



CoARTE Third Party Complaint

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a mechanism to ensure that issues and concerns expressed by third parties are addressed appropriately and in a timely manner. The objectives of the complaints policy are:

- to maintain the integrity and credibility of the accreditation process;
- to ensure a fair and open process for stakeholders to address concerns and questions regarding a program's conformity with the requirements for accreditation; and
- to provide a mechanism for accountability of the accrediting body to the public.

Policy:

1. CoARTE provides accreditation for respiratory therapy education programs. It will not act as an arbitrator as between an individual and an accredited program with respect to matters such as admission, graduation, fees etc.
2. If an outside party (third party) has reason to believe that an accredited program may not be in conformity with one or more of the requirements for accreditation, the party may submit a formal complaint to CoARTE.
 - 2.1. The complaint must describe a specific concern or concerns about the program and/or identify one or more accreditation requirement(s) that is/are not being met.
 - 2.2. The complaint must include evidence to support the stated concern(s).
3. The confidentiality of the complaining party is protected by CoARTE unless release of identity has been authorized, or disclosure is required by legal action.
4. Program reviewers and members of CoARTE, as well as CSRT staff, are required to maintain the confidentiality of all information regarding the program and the assessment.

Procedure:

1. When submitting a complaint to CoARTE, the third party must show evidence that they have attempted to resolve the complaint directly with program/institution officials by following the due process or grievance procedures provided by the program/institution. If the third party is unable to resolve the complaint with program/institution officials or believes that the concerns have not been properly addressed, he or she may submit a complaint of non-conformity in writing to CoARTE.
2. In order for such a concern to be considered by CoARTE, a signed and dated written letter must be sent to CoARTE, along with any available supporting documentation. CoARTE will then

Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists/Société canadienne des thérapeutes respiratoires
201-2460 Lancaster Road, Ottawa, ON K1B 4S5



consider the complaint in light of CoARTE Terms of Reference, policies and procedures, and the CoARTE Accreditation Manual. If there are no accreditation-related violations, CoARTE will avow jurisdiction, and refer the issue back to the complainant.

2.1. The letter of complaint must include:

- a) A description of the nature of the complaint and the related accreditation policies or procedures that the complainant believes are not being met by the program. The complainant must provide supporting data for the charge.
- b) A demonstration that the complainant has made reasonable efforts to resolve the complaint, or alternatively that such efforts would be unavailing; including verification and documentation
- c) If the complaint is from a student or faculty/ instructional staff member at that institution, the complainant must demonstrate that he/she has exhausted all relevant institutional grievance and review mechanisms before submitting a complaint to CoARTE; and
- d) A signed cover letter including the complainant's name, address, and telephone contact information and the complainant's relationship to the program in order for CoARTE to verify and communicate with the source of the complaint. All complaints must be submitted to CoARTE Chair, at the Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists. Forms or letters submitted without signature or the required supporting material will not be considered.

3. Upon receipt of a written complaint, the Director of Accreditation immediately forwards the submission to CoARTE for their information. A decision will be made by CoARTE within 30 days as to whether action should be taken on the complaint. CoARTE's decision is based on whether the complaint is relevant and within the scope of accreditation. If the issue(s) is/are not relevant or within the scope of accreditation, the complaint is not pursued and the complainant is informed of this decision.
4. If CoARTE decides that the issue is relevant, CoARTE immediately informs the program in question that a third party complaint has been received. CoARTE requests a response from the program within 30 days.

Policy History
Approved by the CSRT Board of Directors May 27, 2009.
Revisions approved by the CSRT Board of Directors May 24, 2016. (Revisions made to timelines and to remove duplication of other CSRT policies)