



May 25, 2020

Mr. Keith Conn, Assistant Deputy Minister, First Nations & Inuit Health Branch, Department of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)

Dr. Tom Wong, Chief Medical Officer of Public Health, First Nations & Inuit Health Branch, ISC

Dr. Evan Adams, Deputy Chief Medical Officer of Public Health, First Nations & Inuit Health Branch, ISC

Dear Mr. Conn, Drs. Wong and Adams:

**Re: Position Statement on Clinical Triage Thresholds in Respiratory Disease Patients in the Event of a Major Surge during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

On behalf of the Canadian Thoracic Society (CTS), we would like to share our position statement on **clinical triage thresholds in respiratory disease patients**. We developed this statement based on best evidence and a consensus among experts from across Canada, **to inform care allocation decisions in the event of a major surge during the COVID-19 pandemic**. This document is being shared with federal and provincial/territorial governments and will be published in the *Canadian Journal of Respiratory, Critical Care and Respiratory Medicine* (<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ucts20/current>).

As the national expert society on lung diseases, the CTS believes that it is important for our organization to provide guidance in this area. Our aim is not only to provide a reference for institutions that may be developing resource allocation guidance documents, but also to reassure members of our profession and the public that the best available evidence and expert opinion has been utilized in estimating the respiratory disease-specific predicted mortalities that will be used to determine eligibility for critical care in the event of resource shortages. This position statement specifically provides criteria corresponding to estimated mortalities for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, interstitial lung disease, and cystic fibrosis.

Note that these recommendations may be subject to change, and we plan to update this guidance as new information becomes available. We also plan an update with additional criteria for patients with pulmonary hypertension in the coming weeks. We recommend periodically visiting the Canadian Thoracic Society website (<https://cts-sct.ca/covid-19>) for these updates.

We hope that you will consider our guidance in any surge-related planning policies in which you may be involved and that you will disseminate this information to the relevant institutions within your jurisdiction.

Sincerely,

John Granton, MD, FRCPC  
President, Canadian Thoracic Society

Samir Gupta, MD, MSc  
Chair, Canadian Thoracic Society  
Canadian Respiratory Guidelines Committee

cc. Federal Minister of Health, Deputy Minister and Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Provincial/Territorial Ministers of Health, Deputy Ministers and Chief Medical Officers of Health  
Indigenous Services Canada, First Nation & Inuit Health Branch