GROUPE LACASSE

Healthcare Glossary /15

Groupe Lacasse
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Glossary of Terms

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Departments

A-C/I	Provides detoxification of patients who are physically and psychologically dependent on Alcohol / Chemicals after having been admitted to a healthcare facility.
A-C/O	Treats patients on an ambulatory basis after they have been discharged from the A-C/I unit following detoxification treatment.
Aero	A helicopter service staffed and equipped to transport seriously ill patients and trauma victims between medical facilities and from accident scenes.
AIDS/ARC	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome / AIDS Related Complex - ARC was used in the 1980s but was later changed to AIDS.
ALF	Assisted Living Facility - An apartment setting which provides nursing, physical therapy, cooked food, and social environment for its residents.
Ambu	Ambulatory Surgery Services - Surgical services on an outpatient basis. Patients go in for same day surgery procedures which do not require overnight stay in hospital.
Anesthesiology	Administration of anesthesia - A doctor of anesthesia and in some cases a nurse anesthetist gives drugs, gases or both to sedate a patient for a procedure.
Bariatrics	A branch of medicine that deals with the treatment of obesity - Special staff and equipment are necessary to care for these patients. Generally the patients must be at least 100 lbs. overweight.
BB	Blood Bank - Part of the lab of the hospital which runs the tests, type, and cross match for providing donated blood to a patient.
BCU	Burn Care Unit - Critical or intensive care department which treats severely burned patients.
BR	Birthing Room - Patient room in a hospital designed to provide a homelike environment. Contains specialized equipment to safely assist the birth of a baby.
Cardiology	The area of medicine which studies, diagnoses, and treats heart conditions and disease.
CAH	Critical Access Hospital - Hospitals designated to provide services to a rural or under populated geographic region. These hospitals are supported by the federal government with funds.
Cath	Cardiac Catheterization Lab - Diagnostic procedure which involves introducing a catheter into the interior of the heart. This is a very specialized room which has x-ray equipment to view the heart at many levels.
CVICU	Cardio Vascular Intensive Care Unit - Intensive/Critical care department, with special staff/equipment to care for patients who have had heart surgery.
CCU	Critical Care Unit - This department has special equipment and staff trained to treat life and death situations involving patients who need intensive care from surgery, medical condition, or trauma.
CCU	Coronary Care Unit - Specialized care unit for patients with severe cardiac disease. This department specializes in care of patients who have had heart attacks, or heart related problems which can be life threatening in nature.

CCU	Cardiac Care Unit – Intensive or step down department where patients are cared for having heart/cardiac related conditions.
CSR	Central Supply Room – Area responsible for the preparation, storage, and distribution of medical / surgical supplies. This department organizes, sorts, and distributes all the supplies needed for taking care of patients.
CS	Central Services - The name of the department referring to CSR.
CSS	Central Sterile Supply – Area responsible for the assembly, processing, storage, and distribution of sterile treatment and procedure trays or packs. This department cleans, organizes, sorts, and sterilizes all the trays and instruments used in surgical procedures.
DRG	Diagnostic Related Group – Established by Centers for Medicare (federal government), puts medical/surgical/trauma conditions into groups.
Dermatology	Diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the skin.
Diagnostic Imaging	Department that provides X-rays, ultra-sounds, etc.– This type of diagnostic study involves radiation at different levels.
Dietary Services	Food services – May include staff/cafeteria, as well as patient food preparation. Trained nutritionists oversee the menu
EENT	Eye, Ear, Nose, and Throat – The doctor is a special trained surgeon who treats conditions of EENT.
ENT	Ear, Nose, and Throat.
Emerg	Common reference for the emergency department or (ER) – Also refers to level of treatment required within the emergency room or department.
Endocrinology	Diagnosis and treatment of glandular disorders – The doctor is specially trained to treat diseases of the pancreas, ovaries, lymph system, and all gland related organs.
FONAR	Field Focusing Nuclear Magnetic Resonance - Refers to the diameter of study on a camera associated with nuclear magnetic resonance. Considered an imaging device.
FOS	Freestanding Outpatient Services – Self-contained facility geographically separated from a parent hospital which treats patients who do not require overnight admission. These facilities are closed on nights and weekends and do not have an emergency departments.
Gastroenterology	Diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the gastrointestinal system – Special trained doctor who will do scopes, run a scope with camera and light into the stomach or into the colon to view, diagnose the GI tract.
Geriatric Care	Facilities designed for the elderly – They generally care for people aged 65 and older. They specialize in nutrition, mental/emotional wellness, physical therapy, etc.
Hematology	Diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the blood, blood-forming organs and cancer related diseases.
HH	Home Health – Nursing, therapy, and home-related or social services in patient's home. Nurses, physical therapist, etc. visit patients in their homes, getting the referrals from the hospital or doctor.

