



# European Respiratory Society statement for defining respiratory exacerbations in children and adolescents with bronchiectasis for clinical trials

Anne B. Chang <sup>1,2,3</sup>, Angela Zacharasiewicz <sup>4</sup>, Vikas Goyal <sup>1,2</sup>, Jeanette Boyd<sup>5</sup>, Efthymia Alexopoulou <sup>6</sup>, Stefano Aliberti<sup>7</sup>, Leanne Bell<sup>8</sup>, Andrew Bush<sup>9</sup>, Alison Claydon<sup>10</sup>, Carolina Constant <sup>11</sup>, Rebecca Fortescue<sup>12</sup>, Adam T. Hill<sup>13</sup>, Bulent Karadag<sup>14</sup>, Zena Powell<sup>8</sup>, Christine Wilson<sup>15</sup>, Keith Grimwood<sup>3,16,17,20</sup>, Ahmad Kantar <sup>18,20</sup> and other members of Child-BEAR-Net<sup>19</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Australian Centre for Health Services Innovation, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia. <sup>2</sup>Dept of Respiratory and Sleep Medicine, Queensland Children's Hospital, Brisbane, Australia. <sup>3</sup>NHMRC Centre for Research Excellence in Paediatric Bronchiectasis (AusBREATHE), Child Health Division, Menzies School of Health Research, Charles Darwin University, Darwin, Australia. <sup>4</sup>Dept of Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, Teaching Hospital of the University of Vienna, Wilhelminen Hospital, Klinikum Ottakring Vienna, Vienna, Austria. <sup>5</sup>European Lung Foundation, Sheffield, UK. <sup>6</sup>2nd Radiology Dept, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Attikon University Hospital, Athens, Greece. <sup>7</sup>Dept of Biomedical Sciences, Humanitas University and Respiratory Unit, IRCCS Humanitas Research Hospital, Milan, Italy. <sup>8</sup>European Lung Foundation Bronchiectasis Paediatric Patient Advisory Group, Sheffield, UK. <sup>9</sup>Dept of Paediatric Respiratory Medicine, Royal Brompton Hospital, and National Heart and Lung Institute, Faculty of Medicine, Imperial College London, London, UK. <sup>10</sup>Centre for PCD Diagnosis and Research, Dept of Respiratory Sciences, University of Leicester, Leicester, UK. <sup>11</sup>Dept of Paediatrics, Hospital de Santa Maria and Faculty of Medicine, University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal. <sup>12</sup>Population Health Research Institute, St George's University of London, London, UK. <sup>13</sup>Dept of Respiratory Medicine, Royal Infirmary and University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, UK. <sup>14</sup>Division of Paediatric Pulmonology, Faculty of Medicine, Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey. <sup>15</sup>Dept of Physiotherapy, Queensland Children's Hospital, Brisbane, Australia. <sup>16</sup>Depts of Infectious Disease and Paediatrics, Gold Coast Health, Southport, Australia. <sup>17</sup>School of Medicine and Dentistry, Menzies Health Institute Queensland, Griffith University, Southport, Australia. <sup>18</sup>Pediatric Asthma and Cough Centre, Istituti Ospedalieri Bergamaschi, University and Research Hospitals, Bergamo, Italy. <sup>19</sup>Other Child-BEAR-Net committee members are listed in the Acknowledgements section. <sup>20</sup>Equal senior co-authors.

Corresponding author: Anne B. Chang ([Anne.Chang@menzies.edu.au](mailto:Anne.Chang@menzies.edu.au))



## Shareable abstract (@ERSpublications)

**This ERS Task Force statement developed internationally derived, consensus-based definitions of respiratory exacerbations for future clinical paediatric bronchiectasis research** <https://bit.ly/3sqT2YP>

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## Abstract

Bronchiectasis is being diagnosed increasingly in children and adolescents. Recurrent respiratory exacerbations are common in children and adolescents with this chronic pulmonary disorder. Respiratory exacerbations are associated with an impaired quality of life, poorer long-term clinical outcomes, and substantial costs to the family and health systems. The 2021 European Respiratory Society (ERS) clinical practice guideline for the management of children and adolescents with bronchiectasis provided a definition of acute respiratory exacerbations for clinical use but to date there is no comparable universal definition for clinical research. Given the importance of exacerbations in the field, this ERS Task Force sought to obtain robust definitions of respiratory exacerbations for clinical research. The panel was a multidisciplinary team of specialists in paediatric and adult respiratory medicine, infectious disease, physiotherapy, primary care, nursing, radiology, methodology, patient advocacy, and parents of children and adolescents with bronchiectasis. We used a standardised process that included a systematic literature review, parent survey, and a Delphi approach involving 299 physicians (54 countries) caring for children and adolescents with bronchiectasis. Consensus was obtained for all four statements drafted by the panel as the disagreement rate was very low (range 3.6–7.2%). The panel unanimously endorsed the four consensus definitions for 1a) non-severe exacerbation and 1b) severe exacerbation as an outcome measure, 2) non-

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severe exacerbation for studies initiating treatment, and 3) resolution of a non-severe exacerbation for clinical trials involving children and adolescents with bronchiectasis. This ERS Task Force proposes using these internationally derived, consensus-based definitions of respiratory exacerbations for future clinical paediatric bronchiectasis research.