

# Days Spent at Home and Mortality After Critical Illness

## A Cluster Analysis Using Nationwide Data

Guillaume L. Martin, MD; Alice Atramont, MD; Marjorie Mazars, MSc; Ayden Tajahmady, MD; Emin Agamaliyev, PhD; Mervyn Singer, FRCP; Marc Leone, MD; and Matthieu Legrand, MD

**BACKGROUND:** Beyond the question of short-term survival, days spent at home could be considered a patient-centered outcome in critical care trials.

**RESEARCH QUESTION:** What are the days spent at home and health care trajectories during the year after surviving critical illness?

**STUDY DESIGN AND METHODS:** Data were extracted on adult survivors spending at least 2 nights in a French ICU during 2018 who were treated with invasive mechanical ventilation or vasopressors or inotropes. Trauma, burn, organ transplant, stroke, and neurosurgical patients were excluded. Stays at home, death, and hospitalizations were reported before and after ICU stay, using state sequence analysis. An unsupervised clustering method was performed to identify cohorts based on post-ICU trajectories.

**RESULTS:** Of 77,132 ICU survivors, 89% returned home. In the year after discharge, these patients spent a median of 330 (interquartile range [IQR], 283-349) days at home. At 1 year, 77% of patients were still at home and 17% had died. Fifty-one percent had been re-hospitalized, and 10% required a further ICU admission. Forty-eight percent used rehabilitation facilities, and 5.7%, hospital at home. Three clusters of patients with distinct post-ICU trajectories were identified. Patients in cluster 1 (68% of total) survived and spent most of the year at home (338 [323-354] days). Patients in cluster 2 (18%) had more complex trajectories, but most could return home (91%), spending 242 (174-277) days at home. Patients in cluster 3 (14%) died, with only 37% returning home for 45 (15-90) days.

**INTERPRETATION:** Many patients had complex health care trajectories after surviving critical illness. Wide variations in the ability to return home after ICU discharge were observed between clusters, which represents an important patient-centered outcome.

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**KEY WORDS:** intensive care; outcome; PICS; trajectory

**ABBREVIATIONS:** ACH = acute care hospitals; CNAM = Caisse Nationale de l'Assurance Maladie; FROG-ICU = French and European Outcome reGistry in Intensive Care Units; HAH = hospital at home; IQR = interquartile range; PICS = post-ICU syndrome; PW = psychiatric wards; RF = rehabilitation facilities; SAPS II = Simplified Acute Physiology Score II; SNDS = Système National des Données de Santé; SNH = skilled nursing homes

**AFFILIATIONS:** From the Caisse Nationale de l'Assurance Maladie (G. L. M., A. A., M. M., A. T., and E. A.), Paris, France; the Bloomsbury Institute for Intensive Care Medicine, Division of Medicine (M. S.), University College London, London, United Kingdom; Aix-Marseille University, Assistance Publique Hôpitaux de Marseille, Department of Anesthesia and Intensive Care Unit (M. Leone), Hospital Nord,

Marseille, France; Société Française d'Anesthésie et de Réanimation (SFAR) (M. Leone and M. Legrand), Paris, France; the Department of Anesthesia and Perioperative Care (M. Legrand), Division of Critical Care Medicine, UCSF, San Francisco, CA; and the INI-CRCT network (M. Legrand), Nancy, France.

**CORRESPONDENCE TO:** Matthieu Legrand, MD; email: [matthieu.legrand@ucsf.edu](mailto:matthieu.legrand@ucsf.edu)

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## Take-home Points

**Study question:** How many days did patients spend at home during the year after surviving critical illness?

**Results:** Among patients surviving an ICU stay, 89% returned home (for a median 330 [interquartile range (IQR), 283-349] days) but with wide variability between clusters, and only 37% of patients who ultimately died after ICU discharge could return home for 45 (15-90) days.

**Interpretation:** Many patients had complex health care trajectories after surviving critical illness, with large variability in their ability to return home.

Stay in an ICU represents a major life event, impacting the physical, cognitive, and mental health of many survivors.<sup>1-5</sup> Beyond the legitimate question of short-term survival, outcomes research in critical care is

## Study Design and Methods

### Data Source

France has a mandatory public health insurance system that covers the entire population, ie, 67 million inhabitants. The National Health Data System (Système National des Données de Santé, SNDS) comprehensively collects anonymized individual health care consumption data, reimbursed to beneficiaries of the various French public health insurance schemes.<sup>15</sup> The SNDS includes outpatient data (pharmacy reimbursement claims, health care professional visits, and laboratory or imaging claims) and is linked to data collected on public and private hospital admissions via the Programme de Médicalisation des Systèmes d'Information, the national hospital discharge database. The Programme de Médicalisation des Systèmes d'Information comprises information regarding admissions to acute care hospitals (ACH), psychiatric wards (PW) use of rehabilitation facilities (RF) and hospital at home (HAH). The SNDS is also linked to a specific database for skilled nursing homes (SNH). The SNDS collects demographic data, date of death, and long-term chronic diseases eligible for 100% reimbursement of health care expenditure. Hospital stays in ACH are classified by the *Groupes Homogènes de Malades* system, a French adaptation of diagnosis-related groups. Long-term chronic diseases and hospital diagnoses are coded according to the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, 10<sup>th</sup> Revision. Procedures are coded according to the *Classification Commune des Actes Médicaux*, a French classification of medical procedures.

The use of SNDS data by the *Caisse Nationale de l'Assurance Maladie* (CNAM), the French National Health Insurance Fund, has been approved by decree and by the French data protection authority (*Commission Nationale de l'Informatique et des Libertés*). CNAM has permanent access to SNDS data in application of the provisions of article R. 1461-12 of the French public health code.

### Study Population Selection

Inclusion criteria were patients aged 18 years and older, admitted to a French adult ICU between January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2018, for at least 2 consecutive nights, requiring invasive mechanical ventilation

increasingly focusing on longer-term survival and quality of life. In this regard, the post-ICU syndrome (PICS) has been increasingly recognized as a major clinical entity.<sup>1,6,7</sup> Defined as impairments in cognition, mental health, and physical function after critical care, it affects 33% to 99% of survivors.<sup>8</sup> Although small cohorts have reported quality of life or functional status after critical illness, the ability of the patient to return home and their subsequent health care trajectories in large populations remains underexplored.<sup>7,9-11</sup> Data from large-scale population-based cohorts are needed to better delineate patient needs and to inform patients, relatives, and policy-makers.<sup>12-14</sup>

The main objective of this study was to report outcomes and health care trajectories during the year after ICU discharge in adult patients admitted to French ICUs in 2018, using state sequence analysis. We focused on their ability to return home, days spent at home, and health care trajectories.

or vasopressors or inotropes. Patients admitted to the ICU for trauma, burn injuries, organ transplant, stroke, or intracranial surgery were excluded from analysis because these causes of admission intrinsically affect the patient's ability to return home and reflect highly specific populations with distinct trajectories. Patients with no health care reimbursement in 2017 or with data linkage problems were also excluded. For each patient, if several ACH admissions met the selection criteria, the first was considered the index stay. Because the study focused on post-ICU trajectories, only patients discharged alive after the index ICU admission were included.

### Data Collection and Statistical Analysis

Data were extracted on age, sex, and selected preexisting comorbidities identified by algorithms applied to the patients' 2017 data. These algorithms, developed by CNAM, combine inpatient diagnoses, long-term disease information, and pharmacy reimbursement claims, and are applied annually to each beneficiary, providing information on 58 health conditions.<sup>16</sup>

For the index stay, the cause of hospitalization (based on the *Groupes Homogènes de Malades* classification, summarized into 10 categories), ICU procedures, length of ICU stay, and the Simplified Acute Physiology Score II (SAPS II) on ICU admission were identified.

