



DO NOT FAX THIS SHEET

DEFINITIONS OF PATIENT ACUITY

Low-Acuity Patients

A low-acuity patient is defined as a patient in whom all the following apply:

1. An assessment has been made by an appropriate health professional that the patient is stable for the duration of the transport
2. The patient has no emergency clinical symptoms or signs of recent onset (as outlined in NEPT Clinical Practice Protocols "Definitions of Adult Emergency Patient")
3. The patient has an illness or injury that does not require active treatment but which does require supervised patient transport. Examples include;
 - Inability to travel in a normal seated position
 - Requirement for oxygen during transport
 - Impaired cognitive function
 - Inability to travel more than a few steps unaided

It is also acceptable for NEPT to transport a patient who is not acutely ill, but who requires stretcher transport because of a chronic medical condition (such as quadriplegia) and who is unable to access a suitable alternative form of transport.

Medium-Acuity Patients

A medium-acuity patient is defined as a patient who requires active monitoring or management and in whom all the following apply:

1. An assessment has been made by a **medical practitioner** that the patient is haemodynamically stable for the duration of the transport
2. There is no likelihood that the patient will require transport under emergency conditions
3. The patient does not meet the criteria of an emergency patient (as outlined in NEPT Clinical Practice Protocols "Definitions of Adult Emergency Patient")
4. There is an illness or injury which requires one of more of the following:
 - (a) cardiac monitoring
 - (b) observation and monitoring of an intravenous infusion of a crystalloid fluid, with or without an infusion pump
 - (c) observation and monitoring of an intravenous infusion of crystalloid fluid containing glyceryl trinitrate or heparin using (an) infusion pump(s)
 - (d) care of an intercostal catheter or central venous catheter
 - (e) care of the patient who has a recent fracture of the spinal column (without spinal cord injury)
 - (f) care of the patient on home ventilation

Medium acuity status also applies if the patient has a mental illness and is assessed as behaviourally stable by the sending practitioner, and meets the criteria described under 'patients with a mental illness'.

High-Acuity Patients

A high-acuity patient is defined as a patient in whom:

1. An assessment has been made by a referring medical practitioner that the patient is stable for the duration of the transport
2. There is no likelihood that the patient will require transport under emergency conditions
3. The patient does not meet the criteria of an emergency patient (as outlined in NEPT Clinical Practice Protocols "Definitions of Adult Emergency Patient")
4. There is an illness or injury, which requires active monitoring or treatment by a nurse or medical practitioner, including:
 - Mechanical ventilation
 - An intravenous infusion of a vasoactive drug
 - A patient with tracheostomy
 - A patient with a central or arterial line
 - A device which supports the circulation (intra-aortic balloon pump or extra-corporeal membrane oxygenation)