look forward to partnering with you on this endeavor and working with you to address our region's health sciences workforce pipeline issues.

Sincerely,

Raneé Brayton
Chief Executive Office