

## Overview of Critical Care BC (CCBC) Levels of Care - Adult Critical Care

### Why is this work important?

Critical care patients are not all the same - care needs vary based on acuity. This variation has previously been subjective. The need for documented criteria for each acuity level is important when patients are transferred between facilities and when unit resources require modification to maintain quality care. Differentiating between acuity levels helps to better understand critical care service use and resource planning to support quality care. In addition, it supports critical care providers facilitating recovery for critically ill patients.

### How were the criteria developed?

Using long established criteria identified by the Intensive Care Society in the UK, health authority clinical leaders established consensus on criteria for Level 0-3 acuity levels, with Level 3 as the highest level of patient acuity and Level 0 referring to patients who can be safely cared for on an inpatient unit. The [CCBC Levels of Care - Adult Critical Care document](#) outlines criteria to define the acuity of each patient, facilitating a standardized language for use and data collection. Acuity levels align with those in pediatric and neonate populations for a consistent approach across the province.

### Expected Benefits

Acuity level identification will inform decisions to improve staffing, regional and provincial transfers, service planning and forecasting, for short- and long-term benefits.

#### Operations and Capacity Coordination Benefits

##### Site Benefits

- Informs acuity-based staffing decisions, including minimum Nurse Patient Ratios
- Informs a standardized understanding of unit acuity to determine if current staffing levels are safe to support the level of acuity on the unit
- Informs access and flow decisions to increase critical care capacity
- Informs unit and site education needs, including service/program planning

##### Regional Benefits

- Provides objective information about regional capacity trends to improve capacity coordination
- Supports education planning to meet the needs of the regional population.

#### Provincial System and Service Planning Benefits

- Informs provincial health system and service planning, including capacity coordination between regions, when necessary, during surge periods
- Enables more precise forecasting of critical care needs, including determining training requirements to match population trends
- Informs heat map detection provincially, in alignment with capacity of other services, such as Pediatric and Neonatal Intensive Care

[Critical Care BC](#) (CCBC) is a Health Improvement Network (HIN) of provincial health authority partners working together to improve the quality of critical care services across the province.