

Glossary of Acronyms and Terms

Glossary of Acronyms

AACN	—American Association of Critical-Care Nurses	EDTA	—European Dialysis and Transplant Association
AARC	—American Association for Respiratory Care	EKG	-electrocardiogram (also ECG)
AARP	—American Association of Retired Persons	EMT	-emergency medical technician
ABC	—Airway, Breathing, and Circulation; OR Assess, Breathe, and Circulate	ESRD	-end-stage renal disease
ADAMHA	—Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (DHHS, PHS)	FDA	—Food and Drug Administration (DHHS, PHS)
AGS	—American Geriatrics Society	GAO	-General Accounting Office (U.S. Congress)
AHA	—American Heart Association	GAU	-geriatric assessment unit
AHA	—American Hospital Association	GEC	-Geriatric Education Center
ALS	—advanced life support	GNP	-gross national product
ALS	—amyotrophic lateral sclerosis	GRECC	—Geriatric Research, Education, and Clinical Center
AMA	—American Medical Association	HCFA	—Health Care Financing Administration (DHHS)
AoA	—Administration on Aging	HFV	—high-frequency ventilation
APACHE	—Acute Physiology and Chronic Health Evaluation	HMO	—health maintenance organization
ASPEN	—American Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition	HRSA	—Health Resources and Services Administration (DHHS, PHS)
BLS	—basic life support	ICD-9	—International Classification of Diseases, 9th edition
CAPD	-continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis	ICF	—intermediate care facility
CAVH	-continuous arteriovenous hemofiltration	ICU	—intensive care unit
CBO	-Congressional Budget Office (U.S. Congress)	IPD	—intermittent peritoneal dialysis
CCPD	-continuous cycling peritoneal dialysis	IV	—intravenous
CCRN	-Critical Care Registered Nurse	JCAH	—Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Hospitals
CCU	-coronary care unit	LVAD	—left ventricular assist device
COBRA	-Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (of 1985)	LVPPV	—low-frequency, positive pressure ventilation
COPD	-chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	MMSE	—Mini-Mental Status Exam
CPI	-Consumer Price Index	NCHS	—National Center for Health Statistics (DHHS)
CPR	-cardiopulmonary resuscitation	NCHSR/HTA	-National Center for Health Services Research and Health Technology Assessment (DHHS, PHS)
CRNI	-certified registered nurse, intravenous	NG	—nasogastric (tube)
CRT	-cathode ray tube	NHLBI	—National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (DHHS, PHS, NIH)
CRTT	-certified respiratory therapy technician	NIA	—National Institute on Aging (DHHS, PHS, NIH)
DHHS	—U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	NIAID	—National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (DHHS, PHS, NIH)
DME	-durable medical equipment	NIH	—National Institutes of Health (DHHS, PHS)
DNI	—Do-Not-Intubate order	NIMH	—National Institute of Mental Health (DHHS, PHS, ADAMHA)
DNR	—Do-Not-Resuscitate order	OCCPR	-open-chest cardiopulmonary resuscitation
DRG	-diagnosis-related group	OHTA	-Office of Health Technology Assessment (DHHS, PHS, NCHSR/HTA)
ECC	-emergency cardiac care		
ECMO	-extracorporeal membrane oxygenation		

OTA	-Office of Technology Assessment (U.S. Congress)
PHS	-Public Health Service (DHHS)
PPS	-prospective payment system (Medicare, Part A)
PRO	-peer review organization
ProPAC	-Prospective Payment Assessment Commission
QALY	-quality adjusted life years
R&D	-research and development
RDA	-required daily allowance
RICU	-respiratory intensive care unit
RN	-registered nurse
RRT	-registered respiratory therapist
SCO	-supportive care only
SNF	-skilled nursing facility
TPN	-total parenteral nutrition
VA	-Veterans' Administration
WAK	-wearable artificial kidney

Glossary of Terms

Acute illness: An illness or condition characterized by sudden onset, marked symptoms, and short course. Compare *chronic illness*.

Advance directive: Instructions from a decisionally capable individual regarding decisions about future medical treatment in the event that he or she becomes decisionally incapable. An advance directive may specify medical treatment the individual consents to or refuses, designate a surrogate decision-maker, or both. See also *durable power of attorney, living will*.

Advanced cardiac life support: Sophisticated procedures used to restore and/or maintain breathing and circulation in a person who has experienced cardiac and/or respiratory arrest. Procedures include the administration of drugs, electric shock, and incubation. Compare *basic life support*.

