

Policy Number: BD-00-11-40006
VCH CA_5800

Approval Date: June 2, 2016

Last Review/Revision: June 2, 2016

Emergency Department Care for Patients with a History of or Potential for Violence and/or Aggression

1. Introduction

1.1. Description

The purpose of this policy is to provide an operational understanding of how the regional emergency departments (EDs) of Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) and Providence Health Care (PHC) will enable care for patients with a known history of violence or aggression, and/or who may have exhibited violence or aggression towards Staff members at a particular ED, without putting an unofficial 'ban' on these patients to attend a particular ED.

1.2. Scope

This policy applies to all regional EDs of VCH and PHC.

2. Policy

2.1. Policy Principles

The members of the Regional Emergency Services Program (RESP), in consultation with the Emergency Department Programs represented by RESP, agree that no patient will be refused service for reasons of a history of violence, aggression or having a restraining order in place.

This considers the following:

- The regional EDs of VCH and PHC are represented by the RESP and serve the Lower Mainland with a wide range of primary, secondary and tertiary emergency services.
- Inherent within the delivery of such services are encounters with agitated, aggressive and potentially violent patients.
- Some patients have a known history of violence, may have exhibited violence towards Staff, and/or may have restraining orders in place for certain Staff members.
- VCH and PHC have a continuing obligation to provide ED care to patients with a known history of violence and/or aggression.
- Risk of harm to Staff and other patients must be minimized while care is being provided.

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2.2. Procedures

When patients with a history of violence, or where there is a concern of potential for violence, present to an ED, Staff are to follow the algorithm outlined in [Schedule A](#).

Staff will not provide direction to Law Enforcement agencies and/or BC Emergency Health Services to deviate from normal destination protocols for patients who have a history of violent behaviors. Patients are not to be 'redirected' to another ED based on this history.

2.3. Responsibilities

2.3.1. Staff

Staff members will be responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

2.3.2. Management

Management is responsible for ensuring Staff is in compliance with this policy.

2.4. Compliance

Failure by Staff to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including the loss or termination of employment, services or privileges.

3. Supporting Documents and References

3.1. Related Policies

- [Preventing Violence in the Workplace](#)
- [Violence and Aggression ALERT - Acute Care](#)

3.2. Standards/Guideline/Forms

- [Schedule A: Algorithm for Care of Patient with History of or Potential for Violence, Current State](#)

3.3. Definitions

“**Clients**” means all people receiving services from VCH and includes patients and residents.

“**Law Enforcement**” means an agency in Canada with authority to conduct a law enforcement investigation, including municipal police departments, RCMP, and any other law enforcement or safety agency. For examples of agencies with authority to conduct law enforcement investigations see [“Request by Law Enforcement for Release of Information” form](#).

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“Staff” means all employees (including management and leadership), medical Staff (including physicians, midwives, dentists and Nurse Practitioners), residents, fellows and trainees, health care professionals, students, volunteers, contractors and other service providers engaged by VCH.

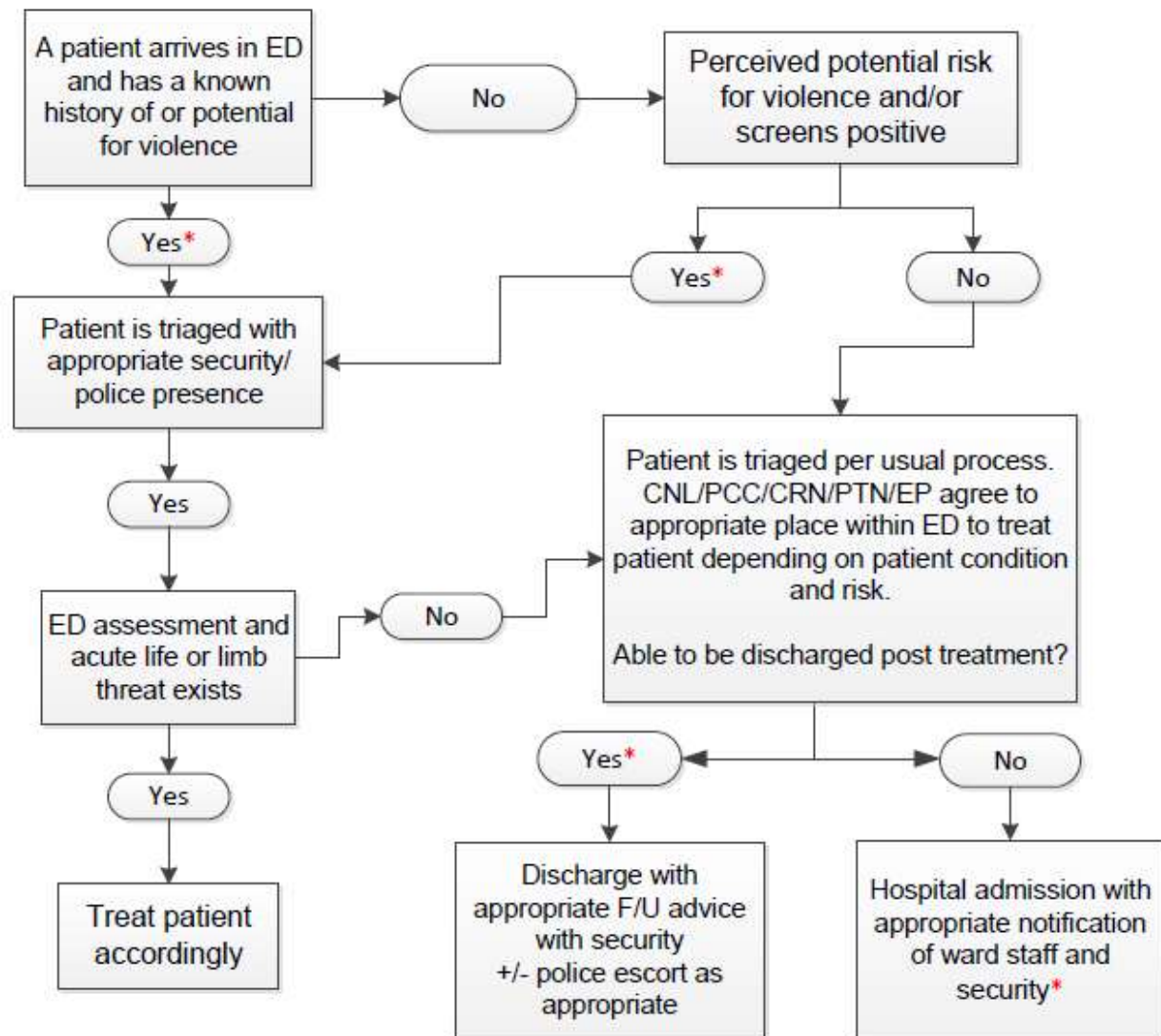
3.4. Keywords

addiction, aggression, aggressive, agitated, emergency, emergency department, emergency services, law enforcement, mental health, restraining order, violence, violent

3.5. Questions

Contact: Regional Emergency Services Program

SCHEDULE A: Algorithm for Care of Patient with History of or Potential for Violence, Current State



*** Follow site procedures for screening documentation and notification**