

Fact Sheet 1: Tiers of Service Overview

A Provincial Approach to Defining and Planning Services

Planning and coordinating children's health services is a major area of focus for Child Health BC and its collaborators (health authorities, ministries, non-profit organizations, school boards, etc). The **Tiers of Service** framework provides a tool to define and plan such services.

Utilizing a common language and methodology, the Tiers of Service framework:

- Recognizes that health services, while important, are one of several factors that contribute to child and youth well-being overall.
- Is informed by a review of frameworks/tools in other jurisdictions around the world (e.g., Queensland, UK).
- Facilitates system planning for clinical services, knowledge sharing/training and quality improvement/ research. The responsibilities and requirements in each of these three areas are defined within the Tiers framework.

Tiers of Service describe the level of a *service* to be delivered, not the hospital or health facility as a whole. A *hospital* or *health facility* generally operates a number of services which may be of differing tier levels.

Defining Tiers of Service

Within the Tiers of Service framework, services are categorized as Tier 1 through Tier 6, with Tier 1 offering a wide breadth service and Tier 6 offering an in-depth, specialized service, often requiring multiple critical interdependencies. The tier identified for a given service represents the highest tier of that service which is available at that site.

Tier	Description
Tier 1	Prevention, primary & emergent health service
Tier 2	General health service
Tier 3	Child-focused health service
Tier 4	Children's comprehensive health service
Tier 5	Children's regional enhanced & subspecialty health service
Tier 6	Children's provincial subspecialty health service

The diagram, titled 'Tiers of Service', shows a pyramid of six colored blocks numbered 1 to 6 from bottom to top. Block 1 is green, 2 is purple, 3 is blue, 4 is red, 5 is orange, and 6 is blue. Two arrows point upwards from the base: one on the left labeled 'Patient referrals' and one on the right labeled 'Knowledge sharing & quality improvement'. At the top of the pyramid is the text 'Health promotion strategies & actions'. At the bottom of the pyramid is the text 'Self-management'.

Clinical services (e.g., Emergency Department, Medicine, Surgery and Mental Health & Addictions) are described using Tiers 1 through Tier 6. *Clinical Diagnostic and Therapeutic Services* (e.g., Laboratory, Medical Imaging and Pharmacy) are described using Tiers A through F.

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Using the Tiers of Service for Service Planning

Child Health BC is leading the use of the Tiers of Service approach to system planning. This is being done through:

1. *Creation of a series of modules:*

For each of the major areas of health services - such as Children's Medicine, Children's Surgery, Children's Emergency Care, Children & Critical Care Services - a Tiers of Service module has or is being created.

Each module has 3 parts:

- Setting the Stage: Summary of data and literature used to create the module.
- *Tiers in Brief to Support System Planning: High-level overview of key aspects to the module.
- *Tiers in Full to Support Operational Planning: Significant detail regarding the (1) clinical service; (2) knowledge sharing/training; and (3) quality improvement & research responsibilities and requirements.

*Tiers in Brief and Tiers in Full are combined in some modules (e.g., Children & Critical Care Services).

2. *Self-assessment based on the modules:*

Once a module is finalized and accepted by the key partners in the province, a self-assessment is completed. Child Health BC works with health authority partners as necessary to get this work completed.

3. *System planning and service planning based on self-assessment results:*

Using the self-assessment analysis, provincial, regional and local planning is undertaken through collaboration of CHBC and its partners.

The Tiers provide a guide to the responsibilities, requirements and critical mass to provide a safe, sustainable and appropriate level of a specified service. This facilitates the planning and development of services appropriate to meet the needs of the relevant catchment area (local, regional and/or provincial).

Service levels are expected to align with the service needs of children living in the team's geographic area of focus. For example, a Tier 6 team (BC Children's Hospital) may be expected to provide Tier 2, Tier 3, Tier 4, Tier 5 and Tier 6 services. Tier 2 services would be provided for children living in Vancouver, Tier 3 and Tier 4 services for children living in the Vancouver Coastal geographic area and Tier 5 and Tier 6 services for children living throughout the province. Tier 1 services are usually community-based and not delivered through a hospital.

Collectively, the modules and their components provide the foundation for provincial, health authority (HA)/regional and local planning of health care services for children and youth.