

# The ABCs of ALCs



An overview of **Alternative Level of Care** patients in New Brunswick

Every day in New Brunswick, people who need hospital (acute) care are admitted to hospital beds. Some admissions are **planned**, such as scheduled surgeries, while others, such as emergencies, are **unplanned**.



Most patients, once they have received the acute care they need, return home. Some patients, however, cannot leave the hospital without putting their **health and safety** at risk.

These patients are designated as **Alternative Level of Care (ALC) patients**. They don't require hospital care, but they remain in the hospital **waiting for the services they need**.

## What are some of the services ALC patients are waiting for?

### Home care

Extra-Mural Program or home support services are provided in the home of the ALC patient after their return from hospital.

### Special care homes

Special care homes provide care and supervision to individuals in need of special assistance.

### Nursing homes

Nursing homes are intended for individuals who are medically stable and who need nursing care.



## New Brunswickers who are ALC patients are not getting the care they need

ALC patients need **appropriate support services** based on their level of need rather than acute care in a hospital. Long wait times in hospital, without appropriate care, **can lead to the development of new health issues**, some of which could deteriorate to the point of needing more acute care.

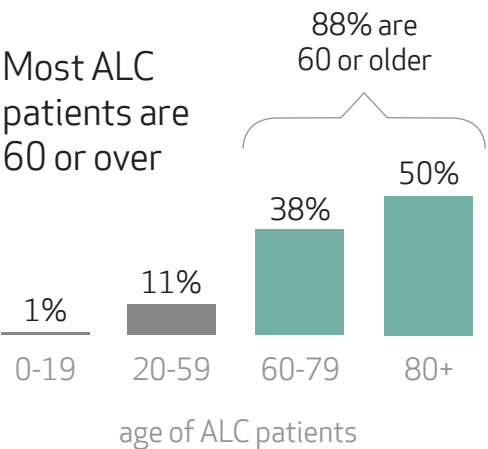


## New Brunswickers in need of hospital care wait longer for admission

Because ALC patients are using resources such as beds and time from hospital staff, **other patients in need of these beds experience delays**. ER patients may wait longer for beds after being admitted, or elective surgical patients may have their surgeries postponed to a later date.

## Better understanding the ALC picture to better care for New Brunswickers

The ALC patient's situation can only be improved by addressing other important health system challenges, including access to primary health, home care, nursing home and special care home services.



	N.B.	Moncton/ South-East	Fundy Shore/ Saint John	Fredericton/ River Valley	Madawaska/ North-West	Restigouche	Bathurst/ Acadian Peninsula	Miramichi
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Access to primary health providers

Timely and coordinated care from a primary health provider can prevent some health issues and help manage other conditions, reducing the need for hospitalization and the possibility of becoming an ALC patient.

Citizens with a family doctor (%)	90.4	92.7	90.2	85.9	90.5	91.5	92.7	92.6
Access to family doctor within 5 days (%)	55.8	58.5	61.6	56.5	39.8	50.1	46.8	56.6

Unmet home care need

This measure reflects the need for home care that is not currently being met. Offering appropriate home care to certain individuals in need may prevent them from becoming ALC patients.

New Brunswickers with home care needs which have not been met (%)	42	37	41	40	53	50	53	42
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Extra-Mural Program (EMP)

Timely EMP services would allow some ALC patients to return home sooner after being approved for discharge.

Citizens for whom EMP services started as soon as they needed them (%)	94.1	95.0	92.8	93.9	94.9	93.3	94.3	94.9
Total EMP professionals (FTEs)	722	182	154	147	77	30	90	42
Number of FTEs per 10,000 population	9.7	8.7	9.0	8.4	16.1	11.9	11.8	9.6

Special care home and nursing home beds

These facilities provide the long-term supportive care that some ALC patients need. Note: For various reasons, not all beds listed below are available for use.

Special care home beds - Total	6624	2257	798	661	835	431	1321	321
Special care home beds - Number per 100 New Brunswickers age 75 and over	9	10	5	4	16	12	14	6
Nursing home beds - Total	5244	1460	1204	1026	404	223	607	320
Nursing home beds - Number per 100 New Brunswickers age 75 and over	6.7	6.8	7.0	6.3	7.8	6.4	6.5	6.3

Wait time for nursing home placement

The longer ALC patients wait for nursing homes, the longer they remain in hospital.

Average number of days to nursing home placement from the time they are placed on the waiting list	51.8	45.9	57.0	57.6	27.9	51.3	60.8	53.2
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Acute care beds in hospitals

When an acute care bed is occupied by an ALC patient, it isn't available for an acute care patient.

Total beds <sup>1</sup>	2023	566	477	366	139	120	254	101
Beds occupied by ALC patients (number) <sup>1</sup>	338	89	68	54	12	44	58	14
Beds occupied by ALC patients (%) <sup>1</sup>	16.7	15.8	14.2	14.8	8.6	36.3	22.7	13.8
ALC bed days out of acute care days (%) <sup>2</sup>	17.5	15.7	15.3	14.8	9.3	36.3	29.2	12.6

1: As of April 1, 2017    2: Average for 2017-2018

Population context

Greater health needs among some population groups may increase the likelihood of becoming an ALC patient.

Indigenous population (%)	4.0	4.0	1.9	4.8	3.2	8.2	4.0	8.5
Living in low income household (%)	17.1	15.4	17.5	16.7	18.3	21.6	19.5	17.7
Working Poor (%)	11.0	9.6	9.5	10.5	9.0	12.8	16.7	9.1
Seniors (%)	19.9	19.3	19.0	17.9	21.7	25.5	23.9	22.4
Persons with a disability (%)	22.7	20.9	24.4	23.3	22.2	26.5	20.5	25.5