

# Respiratory Therapists in Primary Care

Primary care is a cornerstone of healthcare delivery that provides two key functions in the healthcare system. It provides direct service (which is often the first point of contact) and coordinates care to provide continuity across the system.

Primary care services include the prevention and treatment of chronic disease, health promotion, basic urgent care, rehabilitation services, referrals to other levels of care, palliative and end-of-life care.

The Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists recommends governments ensure calls for system renewal are met by scaling up collaborative, interprofessional primary care teams that include respiratory therapists. This will ensure Canadians can access timely care by health providers practicing in a team-based model.

**Primary Care is an established area of practice for respiratory therapists.**

Roles respiratory therapists play in primary care include:



**Chronic disease education and management**



**Management of oxygen therapy in the community**



**Management of home mechanical ventilation**



**Case management**



**Pulmonary rehabilitation**



**Tobacco cessation counselling**



**Sleep disorder testing and management**



**Spirometry and other pulmonary function tests**



**Vaccine education and administration**

For more information on respiratory therapists and the important roles they play on primary health care teams, contact the CSRT.



**CANADIAN SOCIETY OF RESPIRATORY THERAPISTS**

**SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DES THÉRAPEUTES RESPIRATOIRES**