

Guidelines When Calling CritiCall Ontario

If your hospital has an **emergent, urgent or critically ill patient** who requires care beyond your hospital's resources, **call CritiCall Ontario at 1-800-668-HELP (4357).**

CritiCall understands that each case is unique and this HELP sheet serves as a guideline.

Why call CritiCall:

An experienced CritiCall Call Agent will put a hospital based-physician in touch with a specialist who

- will provide a consultation (what steps to take with the patient); and/or
- will provide medical advice (how to manage the patient onsite); and/or
- has access to a select set of resources that may include OR, 24x7 access to imaging, interventional, radiology, dialysis, catheter labs, specialty nursing, and a bed.

When to call CritiCall:

CritiCall's primary role is to facilitate inter-facility transfer where there is **imminent (within 24-hours)** risk to life or limb and the sending facility lacks the necessary resources to manage the patient. CritiCall will facilitate all adult, paediatric, neonatal and perinatal emergencies.

Call CritiCall at 1-800-668-4357 to coordinate a physician-to-physician consultation and/or to seek medical advice regarding patient management or a potential patient transfer. The physician should not call other hospitals prior to calling CritiCall.

Important considerations:

The sending physician needs to be clear about the patient status and urgency. CritiCall Call Agents are experienced and thoroughly trained, but do not make medical decisions. Both the sending and receiving physicians are responsible for patient decisions; CritiCall facilitates consultations and/or referrals.

The physicians determine requirements for patient care. This may result in ongoing patient management at the home hospital or result in a transfer.

Once a call is made to CritiCall, a Call Agent checks for Bed Availability status. Sending physicians are asked not to make additional calls. This often results in a duplication of efforts.

What hospitals are responsible for:

- Existing agreements for coverage within and between hospitals should be used for non-life or limb threatening medical problems (e.g. closed extremity fractures).
- Hospitals are responsible to provide 24x7 coverage of services available in their hospital.

CritiCall does not provide ‘on call coverage’ for physicians as the expectation is that facilities are responsible for coverage of services formally available in their hospital.

When does CritiCall refer out-of-province?

CritiCall will facilitate referrals out-of-province if transport time within the province poses a risk to life or limb. Any patients CritiCall sends out of province will be repatriated back to Ontario by CritiCall, Monday through Friday between 0900-1700 hours.

Does CritiCall arrange for transportation of the patient?

If the patient requires transportation by ORNGE, CritiCall will connect the sending physician to ORNGE for transport coordination. If not ORNGE, then the sending facility is to arrange for patient transport.