

Appendix 2 (as supplied by the authors): Detailed inclusion criteria

1 55 years or older with one or more of the following diagnoses:

- Chronic obstructive lung disease
Defined by at least **two** of the four following criteria:
 - a) Baseline PaCO₂ of ≥ 45 torr,
 - b) Cor pulmonale;
 - c) Respiratory failure episode within the preceding year
 - d) Forced expiratory volume in 1 sec ≤ 0.5 L
- Congestive heart failure
New York Heart Association class IV symptoms and left ventricular ejection fraction $\leq 25\%$.
- Cirrhosis
Confirmed by imaging studies or documentation of esophageal varices and one of three conditions:
 - a) Hepatic coma,
 - b) Child's class C liver disease
 - c) Child's class B liver disease with gastrointestinal bleeding.
- Cancer
Metastatic cancer or stage IV lymphoma
- End-stage dementia
(inability to perform all ADLs, mutism or minimal verbal output secondary to dementia, bed-bound state prior to acute illness)

OR

2 Any patient 80 years of age or older admitted to hospital from the community because of an acute medical or surgical condition.

OR

3 Any patient 55 to 79 years of age admitted to the hospital, who does not meet the above criteria and, in the opinion of the health care team (i.e. attending physician, resident, nurse or charge nurse), is not likely to survive beyond 6 months.