

Ambulatory Care Sensitive Conditions (ACSCs)

Summarized from:

CIHI. Pan-Canadian Primary Health Care Indicator Update Report, 2012, pp. 75–77.

https://secure.cihi.ca/free_products/Pan-Canadian_PHC_Indicator_Update_Report_en_web.pdf

What are ACSCs?

- ACSC are conditions for which appropriate ambulatory care may prevent or reduce the need for admission to hospital
- ACSCs include the following conditions:
 - grand mal status and other epileptic convulsions,
 - chronic obstructive pulmonary disease,
 - asthma,
 - heart failure and pulmonary edema,
 - hypertension,
 - angina and
 - diabetes

How are they used?

ACSC hospitalizations are often considered avoidable hospitalizations and used as an indirect measure of primary and community health care accessibility and the health care system's ability to manage chronic conditions.^{2,3}

For example, ACSC hospitalization rates may be compared between cities, provinces, etc. Areas with lower rates are determined to have better primary care access than those with higher rates. This can help identify areas where access improvements or other initiatives may be needed.

Other notes:

- Billings et al. created the term in 1993¹ to refer to chronic medical conditions that—when treated effectively in community settings—should not generally advance to the point of requiring hospitalization.
- Technical information for this indicator (for example, definitions for the conditions included as ACSCs) is available on CIHI's website.

References

1. Billings J, Zeitel L, Lukomnik J, Carey TS, Blank AE, Newman L. Impact of socioeconomic status on hospital use in New York City. *Health Aff (Millwood)*. 1993;12(1):162-173.
2. Magan P, Otero A, Alberquilla A, Ribera JM. Geographic variations in avoidable hospitalizations in the elderly, in a health system with universal coverage. *BMC Health Services Research*. 2008;8:42.
3. Sanmartin C, Khanand S, and the LHAD research team. Hospitalizations for Ambulatory Care Sensitive Conditions (ACSC): The Factors That Matter. Statistics Canada: 2011. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-622-x/82-622-x2011007-eng.pdf>. Accessed February 22, 2012. 82-622-X - No. 007.