

Rural Hospital ALC Leading Practices Guide

Patients who are waiting for an Alternate Level of Care (ALC) occupy a bed in a hospital but do not require the intensity of resources/services provided in this care setting (acute, complex continuing care, mental health or rehabilitation). Patients designated ALC are often seniors aged 75 and older.

The volume of patients designated ALC is influenced by both system capacity limitations and performance. While hospitals cannot control system capacity challenges, they are able to control performance in ALC avoidance and management in an effort to **have every patient in the most appropriate bed for their care needs.**

In March 2017, Access to Care - Cancer Care Ontario (CCO) launched the Alternate Level of Care (ALC) Leading Practices Guide, valuable for large community and tertiary hospitals to use as a foundation for their ALC avoidance work.

Based on these provincial guidelines, representatives from the North East LHIN developed the [Rural Hospital ALC Leading Practices Guide](#). The Rural Hospital ALC Leading Practices Guide was developed taking into account the realities of small, rural hospitals in mind, including greater emphasis on the principles of restorative potential and incorporating the learning of research on the ALC client, family, and caregiver experience.

The **Rural Hospital ALC Leading Practices Guide** is being piloted by four hospitals in three LHINs (North East, Champlain, and Erie St Clair). These hospitals have completed their self-assessment to determine which of the leading practices are already in place, and they developed an improvement plan to address strategies that are not currently part of their day-to-day practice e. A second self-assessment will be performed in a year to assess progress and plan for further action. Initial feedback from these hospitals is that the guidelines are easy to use, comprehensive, and provide a platform for their organization's ALC work.

This **Rural Hospital ALC Leading Practices Guide** is a must read for any community hospital. For more information, contact the NE LHIN at northeast@lhins.on.ca.