Allied health professionals: Health care personnel whose roles supplement those of physicians and nurses. Includes the many kinds of therapists and technicians trained in resuscitation, respiratory care, dialysis, nutrition, and intravenous therapy who have varying levels of responsibility for patient care and/or the medical equipment used in diagnosis and treatment.

Alzheimer's disease: The most common form of dementia, a chronic organic brain disease leading to severe, progressive loss of brain function and eventual death.

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS): A motor neuron disease characterized by progressive weakening and wasting of the muscles that usually causes

death within 2 to 5 years. Also called "Lou Gehrig's disease."

Anemia: A condition in which the blood is deficient in red blood cells, hemoglobin, or total volume. Associated with a lack of well-being in patients with chronic renal failure.

Antibiotic: Any one of many drugs that can inhibit or destroy microorganisms, and that is administered to cure or control numerous kinds of infections. See *life-sustaining antibiotic therapy*.

Arrhythmia: Any variation from normal, regular rhythm. Usually refers to abnormalities of cardiac rhythm, including ventricular fibrillation, tachycardia, and bradycardia.

Arteriovenous fistula: A surgically created connection between an artery and a vein, commonly used as part of the blood access system for hemodialysis.

Artificial airway Surgically created route for passage of air into and out of the lungs.

Asystole: Absence of electrical activity in the heart.

Atherosclerosis: A common condition, in which deposits of fibrous and cellular tissue, cholesterol, and fat accumulate in the arteries, impeding blood flow.

Autonomy: Derived from the Greek "autos" (self) and "nomos" (rule, governance, or law), first used in reference to self-rule or self-governance in Greek city-states. In ethics, it is the principle that independent actions and choices of an individual should not be constrained by others.

Bacteremia: A pathological state characterized by the presence of bacteria in the blood.

Basic life support: The relatively simple resuscitative procedures used to restore and maintain breathing and circulation in a person who has experienced cardiac or respiratory arrest. Procedures include clearing the victim's airway, administering mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, and manually compressing the chest to stimulate the heart. Compare *advanced cardiac life support*.

Beneficence: Mercy, kindness, or charity to others. In ethics, it is the principle that one has a duty to convey benefits or to help others further their important and legitimate interests.

Best interest (standard): A legal standard to guide surrogate decisionmaking. By this standard, the surrogate makes the decision from the point of view of a hypothetical "reasonable person," on the basis of objective, socially shared criteria. Compare *substituted judgment*.

Biocompatible: Able to exist in harmony with living tissues, unlikely to cause infection, wear, or other deleterious effects.

Brain death: Irreversible cessation of all function of the entire brain, including the brainstem, as evi-

