

What are the John Hopkins Adjusted Clinical Groups (ACG)?

Adjusted clinical groups, a patient-centric approach, categorise patients into different groups based on the complexity and intensity of their healthcare needs rather than just their medical conditions. Instead of focusing solely on a diagnosis (like diabetes or heart disease), they take into account a broader range of health characteristics about a patient.



How Do ACGs Work?

These groups consider factors like the number of chronic conditions, the severity of illness and the level of support a patient might need. The process of assigning a patient to a particular group involves a comprehensive assessment of their health characteristics. The patients in a particular group have similar patterns of need.

For example:

Red ACG 10,11 = Complex Care Needs: Patients with multiple chronic conditions requiring regular monitoring and a coordinated care approach.

Amber ACG 5-9 = Stable Chronic Conditions: Patients with chronic conditions that are well-managed and require occasional support to maintain their stability.

Green ACG 1-4 = Healthy: Patients without significant health issues who require less intervention and could benefit from preventive care. As patient needs change over time, their categorisation changes with them. The Adjusted Clinical Groups (ACGs) therefore offers an indication of a patient's background health, at a point in time.

What are the benefits of having this information available on patient records:

1. **Personalised Care:** Healthcare providers can use ACGs to tailor their care plans, ultimately leading to improved patient outcomes. This means patients receive the specific type of care they need, whether it's more frequent monitoring, specialised treatment, or preventive care.
2. **Improved Coordination:** Patient Need Groups (PNGs) help healthcare teams coordinate more effectively. If a patient has complex needs, the care team can work together to ensure all aspects of their health are addressed, from medication management to lifestyle support.
3. **Better Resource Allocation:** Hospitals and GP Surgeries can allocate resources more efficiently based on the needs of different patient groups, providing healthcare professionals with the confidence that they are delivering the best care. This ensures that patients with the most urgent needs receive timely care, while those with less critical conditions are managed appropriately.
4. **Proactive Health Management:** For patients in lower-need groups, PNGs encourage preventive care and early intervention. This means that even when a patient is not currently experiencing significant health issues, their ACG can guide healthcare providers in recommending preventive measures and interventions. This can help them maintain their health status and avoid complications in the future.
5. **Enhanced Communication:** PNGs facilitate better communication between patients and healthcare providers. By understanding which group a patient falls into, together, they can have clearer discussions about what to expect from the care they receive and what actions they can take to manage their health.