

Acronym	What it stands for	What it means
AGM	<i>Annual General Meeting</i>	A public meeting held each year to give details about Nova Scotia Health's performance and future plans.
ALC	<i>Alternate Level of Care</i>	When a patient's health care needs change and they are discharged from one care setting to another that is better suited to their health needs.
AMS	<i>Antimicrobial Stewardship</i>	The act of working to measure and improve how antibiotic medications are used to treat infections.
AGMP	<i>Aerosol-Generating Medical Procedure</i>	A medical treatment that can cause droplets of body fluids which may spread germs, to go into the air.
ASP	<i>Antimicrobial Stewardship Program</i>	A program to measure and improve how antibiotic medications are used to treat infections.
CAUTI	<i>Catheter-Associated Urinary Tract Infection</i>	Infection in the urinary system (system that removes waste from the body), related to the use of a urinary catheter (a tube put in the bladder to drain urine (pee)).
CCU	<i>Critical Care Unit</i>	A hospital unit for patients who need close 24-hour support, monitoring, and care.
C. Diff	<i>Clostridium Difficile</i>	A type of bacteria that can cause diarrhea (loose, watery poop) and life-threatening swelling in the bowel, often after using antibiotic medications.
CDI	<i>Clostridium Difficile Infection</i>	An infection caused by the bacterium (germ) known as "Clostridium difficile."
CHB	<i>Community Health Board</i>	A group of volunteers who work to improve the health of their communities.
CIHI	<i>Canadian Institute for Health Information</i>	An independent, not-for-profit organization that gives information on Canada's health systems and the health of Canadians.
CLABSI	<i>Central Line-associated Bloodstream Infection</i>	Infection in the bloodstream, related to the use of a central line (a tube put in a major vein to give medication(s) or take blood samples).
CPSI	<i>Canadian Patient Safety Institute</i>	A Canadian non-profit organization that raises awareness and offers resources about patient safety.

CVICU	<i>Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit</i>	A hospital unit for patients with heart conditions who need close 24-hour support, monitoring, and care.
DHW	<i>Department of Health and Wellness</i>	Provincial department responsible for programs and services, including Nova Scotia Health.
DI	<i>Diagnostic Imaging</i>	Hospital department responsible for taking pictures of the inside of your body, including X-rays, CT scans, mammograms, and MRI scans.
ED, ER	<i>Emergency Department, Emergency Room</i>	Hospital department that provides urgent, emergency, life-saving care.
EHS	<i>Emergency Health Services</i>	A branch of the Department of Health and Wellness responsible for providing emergency medical services, and moving patients between hospitals or medical facilities (by ambulance or helicopter).
EKG, ECG	<i>Electrocardiogram</i>	A test that measures the electrical activity of the heart to check how well a patient's heart is working.
ELT	<i>Executive Leadership Team</i>	A group of Nova Scotia Health management staff, including the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Vice-Presidents, and Executive Directors.
EMS	<i>Emergency Medical Services</i>	Medical professionals who respond to 911 calls, and treat and move people who need urgent medical care.
EOC	<i>Emergency Operations Centre</i>	Nova Scotia Health staff in charge of responding to large-scale emergencies, such as pandemics, major weather events, etc.
FMEA	<i>Failure Modes and Effects Analysis</i>	A step-by-step way to identify all possible failures in a system, product, or service, to find ways to improve it.
HAI	<i>Healthcare-associated Infections</i>	Infection a patient gets while receiving treatment for another medical condition.
HPC	<i>High-priority Criteria</i>	Accreditation Canada standards that must be met by Nova Scotia Health in order to become Accredited.
HSMR	<i>Hospital Standardized Mortality Ratio</i>	Measure of the actual number of deaths in a hospital compared to the Canadian average number of deaths in the hospital.

