Guideline: Referral, Transfer and Discharge in the NBC

Purpose

To provide guidelines for which patients should be referred to the National Burn Centre from other regions.
To outline the process for referring patients to the National Burn Centre.
To outline the process for transferring patients from the National Burn Centre to regional services.

Responsibility

Medical personnel from local hospitals.
Regional plastic surgeons.
National Burn Centre surgeons.
Burns clinical nurse specialists.

Associated Documents

Other documents relevant to this guideline are listed below:

| NZ Legislation | CMDHB Clinical Board Policies |
| Organisational Procedures or Policies | Admission Process for Out of Region and Overseas Burns, Progress Reports for Out of Region Burn Patients - Policy. |
| Other related documents | National Burn Service Framework |
Guideline

The following criteria indicate discussion and/or transfer to the NBC:

(NB. Referral does not necessarily mean transfer.)

- Burns ≥ 30% TBSA
- Patients potentially requiring prolonged ventilation
- Full thickness burns greater than 15% TBSA in the very young or very old
- Electrical burns – high voltage with underlying tissue damage
- Significant chemical burns

All patients that fulfil these criteria are required to be discussed with the NBC but may not necessarily be transferred, if this is agreed by the RBU and the NBC staff. Regardless of whether the patient is transferred or not, a referral form should be sent to the National Burn Centre to confirm the agreed outcome. If there is no consultation and agreement with the NBC, funding will not be available to the RBU.

Any patient who fulfils the criteria for admission in a RBU (ANZBA criteria, see below) may be discussed (at the discretion of the referring plastic surgeon) with the NBC if it is felt that the patient’s care would benefit from transfer, although transfer is not necessarily guaranteed.

Complex Burn Injury – ANZBA Criteria

- Burns >10% Total Body Surface Area (TBSA) or 5% in a child
- Burns of Special Areas, ie. face, hands, feet, perineum and major joints.
- Full thickness burns >5% TBSA.
- Electrical burns.
- Chemical burns.
- Burns with associated inhalation injury.
- Circumferential burns of the limbs or chest.
- Burns at the extremes of age, ie children and elderly.
- Burn injury in patients with pre-existing medical disorders which could complicate management, prolong recovery or effect mortality.
- Any burn patient with associated trauma.

1 Additional revenue is accessible via ACC for funding of extreme and HCB’s. This is accessible by RBU’s only if discussion and agreement has taken place between the NBC and RBU, and the details recorded – (procedure to be put in place).
Referral Process

Referring Doctor rings Regional Burn Unit

Suitable for NBC referral?

No

Transfer to RBU

Yes

Referring Consultant and/or RBU Consultant rings On-Call Burn Nurse & FAXES REFERRAL to RBU & NBC

CONFERENCE CALL On-Call Burn Nurse calls back Referring Consultant and/or RBU Consultant with On-Call NBC Consultant to discuss referral

Suitable for NBC referral?

No

Decline Referral On-Call Burn Nurse faxes Referring Consultant & RBU Consultant confirmation of ‘Declined’ referral

Yes

CONFERENCE CALL On-Call Burn Nurse & NBC Consultant liaises with MMH ICU Consultant may require additional call to referring Consultant / RBU Consultant for clarification On-Call PICU Consultant

Is there Surgical Capacity?

No

Consider decanting a less acute burn to either the referring RBU or back to domicile RBU

Yes

Is there Surgical Capacity?

No

Transfer to NBC On-Call Burn Nurse to fax ‘Acceptance’ of referral back to Referring Consultant & RBU Consultant

Yes

Needs ICU Bedspace?

No

CONFERENCE CALL On-Call Burn Nurse & NBC Consultant liaises with MMH ICU Consultant - may require additional call to referring Consultant / RBU Consultant for clarification On-Call PICU Consultant

Received ‘Acceptance’ of referral to NBC Consultant

No

NEW CALL On-call Burn Nurse (R NBC Consultant) contacts Referring Consultant and RBU Consultant about ‘Decline’ within two hours of receipt of faxed referral

NEW CALL On-call Burn Nurse (R NBC Consultant) contacts Referring Consultant and RBU Consultant about ‘Acceptance’ of referral within two hours of receipt of faxed referral

Accepted by ICU?

No

Transfer to MMH ICU On-Call Burn Nurse to fax ‘Acceptance’ of referral back to Referring Consultant & RBU Consultant

Yes
Transfer of Care from the National Burn Centre

Once the patient is discharged from the NBC, responsibility for ongoing care lies with the Regional Burn Unit. The consultant responsible will be the referring consultant, unless notified otherwise by the Regional Burn Unit.

Patients will be transferred as inpatients from the NBC to the appropriate Regional Burn Unit, to enable regional personnel to arrange local support services and plan follow-up care. Exceptions can be made in collaboration between the NBC and the RBU for a patient to be discharged directly home, OR to a local hospital, if this is believed to be more appropriate for the patient and family.

Patients will be discharged from the NBC under the following guidelines:

- When NBC personnel consider the patient is ready for return transfer, following comprehensive multi-disciplinary discharge planning.
- After discussion with the Regional Plastic Surgeon and Charge Nurse of the receiving unit.
- After acute surgical treatment has been completed.
- After very early reconstructive surgery has been completed eg. Eyelid ectropian release, severe neck contracture.
- After complex splints such as Uvex masks, mouth splints have been made and problems addressed.

Comprehensive discharge summaries and plans will be sent to the receiving unit, in line with the Progress Reports for Out of Region Burn Patients Policy.
Follow-up of patients discharged from NBC

- Patient discharged from NBC, following collaboration between NBC and RBU, with multi-disciplinary Discharge Summary.
- Transferred to Regional Burns unit as inpatient.
- Review by Regional Burns unit MDT. Community support and follow-up arranged based on assessment and NBC Discharge Summary.
- Medical/Surgical follow-up in Plastics Clinic by Regional Plastics Consultant.
- Follow-up by NBC personnel at request of Regional Plastics Consultant.

Definitions

Terms and abbreviations used in this document are described below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term/Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TBSA</td>
<td>Total Body Surface Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDT</td>
<td>Multi-Disciplinary Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC</td>
<td>National Burn Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RBU</td>
<td>Regional Burn Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>MMH</td>
<td>Middlemore Hospital</td>
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Counts Manukau District Health Board