

Alberta's Strategic Clinical Networks

Emergency Provincial Clinical Knowledge Development

The Goal

An expert panel has determined that outdated clinical information can result in inconsistent patient care depending on the level of knowledge of individual clinicians. The Provincial Clinical Knowledge Development project is updating Alberta Health Services' (AHS) library of knowledge, for priority medical conditions, that doctors and nurses can access when making clinical decisions. The goal of this project is to ensure patients receive the most appropriate care in all emergency departments (EDs) across Alberta.



The Process

The knowledge library is available through AHS' internal website and provides clinicians information on treatment and best medical practices.

All topics in the existing knowledge library will be reviewed and 36 medical protocols will be updated with the latest best medical practices every year until the entire library is up-to-date. Updates will be prioritized based on how common and complex the medical conditions that are presented to the ED.

The Outcome

The first knowledge updates have been developed for the six most common and complex medical conditions identified by the expert panel. Each of these conditions is potentially life or limb threatening if not treated correctly or quickly.

- Pulmonary Embolism: Blood vessel obstruction in the lungs, usually due to a blood clot.
- Ischemic Chest Pain: Chest pain may indicate a number of serious conditions including a heart attack.
- Upper Gastrointestinal Bleeding: Upper GI bleeding involves bleeding in the esophagus (the tube from the mouth to the stomach), stomach, and first part of the small intestine.
- Dehydration and Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA): A common condition among diabetics with an insulin deficiency associated with high blood sugar levels.
- Deep Vein Thrombophlebitis (DVT): A blood clot that forms in a vein deep in the body most commonly in the lower limbs.
- Atrial Fibrillation: An irregular and often very fast heart rate. This may cause symptoms like heart palpitations, fatigue, and shortness of breath.

The Team

This project is collaboration between the Emergency Strategic Clinical Network and the Chief Medical Information Office.