HNH	Hospital within a Hospital – A trend in the healthcare industry for a small specialty hospital to lease vacant floor space in an existing hospital, which does not provide those medical services. The federal government has now required to stop this practice so new facilities are being built instead.
HospAuth	Hospital Authority – A public agency or corporation that administers a hospital.
Hospt	Hospitalist – A physician who specializes in inpatient medicine. They generally stay in the hospital 24 hours per day treating the patients who need admitting to the hospital.
Housekeeping	Responsible for cleaning and sanitizing the facility to reduce the risk of infection.
ICU	Intensive Care Unit – Department where equipment/staff are dedicated to caring for the critical/intensive needs of patients who may have had surgery, a medical condition or trauma.
Long-term Care	Commonly referred to as a chronic-care facility or one that accommodates patients requiring extended nursing care. These patients require care beyond 5-7 days which is typically desired at a regular hospital.
MOB	Medical Office Building – Building which houses physician's offices, typically located close to a hospital.
Nephrology	Diagnosis and treatment of kidney diseases – This area treats patients with kidney disease. Treatments include dialysis.
Neurology	Diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the brain and nervous systems – This area of medicine treats disease which affects the brain, nervous system, such as a stroke, trauma, and brain surgery.
Neurosurgery	Surgery of the brain and spinal cord – This area deals with the surgical aspect of the brain and spinal cord such as removing a brain tumor or spinal surgery to improve the curvature of the back.
NH/LTC	Nursing Home / Long Term Care Services – These facilities treat and care for patients who cannot be treated at home. Their length of stay is beyond what is typical for a hospital admission while other times family members cannot or are unwilling to care for them.
OB	Obstetrics – Branch of medicine concerned with the care of the pregnant woman, the delivery of the baby, and the immediate postpartum care of the mother and baby. This area is considered surgical in nature.
OB-GYN	Obstetrics and Gynecology – The study and care of the pregnant women and the delivery of the baby as well as the study of the female reproductive system.
Oncology	Diagnosis and treatment of cancer.
OPD	Out Patient Department – The clinic area where patients leave the same day.
Ophthalmology	Diagnosis and treatment of eye diseases – Area of medicine that studies the diseases of the eye. Considered surgical in nature.
OR	Operating Room – The room where a surgeon will perform surgical procedures with nurses, technicians, and anesthesiologists.
Orthopedics	Diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the bones, joints, muscles, tendons, etc. Considered surgical in nature.

OT	Occupational Therapy (patient rehabilitation) – This type of therapy teaches and trains the patient on how to recover mobility to perform activities of daily living such as driving a car again.
PARA	Post Anesthetic Recovery Unit / Recovery Room – This area cares for the patient following a surgical procedure performed under general anesthetic in the operating room.
P&T	Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee – Committee within a hospital which formulates policy regarding the selection and use of drugs within that institution. They serve as the governing body in all regulated standards to follow in the distribution and administration of medications in a healthcare facility.
Palliative Care	A facility designed for the care of a patient that is dying (i.e. hospice in the U.S.) – Palliative means to ease symptoms without curing the disease.
Pathology	Laboratory study of the structural and functional change in tissues and organs caused by disease – An area of medicine dealing with the diagnosis of tissue / organ to aid in diagnosis of a disease. Physician is specially trained.
Pediatrics	Diseases of children – Specially trained doctors treating children from birth through the age of 18. Healthcare staff and hospital departments have specific equipment/training to care and treat these patients. Children are not little adults so they require and have specific needs, according to their age development.
Plastic Surgery	Cosmetic and reconstructive surgery – The doctor is a general surgeon who has completed specific training to perform reconstructive procedures.
Psychiatry	Diagnosis and treatment of mental illness – Specific area of study of the psyche of an individual.
QA	Quality Assurance – Also called Quality Assessment. Makes sure the standards of care are consistently met. This includes identifying high risk, high prone problems which are monitored and measured for improvement.
Radiology	Diagnosis of illness by use of x-rays – Same as imaging. Equipment used in diagnosis of patients utilizing radiation. Highly regulated.
SB	Swing Beds – Facility authorized to change (swing) set number of beds (designated for other specialties) over to handle non-acute illness. This is not used as much as in the past due to the number of Long Term Acute Care Hospitals being built to accommodate patients with length of stay over seven days in order to relieve the acute care hospitals space.
SNF	Skilled Nursing Facility – Provided for patients not in acute phase of illness, but requiring convalescence with physician services and professional nursing supervision. Beds must be set up and staffed in specially designed units.
TC1	Trauma Center Level 1 – Comprehensive 24-hr/day coverage with one physician experienced in ER care on duty. Every state has designated levels according to standards hospitals must meet.
TC2	Trauma Center 2 – ER 24-hr/day with special consultation available within 30 minutes. Most community hospitals of 60 beds or greater are level 2.
TC3	Trauma Center 3 – ER 24-hr/day with physician available within 30 minutes. Many rural or outlying hospitals have this in place.

