



# Delirium in Critical Care



**Aim:** To provide guidance on detection and management of delirium in Critical Care

**Scope:** All adult patients in Critical Care

## ASSESS FOR DELIRIUM

- Use validated tool for critical care for all critical care Patients<sup>2</sup>
- At least daily or on changes/ fluctuations of behaviour<sup>2</sup>

## Definition of Delirium

- A disturbed level of consciousness **AND**
- A change in cognition, of the development of perceptual disturbance.

**Delirium can be hyperactive (agitation), or, more commonly, hypoactive (lethargy, confusion).**

## Standard Care for Delirium Prevention and Management

1	Daily screening for evidence of delirium using a validated method <sup>2</sup>
2	Assess sedation level at least 4 hourly using Richmond Agitation-Sedation Scale or Riker sedation agitation scale <sup>1</sup> .
3	Pain assessment at least 4 hourly and managed as per local protocol <sup>2</sup>
4	Promote good sleep patterns, minimising light and noise <sup>2</sup>
5	Early mobilisation including a range of exercises for those with limited mobility <sup>2</sup>
6	Patient and family engagement & empowerment, with written information provided <sup>1</sup>
7	Patient orientation must be frequent and communication aids provided <sup>1</sup>
8	Daily review of medication, nutrition and hydration status <sup>2</sup>

## Consider and/or Treat

- Daily sedation holds / spontaneous breathing trial
- Withdrawal from:
  - alcohol
  - nicotine
  - benzodiazepines

## Treatment of Delirium - THINK

- **T** – toxic situations (shock, dehydration, new organ failure, sedatives)
- **H** – hypoxaemia
- **I** – infection, immobility
- **N** – non-pharmacological (hearing aids, glasses, sleep protocols, clocks, radio, TV, noise control)
- **K** – correct electrolyte abnormalities

Please see your units full guidelines for more information

(V3 2024)

	<b>References</b>
1	<u>Intensive Care Society (ICS), Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine (FICM) Joint Standards Committee (2022) Guidelines for the Provision of Intensive Care Services (GPICS) Edition 2.1.</u>
2	<u>NICE (2010) (Updated 2023) CG103 Delirium: prevention, diagnosis and management in hospital and long-term care</u>