IAP2	<i>International Association of Public Participation</i>	A global organization that supports public engagement through professional development, standards of practice, and core values.
ICU	<i>Intensive Care Unit</i>	Care unit where very ill patients are cared for by specially-trained staff and monitored very closely.
ID <i>(related to Quality)</i>	<i>Interdisciplinary</i>	A group made up of different specialties, departments, or roles (such as pharmacists, physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists, etc.).
ID <i>(related to Care)</i>	<i>Infectious Diseases</i>	The Nova Scotia Health department responsible for the study and treatment of infectious diseases.
IMCU	<i>Intermediate Care Unit</i>	A hospital unit for patients that need a level of care lower than an Intensive Care Unit, but higher than a general hospital ward.
IMT	<i>Incident Management Team</i>	Nova Scotia Health staff who plan responses to large-scale emergencies, such as pandemics, major weather events, etc.
IPAC	<i>Infection Prevention and Control</i>	Preventing and lowering the spread of infections using actions and tools based on current information and research.
IPPL	<i>Interprofessional Practice & Learning</i>	The Nova Scotia Health department responsible for providing clinical education and support to staff, physicians (doctors), and students.
ISMP	<i>Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada</i>	An organization that works with health care systems and providers to support patient safety and safe medication practices.
IM/IT	<i>Information Technology, Information Management</i>	The department responsible for running and taking care of Nova Scotia Health's information systems.
IV	<i>Intravenous</i>	Delivery of liquids and medication(s) directly into a vein in the body.
IWK Health	<i>Izaak Walton Killam Health Centre</i>	Health Centre located in Halifax, Nova Scotia that provides care to pregnant people, children, youth, and families in the Maritime provinces (NS, NB, PEI).
JOSHC	<i>Joint Occupational Safety and Health Committee</i>	A group of labour and management leaders who meet regularly to deal with health and safety issues.
KPI	<i>Key Performance Indicator</i>	A measurement that helps Nova Scotia Health see how well we are meeting a goal or target.
LMS	<i>Learning Management System</i>	Online learning system used by staff, learners, and volunteers to access courses and training.
LOS	<i>Length of Stay</i>	The number of days a patient is admitted to a hospital before they are discharged.

LTC	<i>Long-term Care</i>	Care of a patient in a long-term care setting for a long time (called “permanent placement”), or a short time (called “respite”).
Macro KPI	<i>High-level Key Performance Indicator</i>	A measurement that helps us see how much we have improved the quality of a system. This is closely related to our strategic goals (<i>the number of patient safety incidents in all of Nova Scotia Health</i>)
Meso KPI	<i>Mid-level Key Performance Indicator</i>	A broad measurement that helps us see how much we have improved the quality of a system (<i>the number of patient safety incidents in one facility or zone</i>)
Micro KPI	<i>Local-level Key Performance Indicator</i>	A specific measurement that helps us see how much we have improved the quality of a system, usually on the local level (<i>the number of patient safety incidents on a single unit</i>)
MHA	<i>Mental Health and Addictions</i>	The Nova Scotia Health department responsible for providing care related to mental health and addictions.
MRSA	<i>Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus Aureus</i>	A type of bacteria (germ) that can be hard to treat, because it has become resistant to (stronger than) the antibiotic used to get rid of it (methicillin).
MSI	<i>Medical Services Insurance</i>	Nova Scotia’s provincial health insurance program that provides eligible residents with coverage for medically needed hospital, medical, dental, and optometry (eye care) services.
NSHA, NS Health	<i>Nova Scotia Health</i>	Health care system that provides health care and services in Nova Scotia and Atlantic Canada.
OPOR	<i>One Person, One Record</i>	Information management project to create and keep up one online electronic health record for each person in Nova Scotia.
OP3	<i>One Province, One Process, One Policy</i>	Online database of all Nova Scotia Health policies and procedures: http://policy.nshealth.ca
PACU	<i>Post-Anesthesia Care Unit</i>	A hospital unit for patients who have received anesthesia (medication to put them to sleep), to make sure they wake up safely.
PCC, PFCC, CFCC	<i>People-Centered Care, Patient & Family-Centered Care, Client & Family-Centered Care</i>	A way of planning, delivering, and evaluating care services that is respectful, compassionate, culturally safe and competent while being responsive to each person’s needs, values, cultural backgrounds and beliefs, and preferences. This means providing care <u>with</u> patients and their families, not <u>to</u> patients and their families.
PAC	<i>Public (or Patient) Advisory Council</i>	A group of Patient and Family Advisors who share their views on projects, service planning, and evaluation within Nova Scotia Health, so we can make sure we are meeting the needs of our patients, clients and residents.