TC4	Reasonable care in determining if an emergency exists; rendering life-saving first aid and referrals. Many critical access hospitals and small hospitals of 5-30 beds.
TCF	Tertiary Care Facility – A level of medical care with special techniques and therapy only available in large medical care institutions. Most small to medium size hospitals send their patient referrals or transfers to a larger tertiary care center, sometimes by ambulance or helicopter. Most are affiliated with medical schools.
UCC	Urgent Care Center – A center that provides care for non-life-threatening illness or injury. Sometimes called Doc in the Box, typically freestanding. Most doctors in these facilities are general/family practitioners.
Urology	Diagnosis and treatment of urinary tract diseases – Considered an area of surgery with specially trained physicians.
WC	Women's Center – An area of a hospital which typically houses, cares and treats women in areas of pregnancy, gynecology, and surgery. Environment is established to promote wellness and comfort aimed at their customer base, women.
WCare	Wound Care – May be within a hospital, LTAC, outpatient facility where patients receive care to treat wounds. Example may include wounds related to a stroke or a patient who has limited mobility. Includes medication, minor or major surgical treatment of the wound.
WFC	Wellness Fitness Center – Established by many healthcare facilities to encourage and promote employee wellness though fitness. If the employee is physically promoted toward wellness they are less likely to suffer illness/disease resulting in lower health care cost for the employer.

Positions

LPN	Licensed Practical Nurse – Training includes 1 year of practical skills in regards to patient care. This person always reports to and works under the supervision of a registered nurse (RN).
MD	Medical Doctor – Training includes 4 years pre-med requirements (biology/chemistry) then acceptance into medical school which is 4 years. Depending on specialty, it may involve more and additional training, i.e. General Surgeon will complete 1-2 years post med school in a specific residency training program to perform surgery.
RN	Registered Nurse – Training may be 2 years Associate Degree / 4 years Baccalaureate or Bachelor degree. These individuals must take a written exam and pass in order to receive a license to practice nursing, specific to each state. They are in charge of patient care having LPN's and Nursing assistants reporting to them.

Equipment

Charting	Refers to the patient files recording all patient health information – Charts may be stored in folders, in clipboards or in binders (varies between hospitals and between units). Electronic chart or medical record is stored in computers. Documentation on charts for patients includes all disciplines, physician, nurse, therapist, clergy, dietician, etc.
Critical Care Cart	Mobile equipment for patient care, including heart "paddles", etc. – Also referred to as the CODE or CRASH cart in that the equipment on this cart includes medications, defibrillators, (heart paddles), IV fluids, and pacemakers. Supplies that are used to aid in resuscitation of a patient both respiratory and/or cardiac in nature. Used when a patient stops breathing and/or the heart stops working.
COW	Computers On Wheels – Part of the move to electronic charting. Holds the computer to allow moving the computer/patient chart into a patient room at the bedside.
ECG	Electrocardiogram – Written tracing of electrical activity in the heart. Also called EKG.–This will diagnose if the patient's heart is irregular, if there is sign of ischemia, lack of blood flow which can result in heart attack, problems with the electrical pathway not working in the heart.
EEG	Electroencephalogram – Written tracing of electrical activity in the brain, many times done to determine brain death.
Tube	Pneumatic Tube Systems – delivers information and small physical items (including sample vials) through the hospital in cylinders (think Orson Wells 1984). It may also refer to any number of items, tube used with patient care. Example: a tube or tracheotomy is done sometimes when a patient needs assistance in breathing. A hole is cut into the trachea and a tube in inserted and connected to a ventilator or breathing machine.

