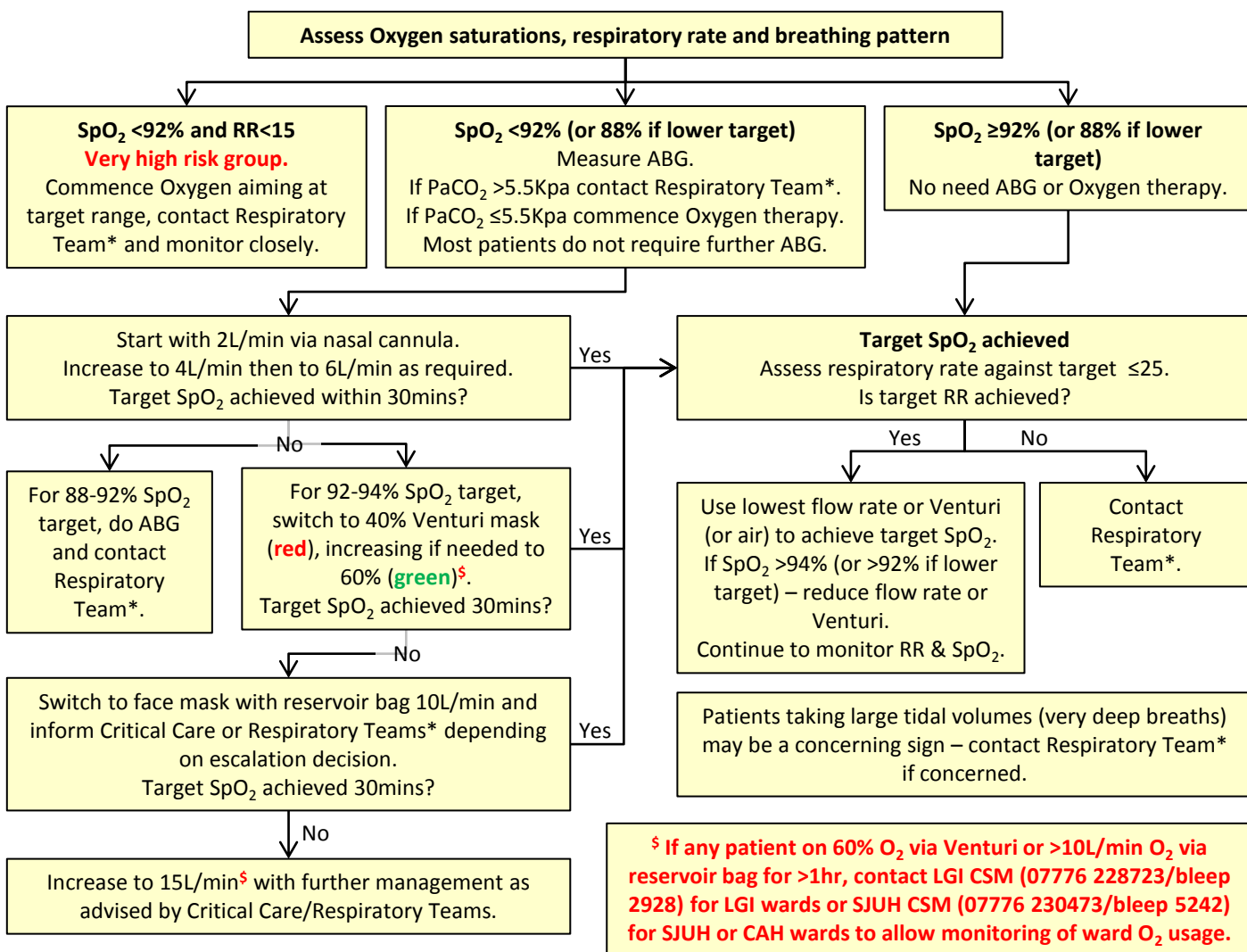


General principles of assessing respiratory status

- Oxygen therapy is guided by respiratory rate (RR), oxygen saturations (SpO₂) and assessment of breathing pattern.
- Count respiratory rate by pretending to check pulse whilst counting breaths for 1 minute.
- Don't tell the patient you are measuring their respiratory rate – they may breath hold or hyperventilate.
- Target respiratory rate is ≤25 breaths per minute.

Target saturations

- Most patients have a target saturation of 92-94% (note this is lower than the normal 94-98% to conserve O₂ supply).
- The following patients should have a lower target of 88-92%
 - Severe cardiorespiratory disease (can't complete one flight of stairs or stop >30 secs at top due to breathlessness)
 - Documented oxygen sensitivity
 - Neuromuscular disease (discuss with Respiratory Team*)
 - Obesity (BMI>40)
- **Always use the lowest flow rate possible to achieve target SpO₂ as Oxygen likely to be in short supply in the hospital.**



* Respiratory team contact is through Respiratory SpR at SJUH (bleep 6775) and Cardiology SpR at LGI (07795 477736).