For each patient, a daily state sequence was created to analyze care pathways in the 365 days preceding and the 365 days after ICU discharge (baseline date, e-Fig 1). A sequence refers to the daily succession of the different events (states) defining the patient's trajectory. Subsequent states were collected: death, hospital stays in ACH (at least 1 night), RF, PW (only full-time hospitalization), HAH, and SNH stays. Among ACH stays, ICU admissions were specifically identified. When neither hospitalized nor deceased, patients were considered to be at home. Patients with SNH stays after the index stay were considered at home if they were already in a SNH before the index stay. When multiple states overlapped on the same day, we used the following priority rule to define the chosen state: Death > ICU > ACH > RF > PW > HAH > SNH > Home. To facilitate visualization and clustering operations (see later

221 Q6 discussion), the daily state sequence was aggregated in a weekly state  
 222 sequence, selecting the most frequent state presented by each patient  
 223 during each week of the year before and after ICU discharge  
 224 (52 weeks per year). If an equal number of events occurred during  
 225 the same week for concurrent states, the previously described  
 226 priority rule was used to define the weekly state.

227 Descriptive statistics were reported based on the individual daily state  
 228 sequences (for each state: number of patients with at least one  
 229 admission, number of admissions, cumulative length of admissions).  
 230 Health care trajectories before and after ICU discharge were  
 231 represented using distribution plots (transversal distribution of the  
 232 different states each week) and sequence index plots (superposition  
 233 of all the individual weekly state sequences).

234 Based on the post-ICU weekly state sequences, an unsupervised  
 235 clustering method was used to identify groups of patients with  
 236 similar trajectories after ICU discharge. The (dis)similarity between  
 237 sequences was first measured: pairwise distances were computed  
 238 between individual sequences by optimal matching, using the  
 239 Longest Common Subsequence method.<sup>17</sup> The partition around  
 240 medoids clustering algorithm was then applied, using previously  
 241 computed distances.<sup>18</sup> This algorithm is intended to find a  
 242 prespecified number of k representative sequences, called medoids,  
 243 and attributes other sequences to the closest medoid. It aims to

276 reduce the sum of dissimilarities between the medoid (center of the  
 277 cluster) and the attributed sequences. The number of clusters was  
 278 determined according to both statistical criteria and clinical appraisal  
 279 of the clustering results. Sensitivity analyses using other sequence  
 280 dissimilarity methods (optimal matching with different costs,  
 281 Hamming distance)<sup>17</sup> and clustering algorithms (hierarchical  
 282 ascendant classification, using Ward's method) were conducted.  
 283 Overall, results were similar across analyses, and the approach  
 284 combining longest common subsequence and partition around  
 285 medoids was chosen for its robustness.

286 A multinomial logistic regression model was then used to assess  
 287 baseline factors associated with the subsequently created clusters.  
 288 Multivariable analysis was adjusted for baseline factors considered  
 289 clinically relevant.

290 Data from the year before ICU discharge that was used as an  
 291 exploratory analysis aimed to describe whether it differed from post-  
 292 ICU clusters.

293 Results are presented as percentage or median and interquartile range  
 294 (IQR) or ORs and 95% CI. Analyses were performed using SAS  
 295 software (version 9.4, SAS Institute Inc) and R version 3.5.2  
 296 (packages TraMineR version 2.0-11 and WeightedCluster version 1.4  
 297 for sequence analysis and clustering).<sup>17,18</sup>

## 243 Results

### 244 Baseline Characteristics

245 Of 222,896 patients admitted to a French adult ICU  
 246 during the study period, 96,177 met the selection  
 247 criteria. Of these, 20% died before ICU discharge,  
 248 leaving 77,132 patients in the final cohort (Table 1 and  
 249 e-Fig 2). Baseline patient characteristics are shown in  
 250 Table 1. Median age was 67 years (IQR, 57-75), with  
 251 58% patients older than 65 years and 27% older than 75  
 252 years (Table 1). The most frequent comorbidities were  
 253 diabetes (24%), chronic respiratory disease (19%),  
 254 psychiatric disorders (14%), chronic heart failure (10%),  
 255 and active cancer (10%). The median SAPS II score was  
 256 41 (30-55). Postoperative care was the main reason for  
 257 admission (30% cardiac, 23% noncardiac), followed by  
 258 respiratory diseases (14%). Invasive mechanical  
 259 ventilation, vasopressors or inotropes, and renal  
 260 replacement therapy were used in 83%, 65%, and  
 261 9.1% of patients, respectively. The median length of  
 262 index ACH stay (including contiguous ACH stays) was  
 263 18 days (11-33). The median ICU length of stay was  
 264 5 days (3-10); 24% of ICU stays exceeded 10 days.  
 265 Patients were admitted directly to intensive or  
 266 transitional care units, or via the ED for 62% of index  
 267 stays.

### 272 Health Care Trajectories After ICU Discharge

273 Three clusters were identified based on the patients'  
 274 post-ICU trajectories (Tables 2 and 3). Figure 1 shows  
 275 the state distribution plots and sequence index plots of

298 care pathways before and after ICU discharge for all  
 299 patients and for each of the three clusters.

300 Among the 77,132 patients discharged alive from the  
 301 index ICU stay, 4,360 (5.7%), 6,124 (7.9%), and 7,424  
 302 (9.6%) died within the 30, 60, and 90 days after ICU  
 303 discharge, respectively. The median duration before  
 304 death was 71 (19-180) days. Six percent of patients (n =  
 305 4,615) died during the index ACH stay (and contiguous  
 306 ACH stays).

307 Eighty-nine percent of patients returned home at some  
 308 point during the year after ICU discharge, for a median  
 309 cumulative duration of 330 (283-349) days (Table 2).  
 310 They returned home 18 (7-37) days after ICU  
 311 discharge. During the 1-year follow-up, 51% of patients  
 312 required re-hospitalization in an ACH for a median 11  
 313 (4-25) days, and 10% an ICU readmission for 5 (2-11)  
 314 days. Approximately 44% of acute care readmissions  
 315 were through the ED or transitional/ICUs. The main  
 316 reasons for readmissions in ACH were cardiovascular  
 317 diseases (16%), noncardiac surgery (16%), GI diseases  
 318 (13%), and respiratory diseases (12%). Cardiac surgery,  
 319 which represented 30% of the index stays, only  
 320 accounted for 2% of the ACH readmissions. The main  
 321 reasons for ICU readmissions were respiratory diseases  
 322 (25%), noncardiac surgery (22%), and cardiovascular  
 323 diseases (12%).

324 Regarding other stays, 48% of patients were admitted at  
 325 least once to RF for 29 (21-54) days, 5.7% had HAH  
 326 stays, 5.2% were admitted to a PW, and 2% to a SNH  
 327

331 Q10 **TABLE 1 ]** Characteristics of Patients and Index Stays

	No.	%
No. of patients	77,132	100
Age, y		
18-34	3,335	<b>4.3</b>
35-44	3,881	<b>5.0</b>
45-54	8,736	<b>11.3</b>
55-64	16,279	<b>21.1</b>
65-69	11,872	<b>15.4</b>
70-74	12,141	<b>15.7</b>
75-79	9,564	<b>12.4</b>
80-84	7,005	<b>9.1</b>
85-89	3,465	<b>4.5</b>
≥90	854	<b>1.1</b>
Age in y, median (IQR)	67 (57-75)	...
Sex		
Male	49,914	<b>64.7</b>
Female	27,218	<b>35.3</b>
Comorbidities		
Heart failure	7,850	<b>10.2</b>
Cerebrovascular disease	4,541	<b>5.9</b>
Diabetes	18,626	<b>24.1</b>
Active cancer	7,960	<b>10.3</b>
Dementia	1,236	<b>1.6</b>
Chronic respiratory disease	14,784	<b>19.2</b>
End-stage renal disease	1,610	<b>2.1</b>
Liver disease	3,834	<b>5.0</b>
Psychiatric disease	11,121	<b>14.4</b>
Reason for hospitalization		
Cardiac surgery	23,157	<b>30.0</b>
Noncardiac surgery	18,036	<b>23.4</b>
Respiratory diseases	11,076	<b>14.4</b>
Cardiovascular diseases	8,031	<b>10.4</b>
Poisoning	4,264	<b>5.5</b>
Neurological diseases (except stroke)	3,486	<b>4.5</b>
GI diseases	3,153	<b>4.1</b>
Renal or metabolic diseases	2,396	<b>3.1</b>
Infectious diseases	1,546	<b>2.0</b>
Miscellaneous	1,987	<b>2.6</b>
Length of index ACH stay in days, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	18 (11-33)	...
Length of ICU stay in days, median (IQR)	5 (3-10)	...
2-3 days (Quartile 1)	27,387	35.5
4-5 days (Quartile 2)	15,065	19.5
6-10 days (Quartile 3)	16,401	21.3
> 10 days (Quartile 4)	18,279	23.7

