

June 1, 2010

Dear RMCRA Member,

We are truly honored to have such wonderful members of the Rocky Mountain Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation Association. The Board of RMCRA would like to thank you for supporting our small affiliate and for your continued dedication to your profession in Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehab.

We would like to notify you of an exciting new opportunity and change within to our affiliate structure. We have been selected (along with two other affiliates) as a Pilot Program with the National organization, American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation (AACVPR). The Board of RMCRA voted at the Annual Conference to proceed with this opportunity. There are only two pilot programs that have joined with National in the U.S. (Michigan and Ohio). **Beginning July 1, 2010, all members of National AACVPR will also become RMCRA members.**

As President, I am thrilled to have the support of AACVPR. Since RMCRA has been operating as a complete separate entity that has been linked only by affiliation, this merger will strengthen our ability to represent our profession and provide effective communication. So far, I have been limited in how much information I can disperse to the membership and how much support we have for RMCRA, which has been difficult at times. The Board is run by a select few individuals who represent Colorado, Wyoming and New Mexico, therefore, the Pilot Program will help to bring the affiliate together and give us resources that we never had before being selected.

We know you have many questions about this joint effort. We have developed a Frequently Asked Questions handout which will help answer some of your concerns. The most frequent questions we are asked are:

IF I AM ONLY AN RMCRA MEMBER, HOW MUCH IS THIS GOING TO COST ME?
and
WHY SHOULD I JOIN AACVPR AND PAY THE EXTRA MONEY?

The cost of membership for AACVPR is currently \$185.00 from July 1 through June 30 (AACVPR Calendar Year). Some of your dues payment will be diverted back to our local affiliate, RMCRA, as state membership dues. Effective July 1, 2010, you will be eligible to become a joint member of AACVPR and RMCRA. You will receive a dues invoice from AACVPR for \$185.00. **If you are only an RMCRA member and if you choose to become an AACVPR member this year, we ask that you complete your invoice for \$185.00 for AACVPR membership AND you will be reimbursed \$25.00 for your RMCRA membership dues that you would be paying individually or as part of the Annual RMCRA Conference Registration.** This reduced rate is offered through the agreement contract that was negotiated between AACVPR and RMCRA. We have negotiated “grandfathering in” those members of RMCRA. Therefore,

your cost to belong to RMCRA and AACVPR for the July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011 year will be \$160.00.

For the following membership year (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012), the joint membership cost will be \$185.00 for both AACVPR and RMCRA. If you choose to forgo the AACVPR National membership, you will remain an RMCRA member until the annual conference in May 2011. At that time, you will no longer receive correspondence and benefits from RMCRA or AACVPR unless you join the National organization.

NOTE: If you are a National Member already, you will become an automatic Member of RMCRA starting July 1, 2010.

There are tremendous benefits associated with this merger. These include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Access to the AACVPR National Meeting
- Use of the AACVPR “Members-Only” website
- Subscription to the Journal of Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation and Prevention (JCRP)
- Obtaining the latest Reimbursement Updates and Legislative information from AACVPR
- Participation in Continuing Education Credit online courses and webinars
- Ability to network with other professionals
- Continued support from a large, nationwide organization who has partnered with other Cardiac and Pulmonary Societies (i.e. AHA, ACC, ATC, AARC, etc.)
- AACVPR Certification support and guidance
- Obtaining all member benefits of being part of the National association, AACVPR.

As mentioned above, the Pilot program will allow our small affiliate to garner support from the large National AACVPR. We will still operate as a small affiliate. We will have our own website and will run the annual conference. Much of the “behind the scenes” work for membership will be handled by AACVPR. Your membership dues will be handled by AACVPR. Effective next year, the Annual RMCRA Conference fee will be reduced for members to reflect the change in structure for membership. We will continue to encourage growth of both AACVPR and RMCRA throughout this entire process.

Becoming a member of the AACVPR has extraordinary benefits which cannot be provided by RMCRA. I am hoping that this change will help strengthen RMCRA and involve more individuals with the goal of promoting Cardiac and Pulmonary Rehabilitation.

Please read the attached FAQ sheet. We would be happy to answer any questions or comments that you may have.

Again, we would like to thank you for supporting RMCRA. We hope you will continue to support your profession by becoming a member of both AACVPR and RMCRA.

Fondly,

Denise LaRocca, MS, RCEP, FAACVPR, President of RMCRA

and
The Board of Directors of RMCRA

RMCRA/AACVPR Joint Membership Frequently Asked Questions (adapted from Michigan affiliate)

1. Why was this decision made?

The decision to move forward with the joint membership was a result of several conference calls and discussions evaluating the feasibility of the transition and the additional benefits to our state membership. The RMCRA Board officially agreed to proceed and voted unanimously to sign the agreement with AACVPR. This agreement will allow for RMCRA members to enjoy all of the benefits of the AACVPR in addition to those already offered by the state affiliate. The AACVPR will support the growth and vitality of the RMCRA by providing an administrative infrastructure for membership communications, currently being done by the RMCRA leadership. Removing this and other administrative burdens will allow the RMCRA leaders to focus on tasks related to increasing exposure for cardiac and pulmonary rehab, reimbursement issues, advocacy, and establishing standards for programs across the Rocky Mountain region.