Medical

ALOS	Average Length Of Stay – Measured by the number of 24-hour periods a patient is in the hospital. Used as a financial measurement of dollars spend daily on care.
Ang	Angioplasty – When a cardiologist (typically) inserts into a blood vessel a tube with a small balloon at the end, in order to reach an area where the vessel is occluded or obstructed. They blow up the balloon and in most cases improve the flow of blood. This procedure is frequently done in a catheter lab on a patient who has compromised blood flow to their heart. An angioplasty, sometimes can improve the situation and surgery may be avoided. Considered more of an interventional rather than surgical procedure.
Anti-Bacterial	Anything directed or effective against bacteria – Can include the soap used to clean a patient before surgery and even the products used to clean hospital bathrooms or the staff's hands.
Anti-Microbial	Anything that destroys or inhibits the growth of microorganisms – Usually refers to medications directed at a specific microorganism which has been identified by the lab, however can be as simple as using a form of bleach to clean an area to prevent the transmission of the HIV virus.
BMR	Basal Metabolic Rate – Amount of energy expended while at rest, decreases with age and with the loss of lean body mass. Increased cardiovascular exercise and muscle mass can increase BMR. It is measured when the person is at complete rest, but awake.
CAT	Computerized Axial Tomography (commonly referred to as "CAT scans") – This test is considered an imaging/radiology test using radiation to penetrate through a person's body for diagnosis.
CBC	Complete Blood Count – Blood test used to determine hemoglobin values. Includes the number of white blood cells that fight infection, red blood cells that provide oxygen to the cells, hemoglobin/hematocrit that measures the body's red blood cells to total body blood.
CON	Certificate of Need – Application to governing bodies to initiate a particular service/program. Most of the states have in place a CON process and requirement to start a new service/program and build a new hospital. Those states which do not have a CON process can begin these processes without approval. Most NON-CON states are located in the Southwest part of the US.
C/Non	Cardiology/Noninvasive - i.e. cardiac tests, studies, and evaluations not conducted in a catheterization lab or operating room. These procedures are considered non-invasive meaning they do not insert any tubes or catheters into the patients. The tests may include an ECG – they put electrodes on certain areas of the chest, arm and legs and run the test, echocardiogram – they look at the heart using ultrasound machine or stress test – they put electrodes on the chest and the patient walks on treadmill as they watch the heart.
CNS	Central Nervous System – Includes brain, spinal cord, and all the nerves extending from each.

CVA	Cerebrovascular Accident – Commonly used term for stroke. Either the brain has had a blockage in blood flow or a break in blood flow causing the stroke. If the stroke is the result of a blockage they can attempt to treat with blood thinners (powerful medications) which have to be given in a short time span after the patient displays symptoms and the results may be very positive.
DU	Dialysis Unit – When patients have kidney failure, a shunt is placed in their arm forever and they receive dialysis through a machine which takes in blood from the patient to clean and remove all the toxins. Patients needing dialysis must receive treatment 2-3 times per week, 2-6 hours per treatment depending on their needs.
Decubitus Ulcer	Bed sores – These are present when a patient's mobility is limited and an area of the body remained in the same position for a prolonged period of time. A huge factor in development of bed sores is the poor nutritional status of the patient.
GI	Gastrointestinal – Pertaining to the digestive system. Includes the tongue, esophagus, stomach, pancreas, gallbladder, and colon.
GU	Genitourinary – Pertaining to the genitourinary system. The organ system that produces, stores, and eliminates urine. In humans it includes two kidneys, two ureters, the urinary bladder, two sphincter muscles, and the urethra.
IV	Intravenous, or within veins – Refers to a tube placed into a vein to provide IV fluids, and/ or medications to a patient.
LOS	Length of Stay – Defined as the time a patient is in a hospital for 24 hour intervals.
Meds	Common reference for "medication" – Medications may be in the form of intravenous, oral, topical, or rectal.
MRI	Magnetic Resonance Imagery – A piece of equipment in the imaging / radiology department. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is an imaging technique used primarily in medical settings to produce high quality images of the inside of the human body. MRI is based on the principles of nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR), a spectroscopic technique used by scientists to obtain microscopic chemical and physical information about molecules.
NPO	"Nil per os" - Nothing by mouth, no food or drink – Many procedures, including surgery indicate the need for the patient to have nothing by mouth a defined number of hours before a procedure to prevent the possible aspiration of the stomach's content into the lungs.
Orthostatic Hypotension	Low Blood Pressure – Orthostatic means upright posture, and hypotension means low blood pressure. Thus, orthostatic hypotension consists of symptoms of dizziness, faintness or lightheadedness which appear only on standing, caused by low blood pressure.
OUTLIER	Patient whose treatment falls outside norms for their illness or injury – Examples can include a typical 3-day stay for a C-section delivery of a baby. The mother has complications and the total length of stay is five days so her hospitalization goes into the category of outlier.
PPS	Prospective Payment System – A particular way the federal government pays for a program or service. They sometimes change every year. Hospitals are paid a pre-determined rate for each Medicare admission. Each patient is classified into a Diagnosis Related Group (DRG) on the basis of clinical information. Except for certain patients with exceptionally high costs (called outliers), the hospital is paid a flat rate for the DRG, regardless of the actual services provided.