(Continued)

336 Q11 **TABLE 1 ]** (Continued)

	No.	%
ICU procedures <sup>a</sup>		
Invasive mechanical ventilation	64,263	83.3
Vasopressors or inotropes	50,271	65.2
Noninvasive mechanical ventilation	25,388	32.9
Fluid resuscitation	16,000	20.7
Renal replacement therapy	7,012	9.1
Transcutaneous temporary cardiac stimulation	4,704	6.1
Administration of blood products	4,438	5.8
Transcutaneous drainage of a pericardial collection	2,114	2.7
CPR with intubation	1,338	1.7
Emergency external electrical cardioversion	1,071	1.4
Mechanical circulatory support	938	1.2
Tracheostomy	3,686	4.8
Gastrostomy	1,614	2.1
SAPS II, median (IQR)	41 (30-55)	...
SAPS II, missing data	71	...

ACH = acute care hospital; IQR = interquartile range; SAPS II = Simplified Acute Physiology Score II.

<sup>a</sup>Including contiguous ACH stays.

facility. At 1 year post-ICU discharge, 77% of patients were at home and 17% had died.

Over the year preceding the index ICU stay, 99% were at home for a median cumulative duration of 351 (333-358) days, 56% were hospitalized in an ACH for a median 7 (3-18) days, and 4.9% had been admitted to an ICU for a median 4 (2-9) days (e-Table 1 and Figure 2).

### Health Care Trajectories Among Clusters

We identified three clusters with very distinct characteristics and outcomes (Figs 1 and 2). Cluster 1 (n = 52,254, 68%) was characterized by an early return to home and, mostly, a hospital-free trajectory for the year after ICU discharge. Patients could be discharged home in 99.8% of cases, for a median 338 (323-354) days. The median time before home discharge was 13 (6-28) days. At 1 year, 98% were still alive and 95% were at home. Nonetheless, 47% required rehospitalization in an ACH a median 2 (1-3) times for a median of 8 (3-17) days; 6.5% were readmitted to an ICU for a median 4 (2-8) days, and 42% were admitted to RFs for 22 (19-29) days. Cluster 1 included the highest rate of patients admitted to a PW (6.3%, for 33 (14-79) days). HAH or SNH

admissions were infrequent. The progression of “ACH-to-Home” (23%) or “ACH-to-RF-to-Home” (17%) were the two main distinct state sequences in this cluster. Over the year preceding ICU discharge, 99% of patients in this cluster were at home for a median of 354 (343-359) days. Fifty-four percent had been hospitalized in an ACH for 6 (2-14) days, and 5.8% stayed in RFs (e-Table 1).

Cluster 2 (n = 13,775, 18%) gathered patients with more complex and heterogeneous pathways. Despite the heterogeneity of the individual sequences, the transversal state distribution showed that in the first 3 weeks after ICU discharge, patients were mostly in an ACH. Over the following 10 weeks, 40% to 57% were in RFs and, subsequently, home discharge was achieved in 43% to 70% (Fig 1A). In this cluster, despite more frequent rehospitalizations, 91% of patients returned home for 242 (174-277) days. The median time before discharge home was 70 (37-112) days. At 1 year post-ICU discharge, 92% had survived, and 70% were at home. Of note, 71% required rehospitalization at least once in an ACH during the year after ICU discharge, with 2 (1-4) stays for 21 (8-45) days. In addition, 89%, 12%, 8%, and 4% were admitted to RFs (for 66 [45-111] days), HAH, SNH, or PWs, respectively. Regarding the year preceding ICU discharge, 99% of these patients were at home, and 56% were hospitalized in an ACH for a median 10 (4-25) days, and 5.6% required ICU admission for 5 (2-12) days (e-Table 1). Sixteen percent spent 37 (20-72) days in RFs.

Cluster 3 (n = 11,103; 14%) gathered patients who died during the year after ICU discharge. Over the year after ICU discharge, only 37% returned home for a median of 45 (15-90) days, with none at home at 1 year post-ICU discharge (Table 2). The median time before discharge home was 16 (8-38) days. The progression from “ACH-to-Death” was the most frequent distinct state sequence in this cluster, accounting for 39% of the individual daily sequences. Forty-four percent were rehospitalized in an ACH for a median of 19 (8-37) days with a median of 2 (1-3) stays, 28% were admitted to RFs for 29 (14-55) days, and 11% had HAH stays for 28 (11-67) days. During the year preceding ICU discharge, 98% were at home, 66% required at least one ACH stay for 16 (7-32) days, 7.9% an ICU admission for 5 (2-10) days, and 16% an admission to RFs for 31 (16-59) days (e-Table 1).

### Risk Factors to Belong to a Cluster

Patients in clusters 2 and 3 were older and had more comorbidities than patients in cluster 1 (Table 3). They

were less frequently hospitalized for cardiac surgery, had longer index ICU stays, had higher SAPS II scores, and more frequently required renal replacement therapy, blood transfusion, mechanical circulatory support, gastrostomy, and tracheotomy than patients in cluster 1. Compared with cluster 1, patients in cluster 2 were more often women, whereas patients in cluster 3 were more often men. These results were confirmed for variables included in the multivariable analysis (Table 3 and Fig 3). Compared with cluster 1, the risk associated with being in cluster 3 increased from 1.65 (1.30-2.08) for patients aged 35 to 44 years to 21.58 [16.83-27.65] for patients over 90 years compared with patients aged 18 to 34 years. The comorbidities most strongly associated with cluster 3 were active cancer (OR = 2.27 [2.14-2.42]), liver disease, dementia, and heart failure, with an OR of approximately 1.8 (Fig 3). Using cardiac surgery as the reference, all other reasons for hospitalization were positively associated with cluster 3 and also with cluster 2 except respiratory diseases and poisoning. Gastrostomy was a strong risk factor for belonging to clusters 2 and 3.

### Discussion

In this large retrospective population study of critically ill adults surviving an admission to a French ICU in 2018, 89% returned home for a median duration of 330 (283-349) days, and 17% died over the year after ICU discharge. Rehospitalizations in acute care units and ICUs were needed for 51% and 10% of patients, respectively. There was wide heterogeneity in their ability to return home. We identified three clusters reflecting three distinct post-ICU trajectories. Many patients had complex trajectories with alternating periods at home and hospital. Most patients who died during the year after discharge could not return home, and those who did managed to stay home for only a short period.

