

# The Guidelines of Practice for Intensive Care Nurses to Prevent Post Intensive Care Syndrome in Adult Patients

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## Background

Following intensive care, patients may develop post intensive care syndrome (PICS), which affects over half of patients within six months of being discharged from an intensive care unit [1]. Studies indicate that PICS is in increase and it leads to a decrease in the quality of life after intensive care [2]. The level of awareness among health care providers is inconsistent in identifying the signs of the syndrome and in implementing nursing interventions [3]. No official guideline were in place in Estonia.

## Aim

The aim of the development project was to prepare the guidelines of practice for intensive care nurses to prevent PICS in adult patients.

## Methods

A systematic review of the literature on PICS and its prevention strategies was conducted. Additionally, a survey was distributed among intensive care nurses to assess the need for guidelines of practice aimed at preventing the syndrome.

## Results

Guidelines of practice for preventing the PICS in adult patients were developed and are now available for use to all intensive care units in Estonia (Figure 1).

## Conclusions

PICS can be prevented through the implementation of the ABCDEF bundle (Figure 2), which reduces patients' time on mechanical ventilation, time in intensive care and minimizes iatrogenic complications. Intensive care nurses participate in each component of the bundle.



Figure 1: The guideline



**Figure 2:** ABCDEF bundle

Intensive care nurses have limited knowledge of PICS and its prevention; however, they consider its prevention essential. Although individual components of the ABCDEF bundle are used in intensive care units, the approach is not complex. Therefore, clear guidelines of practice are needed to effectively prevent PICS.

## References

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