



NATIONAL
ASTHMA EDUCATOR
CERTIFICATION BOARD

AE-C

Fall 2019

Opportunity: AE-C's Needed for Asthma Telehealth Initiative

Telehealth Asthma coaches engage referred patients in video-telehealth, motivational counseling sessions which are aimed at facilitating greater adherence to physician prescribed medical protocols as well as facilitating informed patient choices related to improved asthma control. Engage patients and encourage them to take an active role in their health by providing them with tools to gain better control over their asthma and their lives.

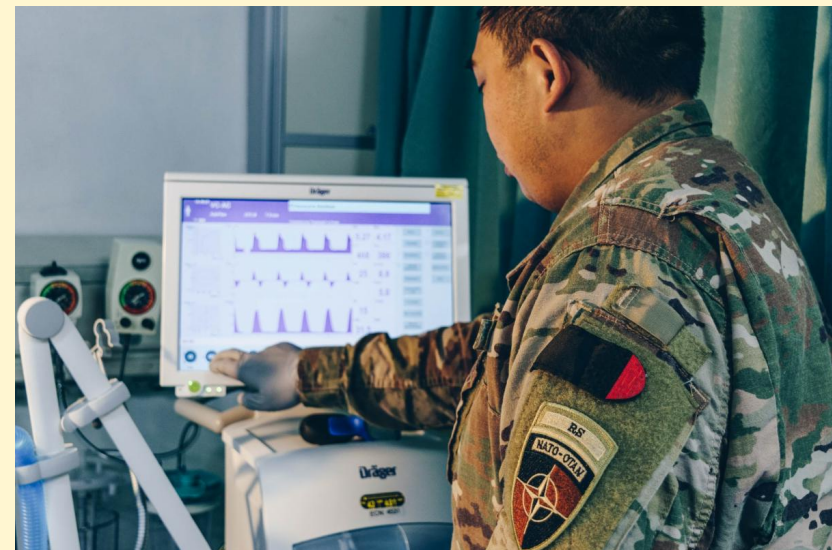
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AE-C Special Feature: United States Air Force Cardiopulmonary Laboratory

The United States Air Force Cardiopulmonary Laboratory Career Field is a diverse corps of functional and operational specialties. The Air Force Medical Service community recognized a need for specialized

medical professionals tasked with assisting physicians and their patients by providing complete and quality medical care in the fields of pulmonary, cardiology, and respiratory care. Over the past 23 years, Air Force Cardiopulmonary Laboratory Technicians have expanded their technical reach far beyond providing diagnostic and therapeutic support in hardened medical facilities. We provide advanced operational support via ground, air and in deployed environments. Our patients range from Department of Defense (DoD) personnel, veterans, retirees, family members, in addition to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, and humanitarian refugees world-wide.

A major benefit of being a Cardiopulmonary Lab Technician is the versatile support they provide on a day-to-day basis. Technicians perform as pulmonary technologists, assisting pulmonologists in the collection and analysis of physiologic data to diagnosing and treating a wide range of illnesses; cardiology technicians support Cardiologists in performing invasive and non-invasive procedures to include but not limited to cardiac stress testing and cardiac catheterization; lastly, as respiratory care practitioners, their expertise is vital to maintaining adequate ventilation utilizing a wide-range of critical care equipment. Whether serving in any of the capacities described above, we are all educators. One of many ways we educate is via Asthma Education.



As a Certified Asthma Educator in the United States Air Force, we are relied upon to assist physicians

with developing action plans for pulmonary rehabilitation and asthma evaluation. As such, we are charged with leading asthma education classes to assist patients in better understanding pulmonary diseases; risk factors associated with unhealthy lifestyle choices; environmental triggers; and how to effectively use prescribed therapies. Whether young or old, we pride ourselves in ensuring our patients are properly trained on the correct use inhalers, pulmonary devices such as spacers, incentive spirometry, in addition to oscillating positive expiratory pressure devices for cough and breathing assistance. Using a full-spectrum approach, we address all the concerns of our patients from medications, to nutrition, relaxation, oxygen therapy, and how to minimize stressors associated with feeling short of breath. By working with patients and setting realistic goals based on the needs of our patients, we help strengthen patient-provider relationships that ultimately lead to more compliance on treatment regimens and far fewer asthma attacks. In fact, Certified Asthma Educators are not just limited to just assisting patients who are diagnosed with asthma. Their expertise encapsulates the entire spectrum of pulmonary diseases to include a number of lung abnormalities which fall under the category of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

