

Chicagoland Respiratory Therapy Workforce Summit

Data Overview

National Data:

- The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects employment of RTs to increase by **13%** 2013-2023
- The Health Resources and Services Administration projects our national shortage of RTs to reach **6,480** by 2037
- In a 2020 AARC survey, **87%** of leaders reported a shortage of RTs
- CoARC reported a **37%** decrease in applications to RT programs between 2011-2023
- CoARC reports that only **9%** of training programs nationwide are filling their accredited enrollment capacity

Local Data (Cook and collar counties):

- A CHWC survey circulated this year, with responses from 46% of hospitals (excluding psychiatric) found 176 RT vacancies. Assuming this sample is representative of the whole, we have approximately **384** RT vacancies in our region (not including home health).
- CoARC reported 63 Associate’s degree graduates in 2024. Rush reported 9 master’s degree graduates, totaling **72** new RTs in 2024.
- Lightcast data shows that around 900, or **25%**, of current local RTs are near retirement.

Hospital Survey Results

CHWC distributed a survey to Cook and collar county hospitals in July-Oct 2025. The following table includes aggregated responses collected from 39 hospitals, nearly half of the 85 hospitals registered to the Illinois Department of Public Health in this region, excluding psychiatric hospitals.

Total number of hospitals responded to survey	39
Total number of beds at the hospitals that responded to the survey	11,873
Total FTE Respiratory Therapist positions budgeted	1,473
Total FTE Respiratory Therapist positions currently employed	1,317
Total FTE Respiratory Therapy positions vacant	176
Total number of Agency Respiratory Therapists currently contracted	71
Total number of Respiratory Therapy Assistants (RT students not yet licensed) currently employed	47
Total number of clinical students hosted in last academic year (Fall '24 + Spring '25 + Summer '25)	384

Training Program Data

(compiled from CoARC and Rush University)

Graduates 2021-2024

RT Program	Location	2021 Grads	2022 Grads	2023 Grads	2024 Grads
Malcolm X College (AAS)	Chicago	27	16	22	17
St. Augustine College (AAS)	Chicago	13	7	34	18
Moraine Valley Community College (AAS)	Palos Hills, Cook County	12	11	12	9
College of DuPage (AAS)	Glen Ellyn, DuPage County	20	11	25	19
TOTAL (AAS)		72	45	93	63
Rush University (MS)	Chicago	13	9	18	9
TOTAL (AAS + MS)		85	54	111	72

AAS 2024 Program Data

AAS RT Program	Annual Enrollment Max	2024 Estimated Applications	2024 Enrollments	2024 Graduates
Malcolm X College	50	150	27	17
St. Augustine College	70	30	16	18
Moraine Valley Community College	32	52	31	9
Triton College	30	78	25	0
College of DuPage	40	68	35	19
Joliet Junior College	25	20	16	0
Elgin Community College	15	0	0	0
TOTAL	210	398	143	63