

Acute Care Violence Assessment Tool (VAT)

This form is to be completed by clinical healthcare worker or manager/supervisor.



Identification #:

Patient's Name:

Initial Assessment

Reassessment

Section A: Risk Indicators

Read the list of behaviours below and identify behaviours that will require specific care interventions. A score of 1 is applied for past occurrence of any of the History of Violence behaviours; and additional scores of 1 are applied for each observed behavior. Add the scores — the maximum is 12.

HISTORY OF VIOLENCE:	SCORE
Score 1 for past occurrence of any of the following:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exercising physical force, in any setting, towards any person including a caregiver that caused or could have caused injury ▪ Attempting to exercise physical force, in any setting, towards any person including a caregiver that could cause injury ▪ Statement or behaviours that could reasonably be interpreted as threatening to exercise physical force, in any setting, against any person including a caregiver that could cause injury 	
OBSERVED BEHAVIORS:	SCORE
Score 1 for each of the observed behaviour categories below.	
Confused (Disoriented – e.g., unaware of time, place, or person)	
Irritable (Easily annoyed or angered; Unable to tolerate the presence of others; Unwilling to follow instructions)	
Boisterous (Overtly loud or noisy – e.g., slamming doors, shouting etc.)	
Verbal Threats (Raises voice in an intimidating or threatening way; Shouts angrily, insulting others or swearing; Makes aggressive sounds)	
Physical Threats (Raises arms / legs in an aggressive or agitated way; Makes a fist; Takes an aggressive stance; Moves / lunges forcefully towards others)	
Attacking Objects (Throws objects; Bangs or breaks windows; Kicks object; Smashes furniture)	
Agitate/Impulsive (Unable to remain composed; Quick to overreact to real and imagined disappointments; Troubled, nervous, restless or upset; Spontaneous, hasty, or emotional)	
Paranoid / suspicious (Unreasonably or obsessively anxious; Overly suspicious or mistrustful – e.g., belief of being spied on or someone conspiring to hurt them)	
Substance intoxication / withdrawal (Intoxicated or in withdrawal from alcohol or drugs)	
Socially inappropriate / disruptive behaviour (Makes disruptive noises; Screams; Engages in self-abusive acts, sexual behaviour or inappropriate behaviour – e.g., hoarding, smearing feces / food, etc.)	
Body Language (Torso shield – arms / objects acting as a barrier; Puffed up chest – territorial dominance; Deep breathing / panting; Arm dominance – arms spread, behind head, on hips; Eyes – pupil dilation / constriction, rapid blinking, gazing; Lips – compression, sneering, blushing / blanching)	
TOTAL SCORE	
Patient's Risk Rating: <input type="checkbox"/> Low (0) <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate (1-3) <input type="checkbox"/> High (4-5) <input type="checkbox"/> Very High (6+)	

Completed By (Name/ Designation) _____ Date: _____

Section B: Overall Risk Rating

Apply the total behaviour score to the Risk Rating Scale to determine whether the patient’s risk level is low, moderate, high or very high. Each level provides cues for further action to consider. If moderate or high / very high risk is determined, complete Section C to identify factors that may trigger or escalate violent, aggressive, or responsive behaviour and ensure the care plan includes measures to avoid or reduce risk behaviours identified.

