

# Alternate level of care (ALC) days

Resource for Indicator Standards (RIS)  
Health Analytics Branch, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

## Indicator description

### RIS indicator name

Alternate level of care (ALC) days

### Other names for this indicator

- Percentage of acute alternate level of care (ALC) days (closed cases)
- Percentage of alternate level of care (ALC) days
- % ALC days

### Indicator description

Percentage of inpatient days where a physician (or designated other) has indicated that a patient occupying an acute care hospital bed has finished the acute care phase of his/her treatment. This indicator can be stratified by characteristics such as age or discharge destination (see Comments section for details).

(Total number of inpatient days designated as ALC in a given period of time ÷ Total number of inpatient days in a given time period) multiply by 100.

### Accountability agreement(s) or ministry initiative(s) the indicator supports

- Ministry LHIN Accountability Agreement (MLAA), 2015-2018
- Hospital Service Accountability Agreement (HSAA), 2017 – 2018
- Multi-Sector Service Accountability Agreement (MSAA), 2017 – 2018
- The Quarterly

## Numerator

### Data source

Discharge Abstract Database (DAD), Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI)

## Inclusion/exclusion criteria

### Includes:

1. Data from acute care hospitals, including those with psychiatric beds (AP hospitals) and without psychiatric beds (AT hospitals);
2. Individuals designated as ALC.

### Excludes:

1. Newborns and stillborns;
2. Records with missing or invalid "Discharge Date".

Note: Other inclusion/exclusion criteria may exist depending on any variables used for stratification.

## Calculation

### Steps:

1. Select the DAD data field name: ALC length of stay.
2. Calculate (sum) the total number of inpatient days designated as ALC in a given time period.

## Denominator

### Data source

Discharge Abstract Database (DAD), Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI)

## Inclusion/exclusion criteria

### Includes:

1. Data from acute care hospitals, including those with psychiatric beds (AP hospitals) and without psychiatric beds (AT hospitals).

### Excludes:

1. Newborns and stillborns;
2. Records with missing or invalid "Discharge Date".

Note: Other inclusion/exclusion criteria may exist depending on any variables used for stratification.

## Calculation

### Steps:

1. Select the DAD field name: Total length of stay.
2. Calculate (sum) the total number of inpatient days in a given time period.

# Timing and geography

## Timing/frequency of release

**How often and when data are being released (e.g., be as specific as possible...data are released annually in mid-May)**

Data by fiscal year are available annually (usually by September); interim data are updated quarterly.

## Trending

**Years available for trending**

Data are available as of 1996/97 fiscal year.

## Levels of comparability

**Levels of geography for comparison**

Data are available at LHIN level.

# Additional information

## Limitations

**Specific limitations**

The ALC days included are based on hospital discharge information, and as such the measure does not include patients occupying ALC beds who have not been discharged.

## Comments

**Additional information regarding the calculation, interpretation, data source, etc.**

The ALC indicator is often stratified by variables such as age or discharge destination. Discharge destinations are based on the 'transfer to' institution type. Approximately 12-14% of ALC separations have missing 'transfer to' codes, which indicates that either these patients were not transferred for further care or the transfer information was not available.

In 2006/07, reporting of activity at adult designated mental health units moved from the DAD to the Ontario Mental Health Reporting System (OMHRS).

Open ALC Days are calculated by Cancer Care Ontario. For more information on open ALC days, please contact [RIS@ontario.ca](mailto:RIS@ontario.ca).

## References

**Provide URLs of any key references (e.g., Diabetes in Canada, [http:// ...](http://...))**

1. [Ontario ALC Patient definition](#)

2. [Alternate Level of Care in Canada – Analysis in Brief \(CIHI\)](#)

**Contact information**

For more information about this indicator, please contact [RIS@ontario.ca](mailto:RIS@ontario.ca).

**Date RIS document created (YYYY-MM-DD)**

2012-11-29

**Date last reviewed (YYYY-MM-DD)**

2017-07-05