

# The Use of Urinary Catheters in Eastern Health

## Choosing Wisely Canada Recommendation

Do not place or leave in place a urinary catheter without reassessment.

### Practice Points

1. Appropriate indications for urinary catheter include acute urinary obstruction, critical illness, and end-of-life-care.
2. Urinary catheter use is associated with preventable harm, such as catheter-associated urinary tract infection, sepsis and delirium. Strategies that reduce inappropriate use of urinary catheters reduce health care-associated infections.

### Data

Aggregate data were obtained from the NL Centre for Health Information (NLCHI) for 2019–20 on number of days a catheter was in use as a proportion of total patient days for the two St. John’s hospitals by ward, the three rural hospitals of Eastern Health (EH) (medical-surgery beds) and the seven non-faith based long-term care facilities.

### Results

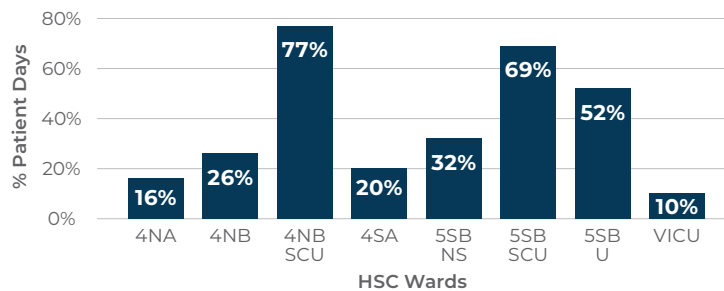


Figure 1. Per Cent of Patient Days Associated With Urinary Catheter Use at the Health Sciences Centre by Ward

- Anticipated high use was observed in Special Care units and in urology at the Health Sciences Centre (HSC). Use in other wards varied from 16–32%.

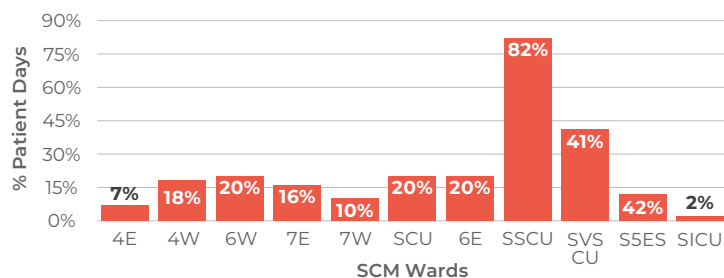


Figure 2. Per Cent of Patient Days Associated With Urinary Catheter Use at St. Clare’s Mercy Hospital by Ward

- At St. Clare’s Mercy Hospital (SCM), anticipated high use was observed in Special Care units, and ward use of urinary catheters ranged from 7–20%.

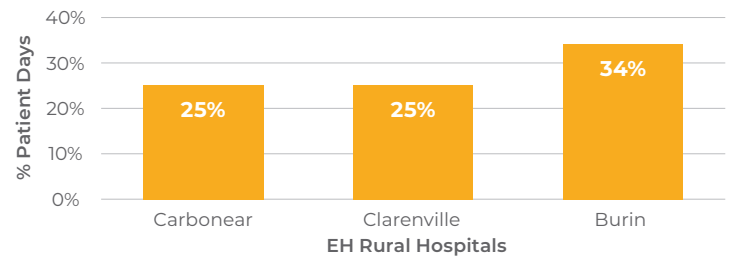


Figure 3. Per Cent Use of Patient Days Associated With Urinary Catheter Use in the Medical — Surgery Beds in the Three Rural Hospitals of Eastern Health

- The rate of urinary catheter use was higher at the hospital in Burin than in Carbonear or Clareville.

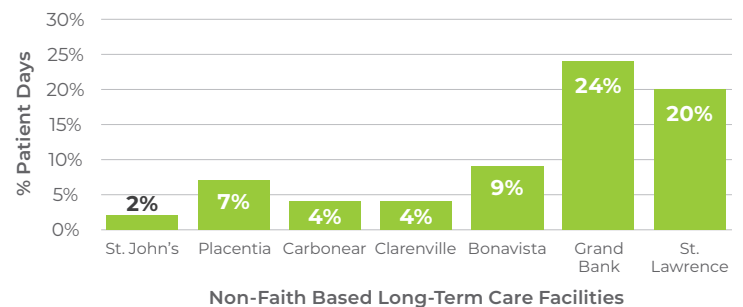


Figure 4. Per Cent Use of Patient Days Associated With Urinary Catheter Use in the Non-Faith Based Long-Term Care Facilities

- Outliers for urinary catheter use at long-term care facilities were Grand Bank and St. Lawrence.

### Conclusions

1. Institutional efforts to reduce urinary catheter use are indicated in acute care hospitals because they predispose to infection and prolong length of stay.
2. The disparity of urinary catheter use in some long-term care facilities is substantial.
3. These data provide a baseline for institutional urinary catheter use to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions to lower use.