

# Central Interior Rural Primary Care Network

*"Optimizing accessible primary care service delivery with coordinated, team-based, culturally safe approaches."*



## Respiratory Therapy - Helping You Breathe Easy

Respiratory Therapy is a specialized health care field that deals with the causes, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of diseases affecting the lungs such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and Asthma.

COPD is the 4th leading cause of death worldwide. It is largely caused by smoking, although sometimes can be genetic or environmental. It is most prevalent in people over 40 years old with a history of smoking.

Asthma affects 3.8 million (10.8%) Canadians over the age of 1 year with a high percentage being untreated.

The traditional translations found at the bottom of the following pages are taken from the First Voices website, an initiative of the First Peoples' Cultural Council

### What's Inside:

*Dahooja / Dzin Guzun / Weyt-kp / Good Day!*

- Pg. 1 Respiratory Therapy - Helping You Breathe Easy
- Pg. 2 Role of the RT in Primary Care
- Pg. 2 Tammy Holland - PCN's New RT
- Pg. 3 Advice From an RT
- Pg. 4 Share Your Experience

For more information on Primary Care Networks:  
<https://gpscbc.ca/what-we-do/system-change/primary-care-networks>

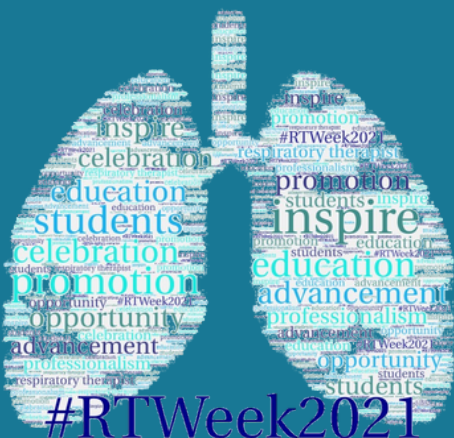
# Role of the Respiratory Therapist

The Central Interior Rural Primary Care Network has recently added a Respiratory Therapist (RT) to our available resources.

RTs have specialized skills to care for patients at all stages of life with critical, chronic, and complex respiratory and cardiopulmonary conditions. They perform many vital roles, including:

- Are members of inter-professional health care team
- Assess and treat patients with breathing difficulties
- Administer various medical gases (e.g. oxygen)
- Conduct cardiopulmonary function testing to diagnose, track and manage cases of respiratory disease
- Visit and educate patients who require home oxygen and other respiratory care in their homes
- Assist patients who require long-term ventilation to return to their homes
- Provide education to patients/clients, students and other members of the health care team

**October 24 to 30 is Respiratory Therapy Week,** an event that raises awareness of the respiratory therapy profession and the outstanding dedication and passion of RTs.



## Tammy Holland The PCN's New RT



Tammy Holland joined the Central Interior Rural Primary Care Network team on August 3rd, 2021. She is providing respiratory services to Williams Lake, 100 Mile House and surrounding communities. These services include respiratory assessments, education, recommendations for disease management, and liaising with community partners to optimize patient care.

Tammy is passionate about helping people optimize their health and enjoys a team-based approach to health care. She is a familiar face to the region having worked closely with various partners in health care over the past 24 years in both the private sector and within Interior Health. Her focus throughout the years has been chronic disease management, pulmonary rehab, diagnostic testing, smoking cessation and sleep-disordered breathing management.

In her free time, Tammy enjoys spending time with her husband, 3 sons and soon-to-be daughter-in-law. Tammy also enjoys all that the Cariboo has to offer including cycling, hiking and paddling.

Tammy can be reached via email at [tammy.holland2holland@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:tammy.holland2holland@interiorhealth.ca).