PAC <i>(related to COVID-19)</i>	<i>Primary Assessment Centre, Primary Assessment Clinic</i>	A location where a member of the public can be tested for COVID-19.
PCR	<i>Polymerase Chain Reaction test</i>	A lab test used to detect certain organisms and viruses (such as COVID-19) from a nose or throat swab test.
PCRA	<i>Point-of-Care Risk Assessment</i>	A way for health care staff to choose the most appropriate (best) infection control measures for safe care, to protect both the patient and staff.
PE	<i>Public Engagement, AND/OR Patient Engagement</i>	Patients and members of the public taking part in planning, delivering, and evaluating health care services in a way that is meaningful to them.
PFA	<i>Patient & Family Advisor</i>	A person who has experience as a patient or as a family member of a patient, who helps to improve the health system by sharing their opinions and experience.
PFPAC	<i>Patient, Family, Public Advisory Council</i>	A group of Patient & Family Advisors from across Nova Scotia, who give input on projects, service planning, and evaluation within Nova Scotia Health.
PHC	<i>Primary Health Care</i>	This is where patients go first for non-urgent care, such as family doctors (primary health care providers), nurse practitioners, etc.
PHIA	<i>Personal Health Information Act</i>	A legal Act that outlines how Nova Scotians' personal health information can be collected, used, disclosed (given out), kept, disposed of (gotten rid of), and destroyed.
PICU	<i>Pediatric Intensive Care Unit</i>	A hospital unit where very ill patients under the age of 18 are cared for by specially-trained staff.
PO	<i>Per Os, Latin for "by mouth"</i>	The delivery of a medication, liquid, or food through the mouth.
P&P	<i>Policy and Procedure</i>	A written document outlining the standard way of providing a service or procedure.
PPE	<i>Personal Protective Equipment</i>	Equipment or clothing (gloves, mask, gown, etc.) worn to prevent exposure to, and spreading of, infectious germs, including bacteria and viruses.
PPT	<i>PowerPoint presentation</i>	A series of slides put together to present a topic, demonstration, lecture, or speech.

PSI	<i>Patient Safety Incident</i>	Any event which resulted, or could have resulted, in harm to a patient or other person who received care or service from Nova Scotia Health, that happened because of things other than complications of the patient's health, treatment, or services.
QIIPA	<i>Quality Improvement Information Protection Act</i>	A legal act to protect health care information to improve patient care.
QIS, QI&S	<i>Quality Improvement and Safety</i>	The process of improving the care we provide, by making it better and safer.
QR	<i>Quality Review</i>	An in-depth review of the structure, practices, and/or results based on all of a patient's care or service (such as from their hospital admission to their discharge). This helps us to find ways to improve the health care system.
REB	<i>Research Ethics Board</i>	An independent group of medical and non-medical members that reviews, approves, rejects, changes, or ends research projects that are about to happen, or are happening right now.
ROP	<i>Required Organizational Practice</i>	A practice from Accreditation Canada's standards that Nova Scotia Health must follow to keep patients safe and lower their risk of harm as much as possible.
SIMS	<i>Safety Improvement and Management System</i>	An electronic system used across Nova Scotia Health to report patient safety incidents, concerns, etc.
SLT	<i>Senior Leadership Team</i>	Nova Scotia Health management members, including Senior Directors.
SPD	<i>Sterile Processing Department</i>	The hospital department responsible for cleaning, packaging, and delivering medical devices and equipment used throughout the hospital.
SRE	<i>Serious Reportable Event</i>	A type of patient safety incident that must be reported to the Department of Health and Wellness (DHW) every 3 months, as defined in the DHW's SRE policy.
SSU	<i>Short Stay Unit</i>	A hospital unit for patients needing a certain type of care and a short stay in the hospital, who will be discharged as soon as they are well enough.
TCU	<i>Transitional Care Unit</i>	A hospital unit for patients with a challenging medical condition who are going from the hospital to their home, or from one care setting to another.

TOD, T&OD	<i>Talent & Organizational Development</i>	The Nova Scotia Health department responsible for supporting staff, physicians (doctors), learners, and volunteers.
TOR	<i>Terms of Reference</i>	A document that outlines a Nova Scotia Health Quality Improvement and Safety team's scope and limitations (what they can and cannot do).
VAP	<i>Ventilator-associated Pneumonia</i>	Lung infection related to the use of a breathing machine ("ventilator").
VRE	<i>Vancomycin-resistant Enterococcus</i>	A type of bacteria (germ) that can be hard to treat, because it has become resistant to (stronger than) the antibiotic used to get rid of it (vancomycin).
WHMIS	<i>Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System</i>	Canada's standard system for sharing important safety information to protect the health and safety of workers who use, store, and handle, dangerous chemicals.

Phrase	What it means
Accreditation	An ongoing process where Accreditation Canada (a non-profit Canadian organization) publishes standards for Nova Scotia Health to meet, to see what we are doing well, and what we could be doing better.
Appropriateness of Service	When the right health care providers give the right care, to the right patient, in the right place, at the right time, resulting in the best quality care possible.
Disclosure [of patient safety incidents]	The process of talking about a patient safety event with the patient involved in the incident.
Hospitalist	A physician (doctor) responsible for providing care to patients who are staying in the hospital (inpatients).
Infection Control Surveillance	Preventing and lowering the spread of infections by measuring health care-associated infections and identifying outbreaks and trends, then sharing this information throughout Nova Scotia Health in a standard way.