Overall Score	Actions to take
Low Score of 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor and remain alert for any potential increase in risk Communicate any change in behaviours, that may put others at risk to the unit manager / supervisor Ensure communication devices / processes are in place (e.g., phone, personal safety alarm, check-in protocol and / or global positioning tracking system)
Moderate Score of 1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply flag alert Promptly notify manager / supervisor so they can inform relevant staff and coordinate appropriate patient placement, unit staffing, and workflow Alert security and request assistance as needed. Ensure to inform security of risk management plan Scan environment for potential risks and remove if possible Ensure section c is completed and initiate the violence prevention care planning process– care plan should address known triggers, behaviours and include safety measures appropriate for the situation for both patients and workers Use effective therapeutic communication (e.g., maintain a calm, reassuring demeanor, remain non-judgmental and empathetic, and provide person-centered care) Be prepared to apply behaviour management and self-protection teachings according to organizational policy/ procedures that are appropriate for the situation - training programs. Ensure communication devices / processes are in place (e.g., phone, personal safety alarm, check-in protocol and / or global positioning tracking system) Communicate any change in behaviours, that may put others at risk to the unit manager / supervisor Inform client of vat results, when safe to do so other Other: _____
High Score of 4-5 OR Very High Score of 6+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply flag alert Promptly notify manager / supervisor so they can ensure relevant staff are on high alert and prepared to respond Alert security and request security assistance as needed. Ensure to inform security of risk management plan Scan environment for potential risks and remove if possible Ensure section c is completed and initiate the violence prevention care planning process – care plan should address known triggers, behaviours and include safety measures appropriate for the situation for both patients and workers Use effective therapeutic communication (e.g., maintain a calm, reassuring demeanor, remain non-judgmental and empathetic, and provide person-centered care) Be prepared to apply behaviour management and self-protection teaching appropriate for the situation in accordance to organizational policy / procedures – training programs. Initiate applicable referrals Ensure communication devices / processes are in place (e.g. Phone, personal safety alarm, check-in protocol and / or global positioning tracking system) Communicate any change in behaviours, that may put others at risk, to the unit manager / supervisor so they can coordinate appropriate patient placement, unit staffing, and workflow Call 911 / initiate code white response as necessary Inform client of vat results, when safe to do so Other: _____

Section C: Contributing Factors

Physical, psychological, environmental, and activity triggers can lead to or escalate violent, aggressive or responsive behaviours. Documenting known triggers and behaviours and asking your patient or substitute decision maker (SDM) to help identify them can help you manage them more effectively and safely. Use the information collected and the intervention resources listed on p.2 and p.11 to develop an individualized violence prevention care plan and a safety plan to protect workers at risk.

QUESTION FOR CLIENT:	CONSIDERATIONS – Select any that Apply			
To help us provide the best care possible, please describe if there is anything during your stay that could cause you to become agitated, upset or angry e.g., I am agitated when...	PHYSICAL <input type="checkbox"/> hunger <input type="checkbox"/> pain <input type="checkbox"/> infection <input type="checkbox"/> new medication <input type="checkbox"/> other	PSYCHOLOGICAL <input type="checkbox"/> fear <input type="checkbox"/> uncertainty <input type="checkbox"/> feeling neglected <input type="checkbox"/> loss of control <input type="checkbox"/> being told to calm down <input type="checkbox"/> being lectured <input type="checkbox"/> other	ENVIRONMENTAL <input type="checkbox"/> noise <input type="checkbox"/> lighting <input type="checkbox"/> temperature <input type="checkbox"/> scents <input type="checkbox"/> privacy <input type="checkbox"/> time of day <input type="checkbox"/> days of the week <input type="checkbox"/> visitors <input type="checkbox"/> small spaces/overcrowding <input type="checkbox"/> other	ACTIVITY <input type="checkbox"/> bathing <input type="checkbox"/> medication <input type="checkbox"/> past experiences <input type="checkbox"/> toileting <input type="checkbox"/> changes in routine <input type="checkbox"/> resistance to care <input type="checkbox"/> other
What works to prevent or reduce the behaviour(s) e.g., When I am agitated, it helps if I...	<input type="checkbox"/> Go for a walk <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to music <input type="checkbox"/> Watch TV <input type="checkbox"/> Draw <input type="checkbox"/> Read (Bible/Book) <input type="checkbox"/> Have space and time alone <input type="checkbox"/> Talk 1:1 with _____ (who?) <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in activities <input type="checkbox"/> Consult a family member or friend			POTENTIAL DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES Identify potential de-escalation strategies using above information such as respect personal space, actively listen, offer choices, give eye contact, use humor