

Guideline

AAU (Emergency Department) Admission Criteria	
Applicable to: Te Whatu Ora Whanganui	Authorised by: SMO Emergency Department
	Contact person: HOD Emergency

This guideline is overarched by Te Whatu Ora Whanganui's commitment to honouring our obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the five Tiriti principles: Tino rangatiratanga; Equity; Active protection; Options; and Partnership, as articulated in Te Tiriti o Waitangi Policy. In seeking to fulfil these obligations, the organisation is guided by the values and strategy outlined in He Hāpori Ora -Thriving Communities.

1. Purpose

Te Whatu Ora Whanganui Emergency Department has a five bed Acute Assessment Unit (AAU). The AAU is a clinical assessment unit, not a short stay unit. That is, we do not have extra dedicated nurse staffing for a short stay admission. This is an important aspect to take into consideration when deciding to admit someone to AAU.

Before admitting to AAU, the clinician should ask themselves: "What am I waiting for to determine whether the patient will be admitted or goes home?" If what you are waiting for is going to take longer than 12 hours, admit this patient to hospital.

2. Prerequisites

In order to admit someone to be admitted AAU the patient must be:

1. 16 years of age or older.
2. Independently mobile or able to be managed by one nurse.
3. Clinically stable ie: normal (or near normal) vital signs.
4. Coherent ie: no dementia or confusion.

3. Definitions

Possible reasons for AAU admission:

- Patient seen overnight and awaiting imaging and/or lab work in the morning.
- IAT assessment in the morning.
- Observation for clinical course ie: expected to improve within 12 hours and go home.
- Expected short course of therapy ie: >80% chance they will be discharged in less than 12 hours.
- Patient lives out of town and/or is awaiting family member for transport.
- Patient is elderly and not safe to send home alone at night.
- Repeat labs.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

When a patient is admitted to AAU, an ED Handover form must be completed to ensure the accepting physician knows the plan. A bedside transfer of care is best practice and is recommended to ensure the patient is involved in the handover. *Remember, most errors in patient care involve a transfer of care.* Ensuring the patient is involved in the transfer of care can help reduce these errors.

The Emergency Consultant is responsible for patients that deteriorate in the AAU.

5. Guideline

To define the need for use of the AAU at Whanganui Hospital's Emergency Department.

6. References

Streaming and the use of Emergency Department Observation Units and Inpatient Assessment Units
- Ministry of Health February 2017

7. Related Te Whatu Ora Whanganui documents

Acute Assessment Unit Guidelines - December 2017

8. Key words

AAU Admission criteria Assessment