- denced by loss of all **reflexes** and electrical activity. Since 1970, many States have enacted legislation recognizing brain death as a criterion for determining death.
- Cardiac arrest:** Cessation of the mechanical function of the heart, resulting in the loss of arterial blood pressure and irreversible brain damage and death if blood circulation is not restored within minutes.
- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR):** A range of technologies used to restore and maintain blood circulation and breathing in a person who has experienced cardiac and/or respiratory arrest. See *advanced cardiac life support, basic life support*.
- Cardiovascular disease** Any of a diverse group of diseases characterized by the debilitation of the heart and/or blood vessels.
- Caregivers:** In this assessment, all persons who administer care to patients, i.e., health professionals including physicians, nurses, and allied health personnel; and lay persons, especially family members.
- Case law:** The aggregate of reported cases that form a body of jurisprudence, or the law of a particular subject as evidenced or formed by the decided cases, in distinction to statutes and other sources of law.
- Catheter:** A long, thin tube through which fluids may be introduced (e.g., nutritional formulas, drugs, blood) or drained (e.g., urine, blood) in the course of diagnosis or treatment.
- Charge:** The amount billed for products or services.
- Chronic illness:** An illness characterized by extended duration or frequent recurrence, and slow development. Chronic illnesses vary in severity and impact on a person's functional capacity. Some chronic illnesses are life-threatening and require continual medical treatment.
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD):** A diagnostic term that designates several diseases characterized by chronic airflow limitation: asthma, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, and less common diseases such as bronchiectasis and cystic fibrosis. COPD is a major cause of respiratory failure in elderly persons. Also called chronic obstructive lung disease.
- Chronic renal failure:** An irreversible condition in which the kidneys function at about one-quarter or less their normal level.
- Chronological age:** An individual's numerical age, dating from the time of his or her birth.
- Code:** Hospital terminology to designate the extent of resuscitative measures to be taken in the event of sudden cardiac arrest. See *Do-Not-Resuscitate*.
- Code blue:** A hospital's emergency call for professionals to respond to a patient in cardiac arrest.
- Cognitive ability:** The ability to comprehend, remember, reason, and judge information. In the context of this assessment, the content and the stability of cognitive ability are of major importance.
- Cognitive impairment:** Diminished cognitive ability.
- Comorbidity:** The simultaneous occurrence of multiple medical conditions or diseases in a single person.
- Competent** In this assessment, any adult who has not been determined by a court to be incompetent, as there is legal presumption of competence. Compare *decisionally capable*.
- Continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (CAPD):** A method of peritoneal dialysis that maximizes patient ambulation and self-care. CAPD is performed continuously, with exchange of dialysis fluid every 4 to 8 hours. CAPD is the most popular form of peritoneal dialysis and the most widely used form of home dialysis.
- Continuous cycling peritoneal dialysis (CCPD):** A recently developed form of peritoneal dialysis that combines nightly use of a machine to cycle the dialysate in and out of the peritoneal cavity (see *intermittent peritoneal dialysis*) and daytime use of ambulatory peritoneal dialysis (CAPD).
- Cost:** The actual amount spent to make facilities and services available and to provide them. Also see *charges* and *payment*. "Cost" is also used in a generic sense when the distinction between cost, charges, and payments is not clear.
- Critically ill:** In this assessment, a patient who is experiencing an acute life-threatening episode or who is believed to be in imminent danger of such an episode. A critically ill patient is medically unstable and, if not treated, likely to decline.
- Decisionally capable:** A patient who is assessed, without the involvement of a court, to possess the mental ability to make decisions or to participate in decisionmaking. Compare *competent*.
- Decisionally incapable:** A patient who is assessed, usually without the involvement of a court, to lack the mental capacity to make a particular decision. Compare *incompetent*.
- Decubitus ulcers:** Lesions or cavities on the skin frequently caused by lying in bed for a long period of time. Also called bed sores or pressure sores.
- Defibrillator** An electrical device used to terminate atrial or ventricular fibrillation. High-voltage electrical shock is delivered to the heart through two paddles placed on the patient's chest.
- Dementia** Severe impairment of mental function and global cognitive abilities of long duration (months to years) in an alert individual. Some forms (especially *Alzheimer's disease*) are permanent; others are reversible.
- Diabetes mellitus:** A chronic disease characterized by inadequate secretion or utilization of insulin, by elevated blood sugar or the presence of sugar in the

urine, by thirst, hunger, and weight loss. Long-term complications include disorders of the kidney, circulatory system, and retina.

Diagnosis-related groups (DRGs): Diagnostic categories used by Medicare (Part A) as case-mix measures, under the prospective hospital payment system. Categories are drawn from the International Classification of Diseases and modified by the presence of a surgical procedure, patient age, comorbidities or complications, and other criteria.

Dialysate: The fluid into which impurities removed from the blood by dialysis are passed. Also called “dialysis fluid.”

Dialysis: In general, any process in which components of a liquid or solution are separated on the basis of the selective movement of different kinds of molecules through a semipermeable membrane. In renal dialysis, impurities are separated and removed from the blood. The two main types of renal dialysis are *hemodialysis* and *peritoneal dialysis*.

Dialyzer: A machine for performing hemodialysis. It consists of a compartment for the blood, a compartment for the dialysate, and a semipermeable membrane separating the two.

Distributive justice: Theories and principles for the fair allocation of resources in general and scarce resources in particular. See justice.

DoNot-Intubate (DNI) order: A directive by a physician not to intubate a patient for mechanical ventilation. Other life-sustaining efforts short of incubation are not ruled out.

DeNot-Resuscitate (DNR) order: A directive by a physician to withhold cardiopulmonary resuscitation in the event that a patient experiences cardiac or respiratory arrest. Also called “no code.”

Durable power of attorney: A legal instrument empowering a designated person to act on another’s behalf. Unlike the traditional power of attorney, the “durable” power does not lapse if the person who executed it becomes decisionally incapable. Originally intended to permit financial or property transactions, durable powers of attorney are also used to delegate medical decisionmaking authority.

Elderly population: In this assessment, all persons who are age 65 and over.

Electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG): A graphic record of the electrical activity of the heart as detected by an electrocardiograph machine.