We previously reported that ICU survivors had a high risk of dying over subsequent years.<sup>19</sup> In this study, we confirmed an ICU mortality of approximately 20% and an additional mortality rate of 17% in the year after ICU discharge. Albeit important, mortality may not be the worst outcome considered by patients or their relatives.<sup>14,20,21</sup> Several observational studies reported poor quality of life of altered functional status after surviving a critical illness.<sup>4,5,22,23</sup> Only a few randomized controlled trials have explored functional outcomes as a crucial end point. The conventional ventilation or extracorporeal membrane oxygenation for severe adult

**TABLE 2 ]** Description of Hospital and SNH Stays, Home Stays, and Death in the Year (365 Days) After ICU Discharge, for All Patients and by Cluster

	All Patients	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3
No. of patients	77,132	52,254	13,775	11,103
<b>ACH</b>				
Index stay (and contiguous stays)				
Patients with at least one stay, No. (%)	73,264 (95.0)	49,043 (93.9)	13,441 (97.6)	10,780 (97.1)
Cumulative LOS, days, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	10 (6-18)	8 (5-13)	20 (11-35)	14 (7-26)
<b>Rehospitalization(s) in ACH</b>				
No. of patients with at least one stay, No. (%)	39,130 (50.7)	24,489 (46.9)	9,765 (70.9)	4,876 (43.9)
No. of stays, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	2 (1-3)	2 (1-3)	2 (1-4)	2 (1-3)
Cumulative LOS, days, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	11 (4-25)	8 (3-17)	21 (8-45)	19 (8-37)
<b>ICU</b>				
No. of patients with at least one stay, No. (%)	7,638 (9.9)	3,408 (6.5)	2,381 (17.3)	1,849 (16.7)
No. of stays, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	1 (1-1)	1 (1-1)	1 (1-1)	1 (1-1)
Cumulative LOS, days, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	5 (2-11)	4 (2-8)	6 (3-13)	6 (3-15)
<b>RF</b>				
No. of patients with at least one stay, No. (%)	37,256 (48.3)	21,898 (41.9)	12,292 (89.2)	3,066 (27.6)
No. of stays, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	1 (1-2)	1 (1-1)	2 (1-2)	1 (1-2)
Cumulative LOS, days, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	29 (21-54)	22 (19-29)	66 (45-111)	29 (14-55)
<b>HAH</b>				
No. of patients with at least one stay, No. (%)	4,359 (5.7)	1,456 (2.8)	1,718 (12.5)	1,185 (10.7)
No. of stays, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	1 (1-2)	1 (1-1)	1 (1-3)	1 (1-2)
Cumulative LOS, days, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	35 (15-86)	24 (12-45)	68 (29-138)	28 (11-67)
<b>PW</b>				
No. of patients with at least one stay, No. (%)	4,045 (5.2)	3,285 (6.3)	574 (4.2)	186 (1.7)
No. of stays, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	1 (1-2)	1 (1-2)	2 (1-3)	1 (1-2)
Cumulative LOS, days, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	36 (15-87)	33 (14-79)	61 (27-129)	28 (12-85)
<b>SNH<sup>b</sup></b>				
No. of patients with at least one stay, No. (%) <sup>a</sup>	1,635 (2.1)	161 (0.3)	1,102 (8.0)	372 (3.4)
Cumulative LOS, days, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	157 (49-270)	67 (21-218)	215 (104-282)	53 (21-128)
<b>Home</b>				
No. of patients with at least one stay, No. (%)	68,873 (89.3)	52,158 (99.8)	12,557 (91.2)	4,158 (37.4)
Cumulative LOS, days, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	330 (283-349)	338 (323-354)	242 (174-277)	45 (15-90)
No. of patients at home at 1 year, No. (%)	59,123 (76.7)	49,414 (94.6)	9,709 (70.5)	0 (0.0)
<b>Home (including HAH)</b>				
No. of patients with at least one stay, No. (%)	69,774 (90.5)	52,173 (99.8)	12,826 (93.1)	4,775 (43.0)
Cumulative LOS, days, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	330 (285-349)	338 (324-354)	249 (187-282)	49 (18-96)
No. of patients at home at 1 year, No. (%)	59,595 (77.3)	49,526 (94.8)	10,049 (73.0)	20 (0.2)
<b>Death</b>				
No. of deaths, No. (%)	13,292 (17.2)	1,150 (2.2)	1,104 (8.0)	1,1038 (99.4)
Cumulative length, days, median (IQR) <sup>c</sup>	294 (185-346)	71 (34-116)	74 (41-110)	316 (249-351)

ACH = acute care hospital; HAH = hospital at home; IQR = interquartile range; LOS = length of stay; PW = psychiatric ward; RF = rehabilitation facilities; SNH = skilled nursing home.

<sup>a</sup>Among patients with at least one stay.

<sup>b</sup>Patients with SNH stays after the index stay were considered at home if they were already in SNH before the index stay.

<sup>c</sup>Among deceased patients.

**TABLE 3 ] Characteristics of Patients and Index Stays by Cluster, and Factors Associated With Clusters in Multinomial Logistic Regression Models**

	Cluster 1		Cluster 2		Cluster 3		Cluster 2		Cluster 3	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	(Ref. = Cluster 1)		(Ref. = Cluster 1)	
No. of patients	52,254	100	13,775	100	11,103	100	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI
Age category, y										
18-34	2,765	5.3	454	3.3	116	1.0	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.
35-44	3,064	5.9	586	4.3	231	2.1	1.09	(0.95-1.26)	1.70	(1.35-2.15)
45-54	6,595	12.6	1,431	10.4	710	6.4	1.28	(1.13-1.44)	2.49	(2.02-3.06)
55-64	11,553	22.1	2,790	20.3	1,936	17.4	1.39	(1.24-1.56)	3.78	(3.10-4.61)
65-69	8,081	15.5	2,172	15.8	1,619	14.6	1.63	(1.44-1.83)	4.81	(3.94-5.87)
70-74	8,218	15.7	2,130	15.5	1,793	16.1	1.63	(1.45-1.84)	5.74	(4.70-7.01)
75-79	6,108	11.7	1,815	13.2	1,641	14.8	1.93	(1.71-2.18)	7.36	(6.02-9.00)
80-84	4,014	7.7	1,397	10.1	1,594	14.4	2.26	(1.99-2.56)	10.57	(8.64-12.95)
85-89	1,535	2.9	817	5.9	1,113	10.0	3.30	(2.87-3.79)	16.36	(13.27-20.17)
≥ 90	321	0.6	183	1.3	350	3.2	3.65	(2.94-4.52)	24.37	(18.99-31.26)
Age, years, median (IQR)	66 (55-74)		68 (59-77)		72 (64-80)					
Sex										
Male	33,945	65.0	8,656	62.8	7,313	65.9	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.
Female	18,309	35.0	5,119	37.2	3,790	34.1	1.09	(1.04-1.13)	0.89	(0.84-0.93)
Comorbidities										
Heart failure	4,210	8.1	1,615	11.7	2,025	18.2	1.31	(1.23-1.40)	1.79	(1.68-1.92)
Cerebrovascular disease	2,670	5.1	976	7.1	895	8.1	1.20	(1.11-1.30)	1.16	(1.06-1.26)
Diabetes	11,677	22.3	3,618	26.3	3,331	30.0	1.13	(1.08-1.18)	1.17	(1.11-1.23)
Active cancer	4,293	8.2	1,368	9.9	2,299	20.7	1.06	(0.99-1.14)	2.22	(2.09-2.36)
Dementia	539	1.0	277	2.0	420	3.8	0.98	(0.93-1.03)	1.10	(1.04-1.16)
Chronic respiratory disease	9,063	17.3	2,789	20.2	2,932	26.4	0.95	(0.83-1.09)	1.35	(1.18-1.55)
End-stage renal disease	906	1.7	312	2.3	392	3.5	1.36	(1.25-1.49)	1.89	(1.73-2.07)
Liver disease	2,100	4.0	786	5.7	948	8.5	1.34	(1.27-1.43)	1.26	(1.18-1.35)
Psychiatric disease	7,298	14.0	2,176	15.8	1,647	14.8	1.34	(1.15-1.56)	1.81	(1.57-2.08)
Reason for hospitalization										
Cardiac surgery	19,264	36.9	3,175	23.0	718	6.5	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.

