

## 5. Patient observations and review criteria

### Introduction

Early recognition of patients with worsening medical conditions will allow a more timely and potentially appropriate response. This is the central theme to many recent educational initiatives including IMPACT (Ill Medical Patients' Acute Care and Treatment), CCrISP (Care of the Critically Ill Surgical Patient), ALERT (Acute Life-threatening Events - Recognition and Treatment) and the programme of critical care outreach and 'track and trigger' systems being promoted by the NHS Modernisation Agency<sup>10</sup> and the Department of Health<sup>25</sup>.