Endotracheal tube: A tube designed to be inserted through the natural opening of a patient’s trachea (windpipe), usually for mechanical ventilation. The two types of endotracheal tubes are nasotracheal tubes (inserted through the trachea via the patient’s nose) and orotracheal tubes (inserted via the patient’s mouth).

End-stage renal disease (ESRD): A late stage of chronic renal failure in which kidney function is less than 10 percent of normal, and regular dialysis or kidney transplantation is required to maintain life.

Enteral nutrition: The infusion of nutrients into a person’s stomach or intestine via tubes placed through the nose or a surgical opening into the gastrointestinal tract. (Though the term is sometimes defined to include oral nutrition supplements, in this assessment it refers only to tube feeding.) Compare *parenteral nutrition*.

Ethics committee: Consultative committee in a hospital or other institution whose role is to analyze ethical dilemmas and to advise and educate health care providers, patients, and families regarding difficult treatment decisions.

Euthanasia: An act intended to cause the merciful death of a person who is suffering from what is believed to be an incurable condition.

Extubation: Removal for any reason from a patient of a nasogastric, tracheotomy, or other tube used in treatment.

Family consent laws Laws that empower a family member to take over decisionmaking for a decisionally incapable patient without going through guardianship proceedings.

Gastrostomy tube: An enteral feeding tube inserted through the patient’s abdomen into the stomach.

Geriatrician A physician who possesses special knowledge of geriatrics or geriatric medicine. See *geriatrics*.

Geriatrics: The medical knowledge of physical disability in older persons—including the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of disorders. Also called “geriatric medicine.”

Gerontology The study of aging in all its aspects, including biological, psychological, sociological, economic, and historical perspectives.

Glomerulonephritis: Acute or chronic inflammation of the kidneys characterized by inflammation of the capillary loops in the glomeruli. A serious risk for chronic renal failure.

Guardian: A person appointed by a court to protect the interests of a person who is decisionally incapable.

Hemodialysis: The oldest and most widely used form of renal dialysis. Blood is pumped in a continuous extracorporeal loop, from an artery, through a *dialyzer*, and back through a vein. Treatments are typically three times weekly, with each session lasting 3 to 5 hours.

Hemofiltration: An extracorporeal process of filtering the blood to correct various imbalances.

Hospice: A method of care that provides supportive medical and social services for dying individuals and