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TABLE 3 ] (Continued)

	Cluster 1		Cluster 2		Cluster 3		Cluster 2		Cluster 3	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	(Ref. = Cluster 1)		(Ref. = Cluster 1)	
Non-cardiac surgery	10,509	20.1	4,369	31.7	3,158	28.4	1.72	(1.61-1.83)	5.27	(4.79-5.80)
Respiratory diseases	6,699	12.8	2,021	14.7	2,356	21.2	1.03	(0.95-1.11)	5.65	(5.09-6.26)
Cardiovascular diseases	4,699	9.0	1,542	11.2	1,790	16.1	1.42	(1.32-1.53)	6.83	(6.17-7.57)
Poisoning	3,738	7.2	308	2.2	218	2.0	0.54	(0.47-0.61)	2.44	(2.06-2.89)
Neurological diseases (except stroke)	2,246	4.3	752	5.5	488	4.4	1.62	(1.46-1.79)	5.48	(4.79-6.28)
GI diseases	1,786	3.4	540	3.9	827	7.4	1.30	(1.17-1.46)	8.44	(7.46-9.56)
Renal or metabolic diseases	1,395	2.7	452	3.3	549	4.9	1.27	(1.12-1.43)	6.44	(5.60-7.39)
Infectious diseases	840	1.6	314	2.3	392	3.5	1.68	(1.46-1.94)	8.99	(7.70-10.49)
Miscellaneous	1,078	2.1	302	2.2	607	5.5	1.42	(1.24-1.64)	14.03	(12.19-16.15)
Length of index ACH stay in days, median (IQR) <sup>a</sup>	15 (10-24)		37 (21-61)		29 (17-49)					
Length of ICU stay, days, median (IQR)	4 (2-8)		8 (4-18)		7 (4-15)					
2-3 days (Quartile 1)	21,979	42.1	3,021	21.9	2,387	21.5	1.00	Ref.	1.00	Ref.
4-5 days (Quartile 2)	11,036	21.1	2,115	15.4	914	17.2	1.25	(1.17-1.33)	1.23	(1.15-1.32)
6-10 days (Quartile 3)	10,646	20.4	2,985	21.7	2,770	24.9	1.68	(1.58-1.78)	1.54	(1.44-1.64)
> 10 days (Quartile 4)	8,593	16.4	5,654	41.0	4,032	36.3	3.49	(3.29-3.71)	2.54	(2.37-2.72)
ICU procedures										
Invasive mechanical ventilation	44,382	84.9	11,610	84.3	8,271	74.5				
Vasopressors or inotropes	31,553	60.4	10,162	73.8	8,556	77.1				
Noninvasive mechanical ventilation	15,688	30.0	5,353	38.9	4,347	39.2	0.99	(0.94-1.03)	0.97	(0.92-1.02)
Fluid resuscitation	9,485	18.2	3,618	26.3	2,897	26.1	1.14	(1.09-1.20)	1.08	(1.03-1.14)
Renal replacement therapy	3,354	6.4	2,031	14.7	1,627	14.7	1.34	(1.25-1.43)	1.31	(1.22-1.41)
Transcutaneous temporary cardiac stimulation	3,809	7.3	716	5.2	179	1.6	1.00	(0.91-1.10)	0.84	(0.71-1.00)
Administration of blood products	485	4.8	1,154	8.4	799	7.2	1.29	(1.19-1.40)	1.36	(1.24-1.49)
Transcutaneous drainage of a pericardial collection	1,684	3.2	345	2.5	85	0.8	1.19	(1.05-1.35)	0.95	(0.75-1.20)
CPR with intubation	695	1.3	347	2.5	296	2.7	1.12	(0.97-1.29)	1.36	(1.16-1.58)

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TABLE 3 ] (Continued)

	Cluster 1		Cluster 2		Cluster 3		Cluster 2		Cluster 3	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	(Ref. = Cluster 1)	(Ref. = Cluster 1)	(Ref. = Cluster 1)	(Ref. = Cluster 1)
Emergency external electrical cardioversion	589	1.1	291	2.1	191	1.7	1.19 (1.02-1.40)	1.15 (0.96-1.39)	1.15 (0.96-1.39)	1.15 (0.96-1.39)
Mechanical circulatory support	516	1.0	335	2.4	87	0.8	1.82 (1.56-2.12)	1.76 (1.37-2.25)	1.76 (1.37-2.25)	1.76 (1.37-2.25)
Tracheostomy	1,533	2.9	1,258	9.1	895	8.1	1.65 (1.51-1.80)	1.52 (1.37-1.67)	1.52 (1.37-1.67)	1.52 (1.37-1.67)
Gastrostomy	398	0.8	668	4.8	548	4.9	3.67 (3.21-4.21)	4.31 (3.73-4.98)	4.31 (3.73-4.98)	4.31 (3.73-4.98)
SAPS II, median (IQR)	38 (28-51)	...	46 (34-59)	...	51 (40-64)	...	...	...	...	...
SAPS II, missing data	48	0.1	12	0.1	11	0.1	...	...	...	...

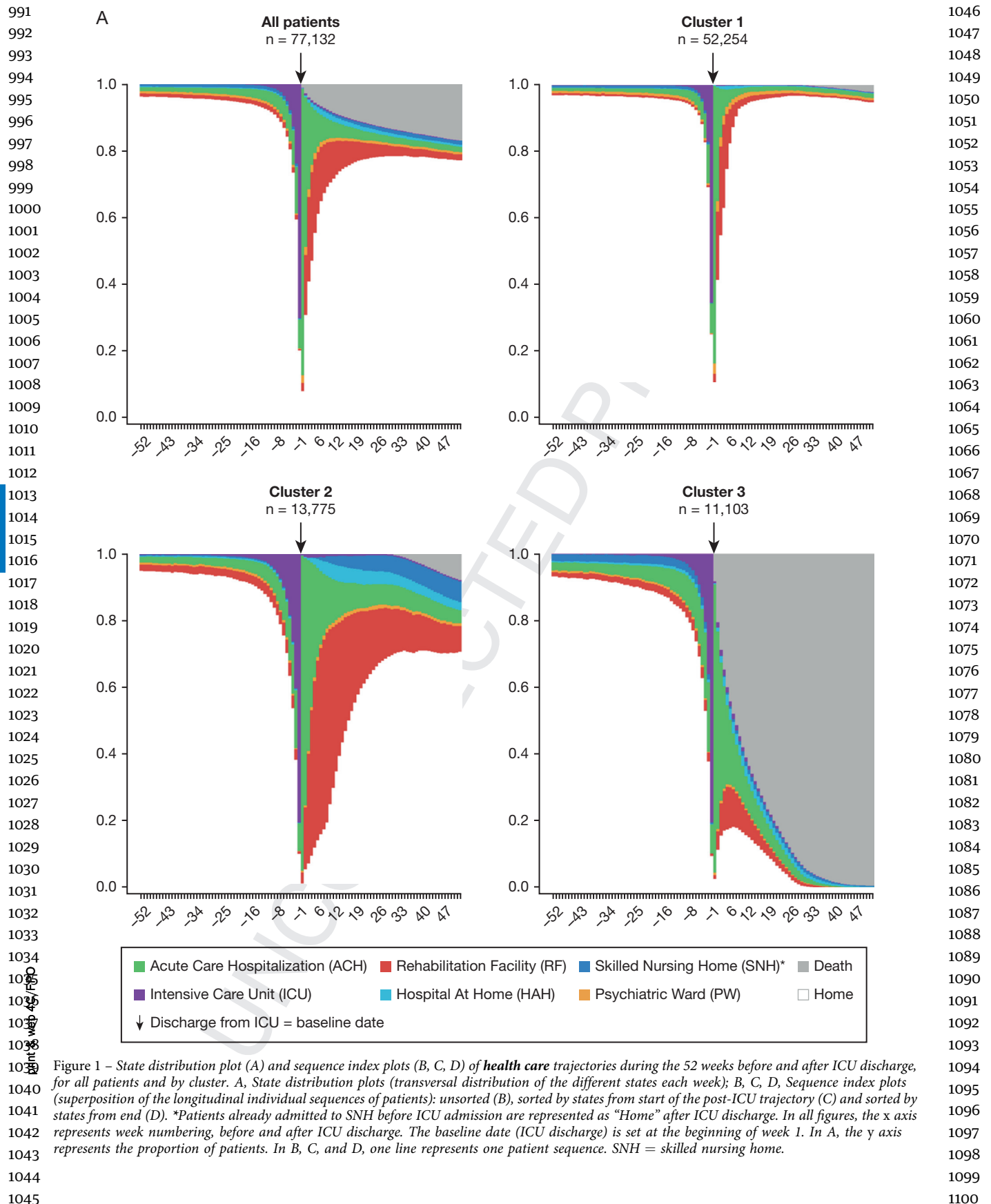
ACH = acute care hospital; IQR = interquartile range; SAPS II = Simplified Acute Physiology Score II.

