

 Council on Licensure,
Enforcement and Regulation

 **Mobility of Credentialed
Professionals Within and
Across National Borders**

2012 Annual Educational Conference - September 6-8
San Francisco, California

Presenters: **Kevin Taylor, MBA**
College of Respiratory Therapists of Ontario

Patricia Muenzen, MA
Professional Examination Service


Promoting Regulatory Excellence

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Annual Conference  September 6-8
San Francisco, California

Background:
2009 - The world was changing...

- 3 Key Events:
 - Changes to regulation of respiratory therapy (RT) in Canada
 - Introduction of sweeping labour mobility legislation at national level
 - Significant revisions to national competency profile
- Needed to establish degree of comparability across jurisdictions and countries

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Overview of Session

In this session, we will:

- Illustrate complexities of comparing a profession (RT) across jurisdictional boundaries
- Describe a process used to evaluate similarities and differences in preparation to practice
- Discuss how findings contributed to policy development regarding practitioner mobility within Canada as well as between the US and Canada


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Differences in Profession: Within Canada

Regulation	8 self-regulated jurisdictions (National Alliance) + Unregulated districts NARTRB sets National Competency Profile (NCP)
Scope of Practice	Generally the same (80% congruence)
Education	Curriculum defined by NCP
Accreditation	All programs accredited by CoARTE
Exams	Quebec - ESPP Remainder of Canada - CBRC
Regional Differences	Quebec - Language + Anaesthesia + No ABGs* Saskatchewan - No legislated scope Manitoba - Care under direction of physician Ontario - Controlled Acts Model Unregulated - No RT-specific legislation


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Difference in Profession: Across Countries

	Canada	USA
Health Care Model	Mainly publicly-funded	Mainly privately-funded
Regulation	Self-Reg + Unregulated	State boards
Education	Curriculum drawn from NCP	Curriculum aligned with NBRC job analysis
Accreditation	CoARTE	COARC
Exams	ESPP + CBRC ⇒ Matrix dev'd from NCP	NBRC ⇒ Content dev'd from job analysis
Scope of Practice	Generally the same	Generally the same
Level of Autonomous Practice	General expectation of autonomy (but does vary)	Generally physician-directed care


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Strategic Considerations

- Identifying the players - there are more than you think!
- Engaging stakeholders - it takes longer than you think!
- Obtaining information - it is more challenging than you think!

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Tactics for Examining Comparability

- Evaluate:
 - educational programs
 - entry to practice competencies
 - examinations
- Questions posed
 - *Is Quebec equivalent to rest of Canada?*
 - *Is US equivalent to Canada?*


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**Education Programs:
Research Focus**

- Are US program accreditation standards comparable to Canadian?
- Why the focus on accreditation?
 - Volume: 400+ RT schools in US, 20+ in Canada
 - Indicator of comparability of preparation to practice
- Line by line comparison
 - Extent and level of comparability
 - Clarification/verification with accrediting organizations


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**Education Programs:
Findings**


- Although structured differently, generally high degree of comparability
- Both sets of standards reference national entry to practice competencies
- Both require curriculum alignment with national competencies
- Small gaps identified - implications unclear

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Features of Examinations				
	US Level 1 (CRT)	US Level 2 (RRT)	Canadian National	Quebec
Eligibility	Associate's degree	CRT + (multiple pathways)	RT Diploma or Bachelor's	Currently enrolled in program
Format	MCQs	MCQs and simulations	MCQs	MCQs and complex MCQs
Number of questions	140 MCQs	100 MCQs and 10 simulations	250 MCQs , 150 scenario based	150 MCQs, all scenario based
Origin of content specifications	Job analysis	Job analysis	NCP	Provincial education ministry

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Examinations: Research Question #1				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do examinations adhere to best practices in their development and administration? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation against external standards by psychometrician NCCA standards 8 - 16 used as benchmark Requires access to sensitive propriety information Permits inferences regarding psychometric rigor 				


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Findings on Psychometrics				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US examinations adhere to NCCA standards Canadian national examination generally adheres to NCCA standards Quebec examination demonstrates lower levels of adherence 				

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**Examinations:
Research Question #2**

- Is examination content comparable?
- For US versus Canada
 - Line by line comparison of test blueprints
 - Initially cross-referenced by single SME
 - Verified by representative group of SMEs individually via email followed by group webinar
 - Clarification/verification of identified gaps by examination developers


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**Findings on Exam Content:
Between US and Canada**

- Most Canadian competencies addressed explicitly or implicitly in US examinations
- Some differences due to different scopes and purposes of outlines
 - Canadian competencies → education + exam
 - US competencies → exam only
- True gaps:
 - Anaesthesia
 - Neonatal/pediatric practice


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**Findings on Exam Content:
Within Canada**

- Difficult to compare content of Quebec and national examinations
- Only macro level comparisons possible
- Previous AIT-related research determined at least 80% comparable


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Limitations of Approach (1 of 2)

- Sometimes comparing apples and oranges
- Reluctance to share information
- Results apply to groups, not individuals - cannot guarantee individual competency

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Limitations of Approach (2 of 2)

- Accreditation standards not prescriptive of:
 - how to teach competencies (didactic v clinical)
 - content and duration clinical training
- Examination comparison did not address:
 - item types
 - amount of coverage of different topics
 - cognitive level of questions

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**Application of Results:
National Policy Decisions**


Canadian Focus

- Stronger relationships
- New exam matrix
- Further study of training standards

International Focus

- Harmonized assessment of int'l applicants
- Reciprocity issue

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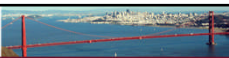
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Pathways for Entry to Canada



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A Different Approach (Road Not Taken)


- Conduct research study = candidates take all three examinations at a single point in time
- If process results in identical pass/fail decisions, could permit mobility based on passing score on any exam
- In 1987 such a study led to now expired reciprocity agreement

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- Questions?
- Discussion...

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Contact Information

 **Patricia Muenzen**
Director of Research Programs
Professional Examination Service (PES)
Tel: 212-367-4273
Email: pmuenzen@proexam.org

 **Kevin Taylor**
Registrar and CEO | College of Respiratory Therapists of Ontario (CRTO)
Tel: 416-591-7800 x.21 | Fax: 416-591-7890 | Toll-Free: 1-800-261-0528
Webpage: www.crto.on.ca | Email: taylor@crto.on.ca

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