- their families. Hospice services can be provided in the patient's home, a nursing home, hospital, a special hospice facility, or a combination of these.
- Hydration:** The addition of water, as by intravenous fluids, to the body.
- Hypercapnia:** Elevated concentration of carbon dioxide in the blood. Also called "hypercarbia."
- Hypertension:** A common and significant cardiovascular disorder characterized by persistently high arterial blood pressure. Important risk factor for life-threatening conditions, including cardiac arrest, stroke, and chronic renal failure.
- Hypoxia:** Deficiency of oxygen in the tissues.
- Iatrogenic:** Complication, injury, or unfavorable result that is due to medical care. Especially drug reactions and hospital-acquired infections. Compare *nosocomial*.
- Incidence:** The number of new occurrences of a disease in a specified population and period of time. Incidence is often expressed as a rate (e.g., the number of new cases of pneumonia per 1,000 nursing home residents during a 12-month period). Compare *prevalence*.
- Incompetent:** A person who has been determined by a court of law to be unable to make and articulate rational decisions.
- Infection:** An illness caused by an organism such as a bacterium, virus, or fungus.
- Informed consent:** A legal term that refers to a person's consent to a proposed medical intervention after being provided information deemed relevant to that decision. The information that is legally required include: diagnosis, nature and purpose of proposed intervention, risks and consequences of proposed treatment, probability that the treatment will be successful, feasible treatment alternatives, and prognosis if the treatment is not given.
- Intensive care unit (ICU):** A special hospital unit for complex treatment and continuous monitoring of critically ill patients.
- Intermittent peritoneal dialysis:** A form of peritoneal dialysis that involves the use of a machine to pump sterile dialysate into a patient's peritoneal cavity and to remove the spent dialysate. Typically performed for 10 to 12 hours, 3 nights per week.
- Intravenous** Through a vein. Intravenous procedures are commonly used for nutritional support, and for administration of antibiotics and other drugs.
- Intravenous feeding:** Nutritional support provided through a vein. See *parenteral nutrition*.
- Incubation:** Insertion of a tube into a body canal or hollow organ, e.g., insertion of an endotracheal tube into the trachea for mechanical ventilation.
- Justice:** Generally refers to fair and equal treatment. In ethics, it is the principle that one should act in such a manner that no one person or group bears a disproportionate share of benefits or burdens. See *distributive justice*.
- Kidney failure:** See *renal failure*.
- Life-sustaining antibiotic therapy** The use of any antibiotic against a life-threatening infection. Not a particular drug or family of drugs.
- Life-sustaining technologies:** Drugs, medical devices, or procedures that can keep individuals alive who would otherwise die within a foreseeable, though usually uncertain, time.
- Living will:** A document in which a decisionally capable person expresses in advance his or her wish not to receive certain life-sustaining treatments in the event that he or she becomes decisionally incapable in the future.
- Maintenance dialysis:** Hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis that is required indefinitely or until renal transplantation. Also called "(chronic dialysis.)"
- Mechanical ventilation:** The use of a machine to take over the role of a patient's respiratory muscles, inducing rhythmic inflation and emptying of the lungs, to permit adequate transport of oxygenation and ventilation. See *ventilator*.
- Medicaid:** A joint Federal/State program that provides medical benefits for certain low-income persons. Medicaid eligibility, coverage, and reimbursement regulations are determined by each State within Federal guidelines and vary significantly among States.
- Medicare:** A nationwide, federally administered health insurance program that pays for medical care for elderly and disabled beneficiaries and persons with end-stage renal disease. Part A (Hospital Insurance) covers hospital care, some posthospital nursing home care, and some home health care services. Part B (Supplementary Medical Insurance) covers physician services, hospital outpatient services, outpatient physical therapy and speech pathology services, and various other limited ambulatory services and supplies such as durable medical equipment. Part B also covers home health services for Medicare beneficiaries who have Part B coverage only.
- Morbidity:** 111 health. Within a population, the number of sick persons or cases of disease in a specified time period.
- Myocardial infarction:** Damage to a portion of the myocardium (heart muscle) as a result of insufficient blood to the heart. Commonly called "heart attack."
- Nasogastric (NG) tube:** An enteral feeding tube inserted through a patient's nose, down the esophagus, and into a patient's stomach.
- Natural death acts:** State statutes that authorize living wills.
- Negative pressure ventilator:** A device that induces breathing by the application of negative (i.e., below atmospheric) pressure. These relatively simple de-

VICES are effective for some medically stable patients with paralysis of the respiratory muscles. The iron lung is a well-known early example.

Nonmaleficence: Generally associated with the maxim “*primum non nocere*” (above all, do no harm). In ethics, it is the principle that one has a duty not to inflict evil, harm, or risk of harm.

Nosocomial: An infection or disease acquired in a hospital or other health care facility.

Nutritional support: Artificial methods of providing nourishment and fluids. See *enteral nutrition*, *parenteral nutrition*.

(DRG) Outlier: An atypical case that has an extremely long length of hospital stay or extraordinarily high costs when compared to most discharges classified in the same diagnosis-related group.

Oxygenation: The delivery of oxygen to the blood.

(Cardiac) pacemaker: A device that substitutes for the heart natural ability to regulate heartbeat, by generating electrical pulses to the heart. May be implanted within the chest wall or applied externally. Also called “*pacemaker*.”

Palliative care: Care intended to keep a patient comfortable, but not intended to prolong life.

Parens patriae: A legal term that refers to the sovereign power of guardianship over persons who are disabled, such as minors, insane, or incompetent persons. Grants courts authority to appoint a guardian.

Parenteral nutrition: Refers to any form of nutrition that does not utilize the gastrointestinal tract but usually refers to the infusion of nutrients directly into the bloodstream via catheter. One form of parenteral nutrition is total parenteral nutrition. Compare *enteral nutrition*.

Payment: The dollar amount actually paid for a product or service. Also called “*expenditure*,”

Peritoneal dialysis: One of two major forms of renal dialysis. Dialysis occurs inside the patient’s peritoneum, See *intermittent peritoneal dialysis*, *continuous ambulatory peritoneal dialysis*, and *continuous cycling peritoneal dialysis*.

Peritoneum: The semipermeable membrane lining the abdominal cavity. In peritoneal dialysis, this is the membrane through which impurities are passed from the blood into the dialysate.

Peritonitis: Inflammation of the peritoneum. Peritonitis is the single most important complication of peritoneal dialysis.