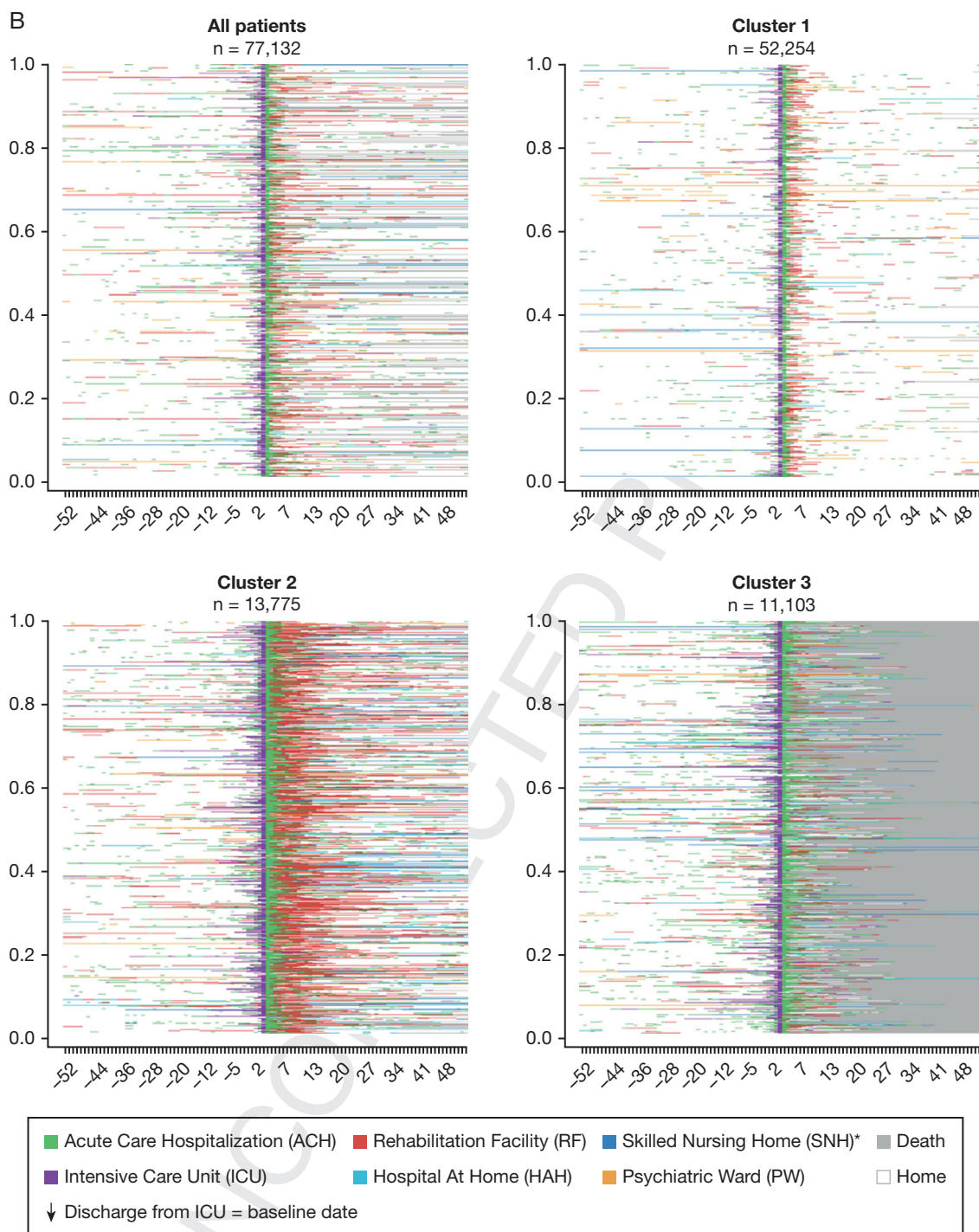
<sup>a</sup>Including contiguous ACH stays.

respiratory failure trial, for instance, explored the impact of extracorporeal membrane oxygenation in patients with severe acute respiratory distress syndrome on death or severe disability at 6 months.<sup>24</sup> Recently, ability to return home and hospital-free days have been proposed as significant patient-centered outcomes in ICU survivors.<sup>25,26</sup> Implementing strategies to accelerate and improve recovery and the ability to return home are advocated by both critical illness survivors and clinicians.<sup>27</sup>

Quality of life in ICU survivors should be viewed as a main goal of ICU management. In the year preceding the ICU discharge, 99% of our cohort were at home for a median of 351 (333-358) days, although 56% were hospitalized in an acute care unit for 7 (3-18) days during 1 (1-3) stays, and 5% had an ICU stay. During the year after ICU discharge, 89% of the patients returned home, 51% were re-hospitalized in an ACH for 11 (4-25) days, and 10% spent 5 (2-11) days in an ICU. Of note, half of the patients were admitted at least once to an RF for a median of 29 (21-54) days, which represents a significant increase in health care resource utilization. The days spent at home during the year preceding admission was not a major discriminant of post-ICU trajectories.

Large variations in postdischarge trajectories were identified in the three different clusters. Cluster 1 gathered survivors who returned home after ICU discharge and survived, although many required several acute hospitalizations, and 42% were admitted to an RF. Cluster 2 included patients who had more complex health care trajectories, with 71% requiring a new acute hospitalization and 17% an ICU readmission. Most were admitted to long-term care facilities. Cluster 3 mainly comprised patients who died during the year after ICU discharge, with only 37% able to return home (43% including receipt of HAH) for a short period. Patients in clusters 2 and 3 were more likely to have prolonged ICU stays (>10 days), receive renal replacement therapy, or have a tracheotomy or gastrostomy performed.<sup>28</sup> Most had complex trajectories with large utilization of health care resources. In the general population in France in 2018, approximately 15/1,000 inhabitants were admitted for hospitalizations in RF, and 107/1,000 inhabitants for overnight hospitalizations in ACH. Admissions to RF vary across hospitals and regions, depending on ease of access or the population profile, and these are decided on a case-by-case basis by physicians, with no specific economic or clinical criteria.





print &amp; web 4C/FP0

Figure 1 - Continued

Our study reports at a national scale the trajectories of patients after ICU discharge and adds to the literature of post-ICU outcomes. Among 1,083 Medicare survivors of sepsis, of whom only 38% required ICU admission, 63% were readmitted in the first year after discharge, spending a median 16 days (IQR, 2-45) in

an inpatient health care facility.<sup>25</sup> Among patients with septic shock, only a third of survivors had not returned to independent living by 6 months after discharge. In our study, the identification of clusters of patients provides important insights into the population more likely to return home after an ICU

