

# **Temiskaming Hospital**

September 9, 2009

## **Alternate Level of Care – What is it and Why is it important?**

### **What is Alternate Level of Care (ALC)?**

Alternate Level of Care (ALC) is a clinical decision that is made by a physician, or other healthcare professional, when a patient no longer requires the treatment or services provided in their current location or care setting. A patient can be identified as ALC when they occupy a hospital bed in an acute care, rehabilitation, mental health, or complex continuing care hospital.

### **How is a patient identified as ALC?**

When a patient is in a hospital bed, their healthcare team, which may include physicians, nurses, social workers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and discharge planners, will review the patient's progress. A patient can be identified as ALC when their healthcare team decides that they have reached a point in their treatment where they no longer require the level of care provided in their current location. Usually this happens when all treatments and services that can *only* be performed in this care setting are complete. When a patient is identified as ALC, this means that their healthcare team is in the process of planning for the patient's care needs following discharge.

### **Why is it important to identify patients as ALC?**

Identifying patients as ALC is important because it allows hospitals to track who is currently waiting to be sent home or waiting for a different care setting. By capturing this information, healthcare decision-makers will have a better understanding of what services are needed in our community. This will help to ensure that patients receive the care they need, when they need it, and in the appropriate location.

If you have more questions about the Alternate Level of Care designation, please talk to your healthcare provider.



Please refer complaints to the Patient Relations Representative at (705) 647-1088, extension 2221.