Pneumonia: An acute or chronic inflammation of lungs, caused by exposure to a wide variety of microbial pathogens or to toxic substances. Pneumonia is one of the five leading causes of death in the elderly population.

Polypharmacy: The concurrent use of multiple medications by one patient.

Positive pressure ventilator: A ventilator that delivers respiratory gas to a patient by the application of positive (i.e., above atmospheric) pressure to the patient’s airway.

Prevalence: In epidemiology, the number of existing cases of a disease present during a particular time period and in relation to the size of the population. Often expressed as a rate, e.g., the prevalence of diabetes per 1,000 persons per year. Compare *incidence*.

Prognosis: An informed judgment about the likely course and probable outcome of a disease based on knowledge of the facts of a particular case.

Prospective payment: A method of payment for medical care in which the amount of payment is set prior to the delivery of services. The basis for Medicare Part A (hospital) payment since 1983. Compare *retrospective cost-based reimbursement*.

Renal: Pertaining to the kidneys.

Renal dialysis: See *dialysis*.

Renal failure: Acute or chronic loss of renal function to a level that is incompatible with life. Also called “*kidney failure*.” See *chronic renal failure*.

Respect for persons: In ethics, the principle that individuals should be treated as ends in themselves and never merely as means to the ends or goals of others.

Respirator: See *ventilator*.

Respiratory arrest: Complete cessation of effective breathing.

Respiratory failure: Life-threatening condition in which the respiratory system does not provide adequate oxygenation and/or ventilation.

Respiratory insufficiency: Acute or chronic, life-affecting (in children, growth-affecting) disorder in *oxygenation and/or ventilation*.

Respiratory intensive care unit (RICU): A specialized unit in an acute care hospital for critically ill patients requiring mechanical ventilation and continuous monitoring of respiration.

Resuscitation: Procedures for the restoration of heart rhythm and maintenance of blood flow and breathing following cardiac or respiratory arrest. See also *advanced cardiac life support* and *basic life support*.

Resuscitation policies: Guidelines adopted by some hospitals, nursing homes, and other institutions to govern decisions about the use of resuscitation.

Retrospective cost-based reimbursement: A method of payment for health care services in which the amount of payment to a health care provider or patient is based on the costs that were already incurred in providing the services. Compare *prospec-*

tive payment.

Severely debilitated: In this assessment, a patient who has serious or multiple impairments or comorbidities, with severely compromised functional capacity and physiological reserve. A severely debilitated person is medically stable but highly vulnerable to new physiological stress.

Substituted judgment (standard): A legal standard for surrogate decisionmaking. By this standard, the surrogate makes the decision on the basis of what is known about the patient's personal values and preferences. Compare *best interest*.

Surrogate decisionmaker: A person who is designated to make decisions on behalf of a person who is incapable of making decisions. A surrogate decisionmaker may be selected in advance of a person's becoming decisionally incapable by means of a durable power of attorney or living will or may be selected after a patient has become decisionally incapable.

Terminally ill: A person for whom a prognosis of death has been made, based on diagnosis of an illness that has a predictably fatal progression that cannot be stopped by any known treatment.

Time-limited trial: Clinical trial of a treatment for a predetermined time period.

Total parenteral nutrition (TPN): An intravenous feeding technique that is capable of supplying sufficient nutrients to maintain a person's normal weight and growth over a prolonged period.

Tracheotomy: An artificial opening in a patient's trachea, which is created by cutting through the patient's neck into the trachea, often for the purpose of inserting a tube for mechanical ventilation.

Tube feeding: See *enteral nutrition*.

Uremia: A symptom complex that accompanies ESRD, characterized by retention in the blood of excessive byproducts of protein metabolism.

Urinary tract infection: Any infection of one or more parts of the urinary tract.

Ventilation: The removal of carbon dioxide from the blood.

Ventilator: A medical device that assists or replaces the natural mechanisms for breathing. The terms ventilator and respirator are used interchangeably, but ventilator is currently the preferred term.

Ventilator-dependent: A patient who must rely on a ventilator for survival, whether for a short time, intermittently but frequently, or constantly.

Ventricular fibrillation: Twitching or beating of the ventricles of the heart in an uncoordinated pattern, without effective contraction and cardiac output. The form of arrhythmia that most frequently precedes cardiac arrest.

Weaning: The step-by-step process of decreasing a patient's dependence on mechanical ventilation until the patient's ability to breathe independently is fully restored and the ventilator can be removed.