

# Australian Emergency Care Classification

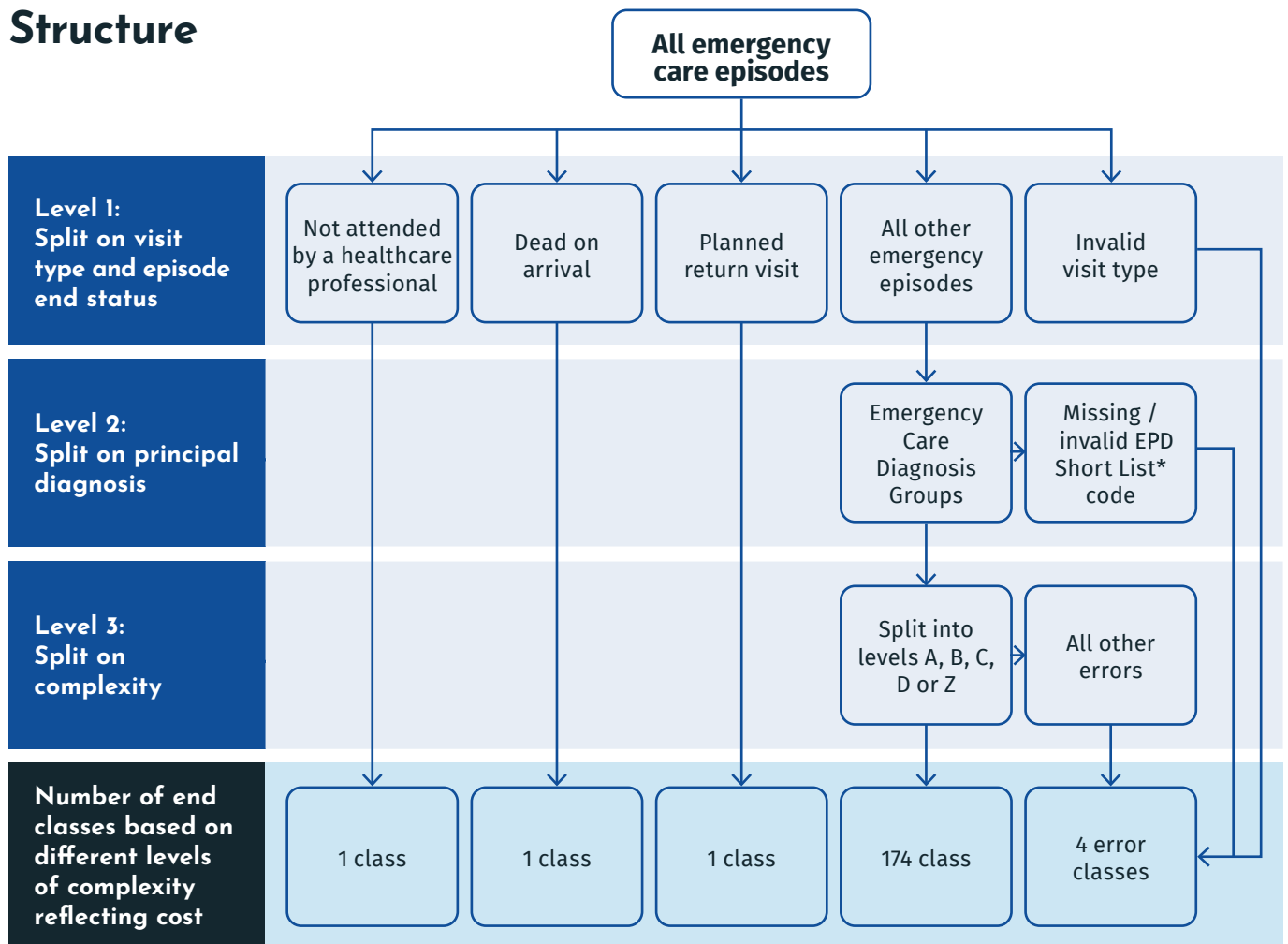
The Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority (IHACPA) is responsible for the development of the classification systems that provide the healthcare sector with a nationally consistent method of classifying all types of patients, their treatment and associated costs.

## Overview

**The Australian Emergency Care Classification (AECC) has been developed for use in emergency departments and replaced the use of the Urgency Related Group (URG) for pricing from 1 July 2021.**

The AECC has three hierarchical levels which represent how the classification sorts emergency department presentations into different end classes. The complexity levels are based on a score assigned to each presentation which is calculated using the patient's type of visit, episode end status, triage category, principal diagnosis, transport mode and age.

## Structure



\*The Emergency Care International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Tenth Revision, Australian Modification (ICD-10-AM) Principal Diagnosis Short List (EPD Short List) is a set of codes and medical terms based on ICD-10-AM that provides a nationally consistent approach to principal diagnosis reporting for emergency departments.

# Australian Emergency Care Classification

## Variables

The classification variables used by the AECC are collected in the Non-Admitted Patient Emergency Department Care National Minimum Data Set (NAPEDC NMDS).

AECC uses additional variables compared to the URG system to enable greater understanding of patient complexity and the resources consumed.

	URG	AECC
<b>Type of visit</b> (e.g. emergency presentation)	✓	✓
<b>Episode end status</b> (e.g. admitted to this hospital)	✓	✓
<b>Triage Category</b> (e.g. 1 – Resuscitation, 2 – Emergency, 3 – Urgent, 4 – Semi Urgent, 5 – Non Urgent)	✓	✓
<b>Emergency care principal diagnosis</b> (e.g. J18.9 Pneumonia, unspecified)	✓	✓
<b>Transport mode, arrival</b> (e.g. ambulance, police / correctional services vehicle, other)		✓
<b>Age</b>		✓

## Numbering convention

The AECC adopts a numbering convention that represents the Emergency Care Category (ECC), Emergency Care Diagnosis Group (ECDG) and the complexity level.

### Emergency Care Category

Higher level grouping of ECDGs. All ECCs are prefixed with E, followed by a number, two characters long.

**ENN**  
**E04**

*Respiratory*

### Emergency Care Diagnosis Group

Groupings of EPD Short List diagnoses reflecting care pathways or models of care in emergency departments.

**NN**  
**E0450**

*Lower respiratory tract infections*

### Complexity level

A split within an ECDG that represents different levels of patient complexity characterised by cost. Represented by the characters A, B, C, D and Z. 'A' represents the highest complexity level and each subsequent letter represents the next complexity level. 'Z' indicates that there was no complexity split.

**E0450B**

*Lower respiratory tract infections*  
**Complexity level B**  
**AECC end class**

### Benefits of the AECC:


- developed in consultation with clinicians
- utilises variables that are currently collected in national datasets
- is based on clinical characteristics and reduced reliance on triage category to describe patients
- has statistically strong performance
- enables greater understanding of patient complexity and resource utilisation
- has two levels of clinical diagnosis groupings (ECC and ECDG)
- can be used for purposes other than activity based funding including health planning and research
- is designed to enable incorporation of additional complexity variables for future classification refinement.

### Further information

To learn more about the Independent Health and Aged Care Pricing Authority, get in touch with us via the details below.

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