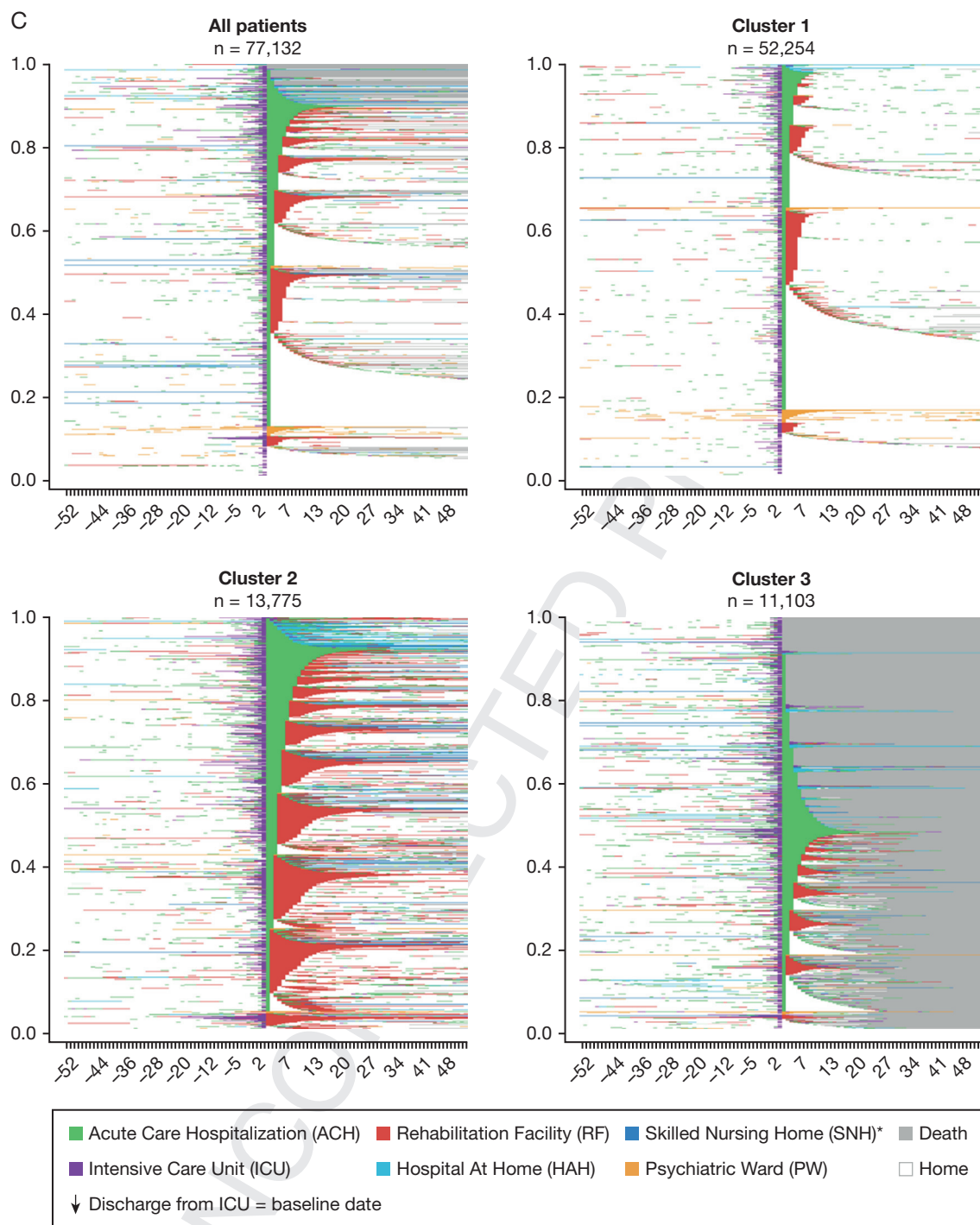
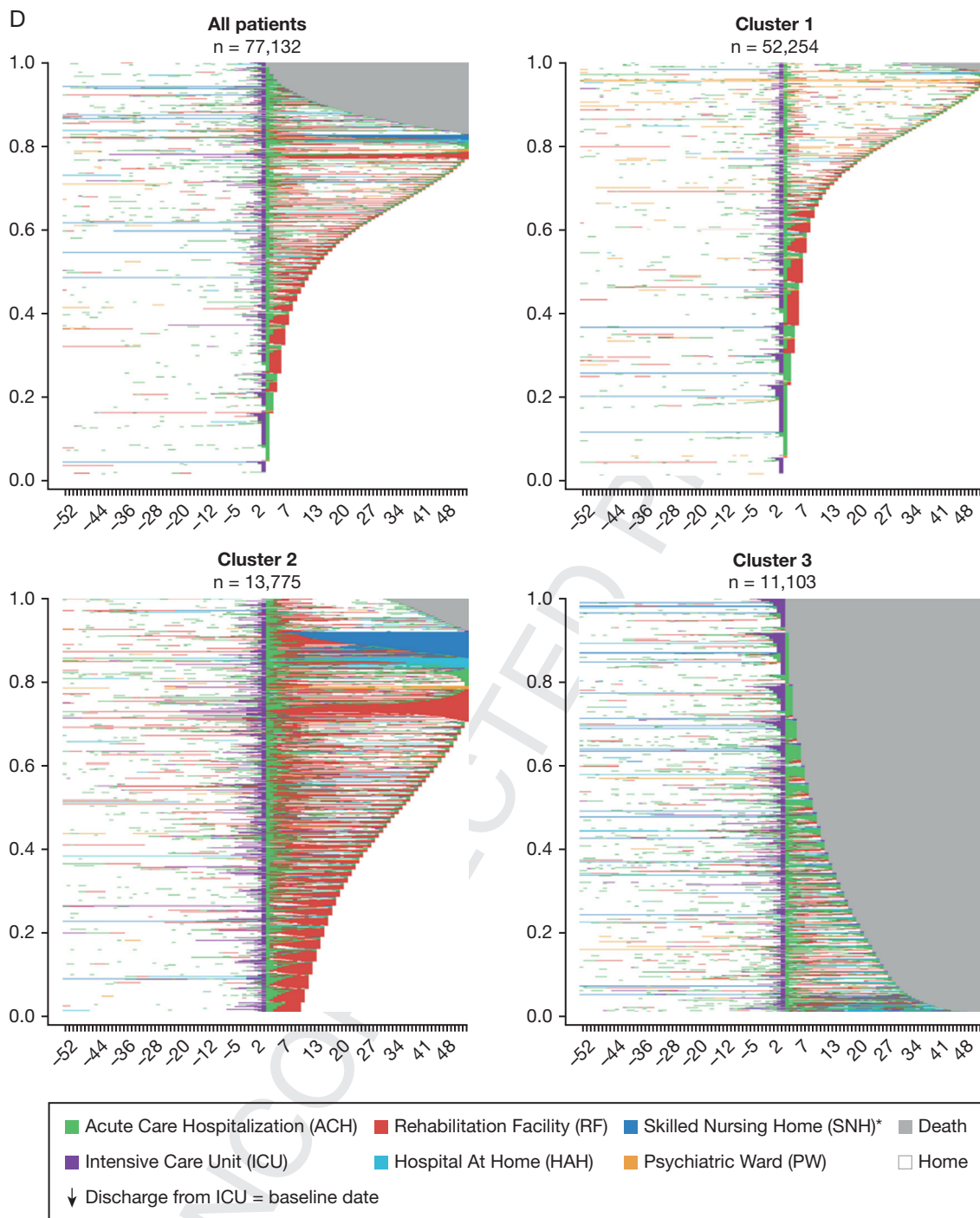


Figure 1 – Continued

stay and those more likely to have complex trajectories with a requirement for complex care. Although these data are not intended for decision-making at the individual level, they nonetheless provide valuable information on the health care intensity of different populations after an ICU admission. Most of the patients who died during the year after ICU discharge

never went home, except for short periods, and they spent most of their time in acute care units and RFs. Of note, 98% of them were at home in the year before ICU admission, excluding such criteria as a predictor of post-ICU outcomes. These results reinforce the need for accurate predictive and prognostic tools in patients discharged from the ICU.<sup>29</sup>



print &amp; web 4C/FPO

Figure 1 - Continued

Cluster 2 gathers populations most likely to benefit from strategies aimed at improving post-ICU outcomes. Although large-scale, multicenter studies are still lacking, interdisciplinary and collaborative rehabilitation interventions are feasible and may improve post-ICU outcomes. In a randomized controlled trial, early mobilization in patients with sepsis was associated with

an increased likelihood of being discharged directly home (51% vs 27%,  $P < .001$ ).<sup>30</sup> Long-term consequences of critical illness, including respiratory and cardiovascular complications, neuromuscular weakness, neurological disorders, cognitive decline, depression, posttraumatic stress disorders, and decompensation or progression of underlying

