pCAM-ICU Instruction Tool

Step 1: Arousal Assessment **(RASS)**: If RASS is **≥ - 3** then PROCEED to **Step 2** Content Assessment (pCAM-ICU) If RASS is **– 4 or – 5** then STOP and REASSESS patient later	**RASS**

Step 2: Content Assessment **(pCAM-ICU)** Features 1 – 4

FEATURE 1: Change or fluctuation in Mental Status

1. Is there an **acute change** from mental status baseline (MSB)? *MSB is the patient's pre-hospital mental status.*	☐ **yes**	☐ **no**
2. Has there been a **fluctuation** in mental status over the past 24 hours? *May use GCS, sedation scale, PE, or history.*	☐ **yes**	☐ **no**

Feature 1 is POSITIVE when the answer to either question is 'yes.' **+ / —**

FEATURE 2: Inattention → Attention Screening Examintion (ASE) with Letters or Memory Pictures

It is normal to have some anxiety in "performing" the pCAM-ICU when you start. Do NOT try to memorize what to say when assessing inattention or disorganized thinking. Use the pCAM-ICU card during your evaluation of the patient and read directly from it for feature 2 and feature 4. The verbage we use is verbatim off the card.

Letters (Vigilance A Test)
- **Place** your hand or finger in the palm of the patient's hand.
- **Say, "***Squeeze my hand when I say 'A'. Let's practice: A, B. Squeeze only on 'A'.***
- During the practice squeeze on A and B, **do not correct** the patient's squeeze or lack there of. For pediatric patients, you are allowing the brain time to process the command twice. Then move on with the letter sequence.
- <u>Read this 10 letter sequence without stopping</u> : *A B A D B A D A A Y*
- Use the card to read off the letter sequence so your attention is on the total number of errors. Do NOT stop and repeat command when child has errors.
- **Errors** → No squeeze with 'A' or Squeeze with letter other than 'A'.

Memory pictures
- **Hold** the memory picture stack in front of the patient.
- **Say**, "*Here are some pictures. You need to remember them.*"
- **Show** the patient the <u>5 memory pictures</u>. Show each picture for 2-3 seconds.
- **Pause** at the blank card following the 5 memory pictures and **say**, "*Here are some more pictures. Tell me 'yes or no' (or nod yes or no) if the picture you see was one you needed to remember.*"
- **Show** the patient <u>10 pictures</u> (5 memory pictures & 5 'other' pictures). Say the name of each object and show each picture for 2-3 seconds.
- **Errors** → 'No' response to a memory picture **or** 'Yes' response to an 'other' picture

Feature 2 is POSITIVE when a patient demonstrates > 2 Errors on either the Vigilance A test OR ASE picture test ERRORs **+ / —**

Feature 3: Altered Level of Consciousness

This feature determines the **current** level of consciousness (LOC) regardless of the patient's baseline mental status.   Any validated sedation scale may be used to determine current LOC.

Feature 3 is POSITIVE when the current LOC is anything other than 'Alert and Calm' (RASS score '0') Score RASS **+ / —**

Feature 4: Disorganized Brain

Say, "*I am going to ask you some questions. Say or nod yes or no to answer each question.*" Ask each question slowly and clearly, giving time for an answer.

▪ Is sugar sweet?	**Alternate:** ☐ **Is a rock hard?**
▪ Is ice cream hot?	☐ **Do rabbits fly?**
▪ Do birds fly?	☐ **Is ice cream cold?**
▪ Is an ant bigger than an elephant?	☐ **Is a giraffe smaller than a mouse?**

- ▪ <u>**Command:**</u> **Say**, "*Hold up this many fingers.*" **Demonstrate** by holding up 2 fingers. **Wait** while the patient attempts to complete the command.
  Then **say**, "*Now do that with the other hand,*" <u>**OR**</u> "*Add one more finger.*"   With this part of the command, **do NOT demonstrate** to the patient.

Errors → Incorrect 'Yes' or 'No' response to questions or inability to complete the 2-step command. (4 points for questions and 1 point for 2-step command = 5 possible points)

Feature 4 is POSITIVE when a patient demonstrates > 1 Error ERRORs **+ / —**

Delirium Outcome	Delirium is present when Feature 1 is POSITIVE + Feature 2 POSITIVE AND Either a POSITIVE Feature 3 OR Feature 4	Present Absent UTA	☐ ☐ ☐