

# POSITION STATEMENT ON THE DEFINITION OF CRITICAL CARE OUTREACH NURSING

## Purpose

The aim of this position statement is to define Critical Care Outreach Nursing and a Critical Care Outreach Service.

## Background

Critical Care Outreach Services in New Zealand were introduced in response to a growing concern that ward patients, who were either critically ill or had the potential to progress to critical illness, were not being identified and appropriately treated. These services extend the boundaries of intensive/high dependency care by taking specialist critical care nursing knowledge and skills to other clinical areas within a hospital.

## Critical Care Outreach Nursing

- Critical care outreach nursing is the use of specialist critical care knowledge and skills when providing care to patients outside the intensive care unit (ICU) and/or high dependency unit (HDU). These specialist knowledge and skills enable early identification of the deteriorating patient and timely, appropriate intervention.

## Critical Care Outreach Service

- A Critical Care Outreach Service is defined as:  
A service provided by designated specialist critical care staff with a defined role outside the ICU and/or HDU. This service provides early identification of clinical deterioration and timely intervention for patients with potentially life-threatening conditions. A critical care outreach nursing service provides specialised nursing (What is the name: a critical care outreach service or critical care outreach nursing or a critical care outreach nursing service – the name needs to be consistent and there is a great deal of repetition in this first page because of the different names. One name one definition will make things much clearer.) expertise from senior critical care nurses to support the interdisciplinary management of deteriorating patients until any of the following is achieved:
  - stabilisation on the ward
  - a palliative care or limitation of care decision is made
  - transfer to an ICU or a HDU.

These services must have a defined relationship with, and ready access to, the expertise and resources of a critical care facility via mutually agreed policy.

The aims of the critical care outreach service are to:

- Ensure all patients receive timely and appropriate care
- Support, coach and teach ward staff to identify patient deterioration and deliver timely and appropriate care
- Facilitate transfer of patients to an ICU or HDU when more care is required
- Support patients, significant others, whānau and ward staff when patients have deteriorated and during the transitional period following discharge from an ICU and/or HDU
- Support ward staff in determining the need for palliative care or limitations in treatment.

## References

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**Correspondence to:** [nurses@nzno.org.nz](mailto:nurses@nzno.org.nz)

Principal author: Critical Care Nurses section

### Mission statement

NZNO is committed to the representation of members and the promotion of nursing and midwifery. NZNO embraces Te Tiriti o Waitangi and works to improve the health status of all peoples of Aotearoa/ New Zealand through participation in health and social policy development.

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