To highlight this, Master Sergeant Jessica White, Manager, Cardiopulmonary Services, shared a story of her experience will working in the Pulmonary Rehabilitation clinic at Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland. "A Retired-military member attended our Pulmonary Rehabilitation Clinic in the spring. Three months prior, he was diagnosed with COPD. He was very determined to prove to us that his physical activity did not have any effect on his difficulty breathing while at rest. Our staff created and implemented a balanced program to fit his needs, and assisted him with his workouts three times a week. The patient could not understand how light to moderate exercise 3-5 times a week would benefit his lung disease or how it would help him breath better, since being in the military he was accustomed to maintaining a more strenuous exercise routine. After his 8 week program was completed, he could absolutely feel a difference. He came back to the clinic to thank the staff that took the time to put a plan together that fit his lifestyle and helped him recover a comfortable fitness level. He stated, it changed his life! As he continued his daily exercises, he would often return to the clinic to let us know how it was improving every aspect of his health. As providers, and also as patients, we tend to forget that our body is put together to run as a unit, not separately".



Master Sergeant White's example is just one of many ways Air Force Cardiopulmonary Laboratory Technicians educate and provide care to patients. As members of the Armed Forces, we take the ultimate oath of protecting and defending our country. A significant amount of resources are spent selecting, training and validating the skills of Cardiopulmonary Lab Technicians. In fact, 90% of our primary mission is centered on the application of Respiratory Therapy, in the air and on the ground. Our members provide crucial en-route critical care by serving on highly trained Critical Care Air Transport Teams (CCATT) along-side a nurse and physician. Training for this platform is maximized through partnerships at civilian trauma centers in Cincinnati, Baltimore and St Louis. Serving as the only enlisted member on this team, our expertise in cardiopulmonary abnormalities has significantly improved the life-saving capabilities in combat environments. Operating in such an environment requires vision, preparation, and attention to ensure we meet the Air Force mission of today and vision of the future. To date, Air Force Cardiopulmonary Lab Technicians serve as members of Critical Care Air Transport Teams (CCATT), Special Operations Surgical Teams (SOST), and Expeditionary Medical Support Teams (EMEDS). We are a valuable member of the entire health care team, educating patients and setting the example

for developing a healthier lifestyle. Air Force Cardiopulmonary Laboratory Technicians are truly the "Heartbeat" of the Air Force Medical Service.

United States Air Force Cardiopulmonary Laboratory Technicians–We are here for our patients, always at the heart of patient care.

Lisa M. Pickett

USAF Cardiopulmonary Laboratory Career Field Manager

Welcome New Board Members!

Congratulations to our newly elected Board of Directors members! These new Board members will serve the National Asthma Educator Certification Board for the 2020–2022 term.

Chanda Holsey, DrPH, MPH, AE–C

Eleanor Prowell, MSN, RN, CPNP–PC, AE–C

LaShonna Stodghill, MAEd, LRT, RRT, AE–C

Honey Pezzimenti, M.Ed., RRT–NPS, AE–C

Elizabeth Gendy–Shaker, MD, AE–C

Share Your Story!

If you are a Certified Asthma Educator with an innovative approach to asthma education or a unique program, we want to hear about it!

[Send an e-mail to info@naecb.org](mailto:info@naecb.org) and we may feature your story in an upcoming newsletter!

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ASTHMA EDUCATOR



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Promoting Excellence in Asthma Education

Please send potential article submissions or upcoming related events to info@naecb.org.

The editors reserve the right to decline submissions for any reason.

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