

**<<DRAFT>>**

**ADVISORY BOARD ON RESPIRATORY CARE**

**Minutes**

May 12, 2026

The Advisory Board on Respiratory Care met on Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at the Department of Health Professions, Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Henrico, Virginia.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Daniel Grinnan, MD

Todd Zischke, RRT

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Santiera Brown-Yearling, RRT - Chair

Kimberly B. Headley – Citizen Member

Shari Toomey, RRT – Vice Chair

**STAFF PRESENT:**

William Harp, MD - Executive Director

Colanthia Morton-Opher - Deputy Executive Director for Medical Licensure & Administration

Erin Barrett, JD - Director of DHP Legislative and Regulatory Affairs

Roslyn Nickens - Licensing Supervisor

Sonia Armistead - Licensing Specialist

Yetty Shobo, PhD - Director for the Healthcare Workforce Data Center

Kathleen LaMotte - Board Administrator

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

None

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**Call to Order**

William Harp, MD, called the meeting to order at 1:02 pm.

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**Emergency Egress Procedures**

Kathleen LaMotte announced the emergency egress instructions.

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### **Roll Call**

Ms. LaMotte called the roll; a quorum was not declared.

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### **Introduction of Members**

Introductions were led by William Harp, MD.

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### **Public Comment on Agenda Items**

There was no public comment.

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## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Healthcare Workforce Data Presentation - Yetty Shobo, PhD**

Dr. Shobo presented key findings from the 2025 Respiratory Therapist Workforce Survey. Highlights included:

Growth in licensees and workforce participation: The total number of licensed respiratory therapists continues to rise, with 5,645 licensees in 2025. However, the number working in Virginia (4,238 RTs providing 3,590 full-time equivalency units) has not increased at the same pace.

Demographic trends: Approximately 74% of the workforce is female, a proportion that has steadily increased. The median age remains 46, consistent with prior years. Roughly 36% of the workforce is under age 40. The diversity index has increased, though it remains below the statewide population diversity measure.

Educational trends: Most RT's continue to hold associate degrees, though the percentage with baccalaureate degrees has grown. Fewer RT's report carrying educational debt, and the proportion of those under 40 with debt has also declined since 2023.

Income and employment characteristics: Median income has risen since 2021. Education debt levels have remained stable. RT's most commonly work in inpatient hospital settings with modest increases in the proportion working in children's hospitals and outpatient hospitals. RT's role in home health has declined.

Language services: About one in four RT's provide services in Spanish, with additional services available in French and Chinese. Virtual platforms are the most common method for translation services.

Future plans: There is a decline in the percentage of RT's planning to retire by 65 and a decrease in those intending to pursue additional education.

Geographic distribution: Northern and Eastern Virginia continue to have lower numbers of RT's per 1,000 residents than other regions of the state.

Board members discussed the discrepancy between the total number of licensees and those working in the Commonwealth. Dr. Shobo noted that some licensees are military-affiliated or work in bordering states. Members also discussed potential future shortages related to retirement trends and the increasing prevalence of baccalaureate degrees.

Dr. Harp thanked Dr. Shobo for her presentation.

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## **Regulatory Update - Erin Barrett, JD**

Ms. Barrett provided an overview of legislative and regulatory matters relevant to the Advisory Board:

Respiratory Care Interstate Compact: The Compact legislation passed and was signed by the Governor. It will become state law on July 1, 2026. Full implementation could take up to five years. A potential issue exists because the Compact requires a criminal background check, which is not currently required in Virginia law. Legislative action to add this requirement is anticipated, and the General Assembly is aware of the need to correct this.

Continuing Education Requirements (HB 1147): Recent legislation requires that all licensees of the Boards of Medicine and Nursing complete specific continuing education for reduction of bias in healthcare. Regulations will need to be promulgated, and additional information will be provided to licensees once timelines are established.

Regulatory Action from the 2022 Periodic Review: One regulatory action remains in progress concerning implementation of changes identified during the 2022 periodic review. After returning from Executive Branch review, the Board will be required to vote again before the action can proceed.

Ms. Barrett noted that other legislative items pertaining to other professions were included in the Advisory Board's packet for informational purposes.

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### **Draft Amendments for Licensure by Endorsement - Erin Barrett, JD**

The Advisory Board reviewed draft amendments establishing a streamlined pathway for licensure by endorsement consistent with an agency bill introduced during the 2025 General Assembly Session. The amendments remove active practice requirements and align respiratory therapy endorsement with the regulations for licensure by endorsement in other allied health professions.

The two members present voiced support for advancing these amendments to the Board of Medicine.

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### **Announcements**

Chair Santiera Brown-Yearling is rotating off the Board and may not be at the September meeting. Elections for a new Chair will occur at that time.

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### **Licensure Statistics**

Total license count - 3,012

Licenses issued from 1/1/26 through 5/12/26 - 120

Average processing time to issue a license - 18 days

Clearance rate - 87%

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### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, September 29, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.**

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### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.