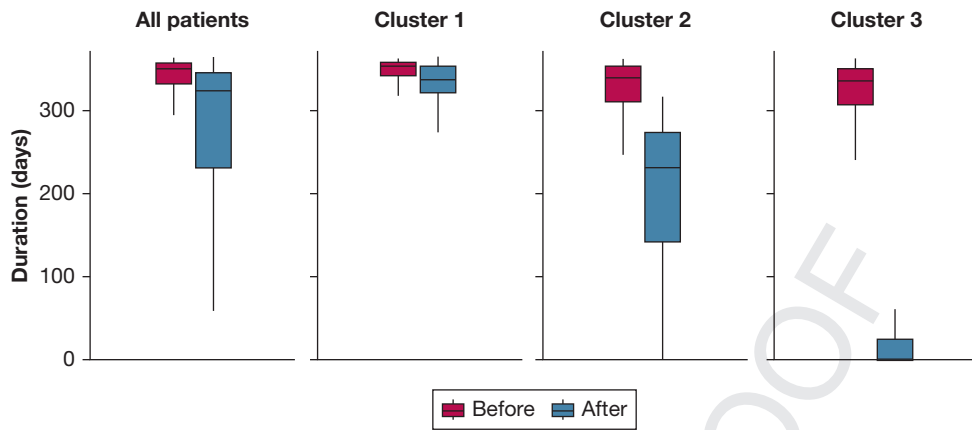


Figure 2 – Distribution of the number of days spent at home during the year before and the year after ICU discharge, for all patients and by cluster, during the year before ICU discharge. “Home” included skilled nursing home (SNH); during the year after ICU discharge, “Home” included SNH only for patients who were already in SNH before ICU discharge. All patients, including those without any return to home (ie, number of days at home = 0) are plotted.

comorbidities of critical illness, have been increasingly recognized.<sup>22,23,31-37</sup> This has been reported as an umbrella syndrome—PICS—corresponding to a global health impairment that includes physical, psychological, and cognitive symptoms after critical illness.<sup>8</sup> PICS may explain the high utilization of health care resources after

ICU discharge, especially RF and psychiatric hospitalization. This last form of hospitalization was needed by 6% of cluster 1 patients. In the French and European Outcome reGistry in Intensive Care Units (FROG-ICU) cohort, 22% and 19%, respectively, showed symptoms of anxiety or depression.<sup>38,39</sup> In a

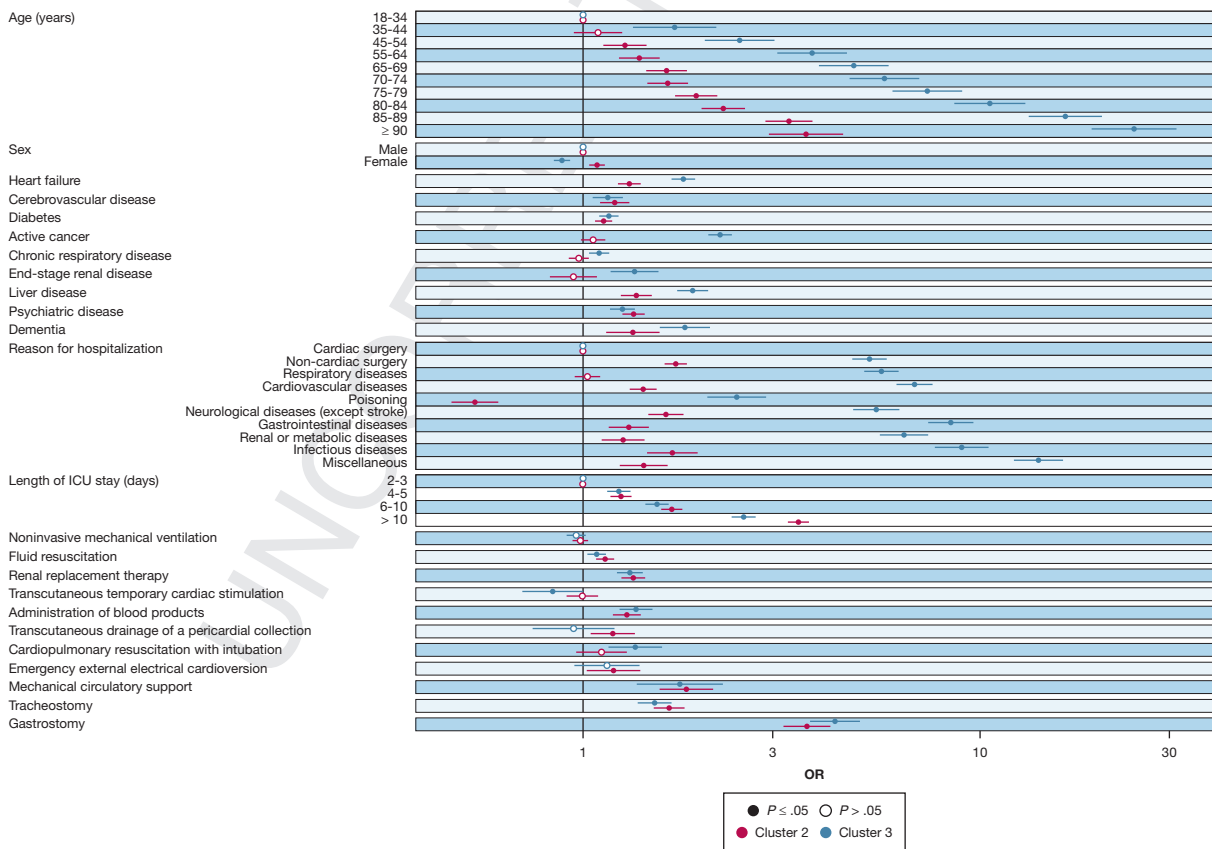


Figure 3 – Factors associated with being in clusters 2 or 3 in multinomial logistic regression models, with cluster 1 taken as a reference.

1541 prospective, multicenter cohort, a history of anxiety or  
 1542 depression, prolonged duration of mechanical  
 1543 ventilation, and inability of a home discharge were  
 1544 associated with long-term disability.<sup>12</sup>  
 1545  
 1546 The methodology used in our study has several strengths.  
 1547 First, we used a nationwide administrative database with  
 1548 an excellent capture of health care utilization.  
 1549 Approximately 7% of patients were excluded because of  
 1550 absence of reimbursed health care or linkage issues  
 1551 making it impossible to follow health care trajectories.  
 1552 We excluded patients with specific causes of index  
 1553 hospital stay admission that could have had a major  
 1554 impact on post-ICU trajectories. Sequence analysis  
 1555 allowed us to analyze health care trajectories, considering  
 1556 the different states and their chronological progression,  
 1557 and could thus complement the focus on specific  
 1558 outcomes. Different sequence dissimilarity measures were  
 1559 tested, as well as a hierarchical ascendant clustering  
 1560 method. Although the three-cluster typology remained  
 1561 broadly similar, clusters 1 and 2 could vary in size.  
 1562  
 1563 Limitations of our study include the observational  
 1564 design, which prevents any causal association. This  
 1565 study focused on hospitalization data to define health  
 1566 care trajectories; ambulatory care requirements were not  
 1567  
 1568 analyzed. Moreover, clinical information, functional  
 1569 status, or markers of quality of life are not directly  
 1570 available in the SNDS to assess whether patients who  
 1571 returned home were independent for daily life activities.  
 1572 Hospital bed availability, regional resource differences,  
 1573 and health care provider preferences could have  
 1574 impacted health care trajectories.  
 1575  
 1576 Overall, our study highlights the use of a massive claim  
 1577 database to explore long-term outcomes in critically ill  
 1578 patients, including the probability of returning home,  
 1579 which is a major patient-centered outcome. Future  
 1580 articles may further detail predictors of such long-term  
 1581 outcomes.

## Interpretation

Most patients surviving a critical illness could return home. Many patients had complex health care trajectories compared with the year before their index ICU admission, but most patients who died after ICU discharge never return home or remain there for short periods, highlighting the need to better identify this subgroup of patients. Days at home should be considered an important patient-centered outcome in future critical care trials.

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