Backgrounder- Overcapacity Triggers- Calgary Zone

1. **Dramatic increases in Tier 1 and total acute triggers between December 2013 and November 2014.**

   ![Tier 1 Triggers and Total Acute Triggers Graphs](chart.png)

2. **Definitions of overcapacity protocols.** A Tier 1 overcapacity protocol is triggered by Levels 1-3. These are the national guidelines for overcapacity triggers.

   **CANADIAN TRIAGE AND ACUITY SCALE (CTAS) NATIONAL GUIDELINES**

   - **CTAS Level 1** - Patients need to be seen by a physician immediately 98% of the time.
   - **CTAS Level 2** - Patients need to be seen by a physician within 15 minutes 95% of the time.
   - **CTAS Level 3** - Patients need to be seen by a physician within 30 minutes 90% of the time.
   - **CTAS Level 4** - Patients need to be seen by a physician within 60 minutes 85% of the time.
   - **CTAS Level 5** - Patients need to be seen by a physician within 120 minutes 80% of the time.

   **EXPLANATION AND EXAMPLES OF CTAS LEVELS**

   The CTAS levels are designed such that level 1 represents the sickest patients and level 5 represents the least ill group of patients. Explanation and examples of cases which would fall under each category are listed below.

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Calgary Health Region- Admission of patients to over capacity inpatient beds-
http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/policy/docs/1451/Admission_over-capacity_AppendixA.pdf
Level 1 - Resuscitation
Conditions that are threats to life or limb (or imminent risk of deterioration) requiring immediate aggressive interventions. Examples of types of conditions that would be Level 1 are: Cardiac/Respiratory arrest, major trauma, shock states, unconscious patients, severe respiratory distress.

Level 2 - Emergent
Conditions that are a potential threat to life limb or function, requiring rapid medical intervention or delegated acts. Examples of types of conditions which would be Level 2 are altered mental states, head injury, severe trauma, neonates, MI, overdose and CVA.

Level 3 - Urgent
Conditions that could potentially progress to a serious problem requiring emergency intervention. May be associated with significant discomfort or affecting ability to function at work or activities of daily living. Examples of types of conditions which would be Level 3 are moderate trauma, asthma, GI bleed, vaginal bleeding and pregnancy, acute psychosis and/or suicidal thoughts and acute pain.

Level 4 - Less Urgent (Semi urgent)
Conditions that are related to patient age, distress, or potential for deterioration or complications would benefit from intervention or reassurance within 1-2 hours. Examples of types of conditions which would be Level 4 are headache, corneal foreign body and chronic back pain.

Level 5 - Non Urgent
Conditions that may be acute but non-urgent as well as conditions which may be part of a chronic problem with or without evidence of deterioration. The investigation or interventions for some of these illnesses or injuries could be delayed or even referred to other areas of the hospital or health care system. Examples of types of conditions which would be Level 5 are sore throat, URI, mild abdominal pain which is chronic or recurring, with normal vital signs, vomiting alone and diarrhea alone.

3. Below is an example of how overcapacity protocol triggers are tracked in the Calgary Zone. The remainder of the documents are available online.

http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/policy/docs/1451/Admission_over-capacity_AppendixA.pdf