2. What benefits will the increased membership fee offer me?

The additional annual fee associated with national membership offers you a very unique opportunity to be a member of two individual organizations with different goals and focuses for one price. National members are a part of a very strong national organization for advocacy and education related to cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation as well as for national networking of professionals and leaders in the field. You will receive the JCRP on a regular basis, which is a peer-reviewed journal dedicated to cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation published by the AACVPR. You will receive direct communications regarding reimbursement, MAC transition issues, outcomes management, program certification, and other information disseminated by the national office.

A stronger RMCRA will allow your voice to be heard both at the state and federal legislative levels and create opportunities for our state to be leaders among affiliates for our cause. A members-only web page from the AACVPR provides many of these benefits to national members already and your joint membership will open this door for you.

If you are already a national but not a RMCRA member, you will enjoy added value for your annual dues with membership in both the state and national organizations without additional RMCRA membership fees.

3. Who was involved with making this decision?

This decision was made by the RMCRA board of directors including the President, immediate past-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and 2 regional board members. After several conference calls, meetings and discussions, the RMCRA Board voted to proceed with the joint membership agreement between RMCRA and AACVPR.

4. How long will this agreement be valid?

The joint membership is a pilot offering for RMCRA members that will be valid upon signing for 3 years, including the first year of grandfathering of memberships. After that time, both the AACVPR and the RMCRA will reassess the goals and outcomes of the joint membership. Should the arrangement be successful, the agreement expanded in the RMCRA by-laws and will continue indefinitely. Should the board decide at the completion of the pilot period that it is not advantageous to our membership the agreement with the AACVPR will be dissolved.

5. When will I need to make a decision regarding my membership?

If you are a current member (membership renewal is a \$35 portion of the annual conference fee), your membership with RMCRA will be valid until the beginning of the 2011 conference (date TBD). After this date, your RMCRA membership will be expired, unless you join the AACVPR at the current fee schedule. The joint membership can be initiated by you at any time during the year. The RMCRA/AACVPR joint membership will be valid between July 1 and June 30 of the following year.

If you decide to join as a joint member during 2010/2011, you will be refunded part of your RMCRA membership fee of \$25 by the state affiliate. This will discount your first joint membership fee to a net of \$160, hopefully relieving some of the financial burden for the first year's membership.

6. If I am not a member of the organization can I still attend the conference?

Non-members will be allowed and encouraged to attend all future RMCRA conferences and events at a non-member rate. If you do not choose to remain a member, your RMCRA membership will not be renewed by attending the 2011 annual conference. Although we certainly hope you will remain a member of the organization, we understand and respect your decision.

7. Why will non-RMCRA members be extended the RMCRA membership?

Part of the agreement with the AACVPR is to strengthen both the national and affiliate organizations. There are a fairly large number of individuals who are current and loyal members of the national organization; however, they do not hold concurrent state membership. These individuals will automatically become RMCRA members and strengthen our affiliate by having an increase in membership moving forward, without an increase in their membership dues. These members include those individuals who are national members residing or working in the states of Colorado, Wyoming and New Mexico.

Additionally, for those members who are currently members of AACVPR and RMCRA, they will realize a significant savings with the joint membership agreement. Beginning on July 1, membership in the AACVPR national organization will make them an automatic member of RMCRA.

8. Who will be my 'go-to people' at the different organizations?

Your state affiliate remains your advocate and contact organization for state-related issues and information. We will continue to work independently of the AACVPR and your questions and concerns may be addressed by any of the RMCRA officers and contacts found at www.rmcr.org. Should you have membership-specific questions, the national office staff will handle administrative and payment related issues. As a member of the national

organization, you will have direct access to national committee members, board members, and office staff. You may visit www.aacvpr.org for more information about these and other individuals.

9. What are the benefits to the Board of Directors of the RMCRA?

The RMCRA board feels very strongly that this decision will first and foremost benefit the state members for the reasons outlined in this communication. There are, however, certain benefits to the RMCRA that do not directly benefit the RMCRA membership. These include insurance for the officers, relieved administrative burden, strengthened relationships with the national board of directors, affiliate marketing opportunities, and increased exposure on the AACVPR website and at national meetings.

10. How can I get more involved in the decision-making process?

We welcome your involvement! If you are interested in serving on the RMCRA board or related committees, please contact any of the officers and express your interest. We are also including an application to serve on one of the state-level committees at the annual meeting, so please fill this out and turn it in at any time during the conference or with your conference evaluation. We are working hard to increase the strength of committees of the RMCRA.

11. Why should I support this decision if it is going to cost me more money?

Ultimately your membership investment is your decision to make; however, we ask that you consider this decision not to increase the cost of your membership, rather to provide you with an exciting opportunity to increase your national exposure, educational opportunities, and networking for a reasonable increase in dues. We feel this decision is advantageous to everyone involved and should be viewed as an opportunity, rather than a burden.

Please feel free to email anytime with questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Denise LaRocca, MS, RCEP, FAACVPR, President of RMCRA

Denise.LaRocca@uch.edu

and

The RMCRA Board of Directors