---

## Advice from the PCN Respiratory Therapist

*find out what they can do for you and your patients*

**Q: As a Respiratory Therapist, what is your role in the PCN?**

*A: The RT role is evolving, as it is a new resource for PCN. I plan to start working with two physician's clinics, one in 100 Mile House and one in Williams Lake. I will work with the physicians and clinic staff to develop a plan to optimize their patient's lung health. From there, I will build on what is benefitting the clinic and the patient and expand to more clinics in the region.*

*As the PCN RT, I can provide a respiratory assessment, review the patient's current care plan, and make recommendations to optimize treatment where required. I can provide education to these patients and will follow up with them as needed to assess their progress or review concerns they may have.*

**Q: As a PCN RT, what gaps will you fill?**

*A: Through the Bridgecare Virtual clinic, I can work with patients that do not currently have a family physician. Patients can also self-refer. In these cases, I can provide the services as outlined above and then send a report with recommendations to their family physician or to a physician at the Bridgecare Virtual Clinic.*

**Q: What tips do you have to offer both patients and healthcare providers?**

*A: With cold and flu season starting, it is important to make sure flu and pneumococcal vaccinations are up to date. We often see an increase in COPD and Asthma exacerbations at this time of year, especially once the kids go back to school. Review of an action plan (as available in the links below) with your physician and PCN RT is recommended so that worsening symptoms can be identified and treated quickly.*

*Wood burning appliance use, causing worsening air quality, can be a culprit for exacerbations at this time of year as well. The [BC government webpage](#) has some excellent resources and recommendations in this regard as does [Interior Health's Air Quality webpage](#).*

## Downloadable Action Plans for Physicians & Patients



**Asthma Action  
Plan Children 1-5**



**Asthma Action  
Plan Children 6-18**



**Asthma Action  
Plan Adults**



**COPD Action Plan**

*The following pages provide downloadable and printable posters that may be of interest to your patients and your medical team. Please feel free to post them in your office or clinic.*



WHO  
ARE

# RESPIRATORY THERAPISTS?

[RTs]

## 1 RTs work in many places

Respiratory therapists are important members of teams that provide care in hospitals, in clinics, in the community and in patients' homes.



## 2 RTs care for many people



RTs provide healthcare to people at all stages of life. For example, RTs care for newborns who are having difficulty breathing. They also care for people of all ages who need respiratory support because they are critically ill or severely injured. RTs provide support for those with chronic heart and lung diseases, and for people who may require long term respiratory care for disease or disability.

## 3 Ways RTs add value to your health care

RTs have unique skills and abilities that they use to provide care to patients in complicated and often times critical situations.

In all health care settings, RTs use methods that are known to be safe and effective to care for patients' respiratory health needs.

RTs play an important role in addressing the key needs of our healthcare system, such as chronic disease care, and team-based primary care.

## 4 Ways that RTs help patients



Assess, perform medical tests, and provide a range of treatments for cardio-respiratory disease



Educate patients about lung health and the use of their breathing medication to help manage their own care



Provide airway and breathing support in the ICUs, emergency rooms, and operating rooms



Participate in research initiatives that help improve healthcare and quality of life



[WWW.CSRT.COM](http://WWW.CSRT.COM)

For more information about the role of RTs in the Canadian health care system, contact:

The Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists

201-2460 Lancaster Avenue

Ottawa, ON K1B 4S5

Email: [csrt@csrt.com](mailto:csrt@csrt.com)

We are conducting a survey to learn about patients' experiences with health services in the region, and we'd appreciate you sharing/posting this flyer where patients will see it.

## Central Interior Rural Primary Care Network

*Share* your  
experiences  
with health services

**Be entered to win \$25 to Tim  
Horton's, Save-On-Foods or  
Fresh Co after completing  
our anonymous 15 minute survey!**

**Visit this link to complete the survey:**

**<https://surveys.reichertandassociates.ca/f/I/CIRPCNCommunitySurvey>**

**OR scan the barcode with the camera of your  
Smartphone and click 'Open'**

**OR call 604-428-2478 to have the survey mailed to you**

Your feedback will help the Central Interior Rural Primary Care Network to better understand and strive to meet your primary health care needs. The survey is open to anyone who lives in the Central Interior region.

Thank you for your time and helping to shape your primary health care system!