Peristalsis	Muscle movement of the intestines or esophagus
PT	Physical Therapy – Rehabilitation methods to improve or restore physical functions, to inpatients or outpatients.
Stasis	A static state or condition in which there is no movement or progress.
STAT	Stat – Indicates urgent, an emergency, right away
TPR	Temperature, pulse, and respiration: vital signs – Basic measurements of a patient's condition.
UA	Urinalysis – A lab test done on a urine sample. Identifies many indicators and can serve to diagnose a problem with a patient's GU tract.
URS	Utilization Review – A department, process or both to analyze a patient's course of treatment and the DRG group (which indicates a plan of care and treatment) to determine if there is over or underutilization of care. Hospitals have designated departments and staff to perform these, both for clinical and financial improvements.
Vasomotor Tone	Producing contraction or dilation in the walls of vessels – Usually refers to the maintaining of a constant output - maintain blood vessels in a partial state of contraction.
Vestibular Canal	Ear canal

Furniture / Facility

Beam Seating	Two or more seats joined by a single beam.
Communication Care Center	Nursing Station.
Moisture Barrier	A product used to protect foam from any wet material.
Staphcheck™	Product used as a moisture barrier.
Tandem Seating	Two or more seats manufactured side by side.
Trendelenburg™ Mechanism	Mechanism used for recliner allowing the patient's head to rest at an angle lower than their feet. With this, the feet are always in a position higher than the head to promote blood flow.

Information / Organizations

ASHE	American Society of Healthcare Engineers (good resource group for hospital issues) – Their mission statement is as follows: *Dedicated to optimizing the healthcare physical environment*.
BBA	Balanced Budget Act - In 1997, the Balanced Budget Act (BBA) was passed which reduced the payments that providers received from Medicare. Some of these cuts were returned to the companies providing services in 1999 under the Balanced Budget Reform Act.
BCBS	Blue Cross Blue Shield – One of the largest healthcare insurance providers.
GPO	Group Purchasing Organization – Organizations who offer contractual pricing of equipment/supply for hospitals/healthcare facilities at a lower price to their customers.
HIGPA	Health Industry Group Purchasing Association – A broad-based trade association that represents GPO's and their trading partners. HIGPA's group purchasing industry members include for-profit and not-for-profit corporations, purchasing groups, associations, multi-hospital systems, and health care provider alliances.
HIPPA	Health Insurance Portability and Privacy Act – An act of 1996 (HIPAA, Title II) requiring the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to establish national standards for electronic health care transactions and national identifiers for providers, health plans, and employers. It also addressed the security and privacy of health data.
HMO	Health Maintenance Organization – One of many types of managed care arrangements, however, it is one of the oldest forms of managed care. Some describe it as "pure" managed care.
IDN	Integrated Delivery Network – The modern integrated health networks were born in the early 1980s after hospitals began to merge in response to changes in the reimbursement rules and looked to purchase and control various auxiliary services. There are approximately 600 Integrated Health Networks operating in the U.S.
PHI	Protected Health Information – Individually identifiable health information that is transmitted by electronic media, maintained in any medium described in the definition of electronic media, or transmitted/maintained in any other form or medium.
PPO	Preferred Provider Organization – A health care organization composed of physicians, hospitals or other providers which provides health care services at a reduced fee. Care is paid for as it is received instead of in advance in the form of a scheduled fee like an HMO.
NFP	Not for Profit – Refers to the tax exempt status of the hospital. These facilities do not pay taxes.
Prop	Proprietary – Facility is privately owned and managed. These facilities do not pay taxes.

Other

Peer Review	Evaluation system for nurses, doctors, and other medical professionals – This process includes the evaluation of performance and appropriateness of service to patients for specific disciplines, peer to peer. Example: a surgeon will review a surgical procedure and the outcome of the patient performed by another surgeon.
Reimbursement	How hospitals are paid – After the fact reimbursed by insurance carrier.
3rd Party Payer	Insurance, Medicare or Medicaid.

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