



Labrador-Grenfell Health

For Immediate Release

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Labrador-Grenfell Health Launches New Processes in the Emergency Department to Improve Patient Services

Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL: A strategy implemented by Labrador-Grenfell Health to change processes at Emergency Departments in the region is improving patient services. A series of initiatives which commenced in January of 2016 are aimed at improving patient experience, providing timely access to services, improving workflow for staff, and meeting benchmarks for service delivery.

Under the improvement initiative, Labrador-Grenfell Health adopted the Canadian Emergency Department Triage and Acuity Scale (CTAS) to prioritize patient care by the severity of their condition or illness. CTAS ensures that patients who are the most critically ill or injured are seen, assessed and treated first. There are five CTAS levels – Level 1 is the highest acuity or most serious and Level 5 represents the least serious. While our goal is to see all patients that visit our emergency departments unfortunately, there are times when patients leave the emergency room without being seen.

CTAS Level 1 and 2 patients usually do not leave the Emergency Department due to the seriousness of their illness or injury, while CTAS Level 3, 4, or 5 patients may leave without being seen or treated. Patients who are assessed as Level 3 usually present with symptoms that could be caused by a number of different diagnoses, which means they require an assessment to determine the seriousness of their condition. Patients who are assessed as Level 4 and 5 typically have non-urgent medical issues.

Labrador-Grenfell Health is partnering with the Newfoundland and Labrador HealthLine to follow-up with patients who are assessed at Level 1, 2 or 3 and leave the Emergency Department without being seen and treated. If an individual cannot be contacted, the identified family contact will be called.

“Labrador-Grenfell Health is committed to providing people with timely, accessible and quality emergency health care services,” said Donnie Sampson, Vice-President responsible for Emergency Services at Labrador-Grenfell Health. “Following up with patients who leave our Emergency Departments before being assessed and treated ensures they receive the appropriate follow-up. This approach also provides Labrador-Grenfell Health with an opportunity to obtain feedback to identify ways we can improve access to care in our Emergency Departments.”

Initiatives to improve access to emergency care are in place at the Labrador West Health Centre in Labrador City, the Charles S. Curtis Memorial Hospital in St. Anthony, and the Labrador Health Centre in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Other initiatives include:

- Implementation of a ‘Fast Track’ area to improve access, increase patient flow and reduce overcrowding in emergency rooms.
- Development of an interactive clinical data reporting system to provide Labrador-Grenfell Health with information that organizes workflow and improves utilization of resources for process improvement and care delivery.

- Introduction of a time-based 'Take a Number' system which allows Labrador-Grenfell Health to streamline patient flow and collect real wait time data.
- Adjustment of nursing schedules to reflect peaks in patient registration.

"Many steps have been taken towards improving access in the Emergency Department," said Wanda Slade, co-chair of the Health Authority's Emergency Room Improvement Committee. "By setting goals, measuring our progress, and continuously striving to improve, patients seeking emergency care will benefit."

For more information on Labrador-Grenfell Health's Emergency Services, click on the links:

- [Canadian Emergency Department Triage and Acuity Scale \(CTAS\)](#)
- [Left Without Being Seen signage for Emergency Departments](#)
- [Left Without Being Seen brochure](#)

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