

Beyond Limits provides policies and procedures to promote safe and consistent practice across the Organisation. The framework laid down within our policies and procedures lets everyone know how we work and reflects our values and mission statement. Our policies and procedures are written to help us, employees of Beyond Limits, to make good, safe decisions.

Beyond Limits expects all employees to be familiar with the contents of all policies and procedures relevant to their role and to understand how to apply them within their daily work.

None of these documents stand alone, all fit within the larger framework of the way we work and any associated policies which are particularly relevant will be directly referenced.

Serious Incident Policy

Serious Incident Policy – what this means to Beyond Limits

This policy sets out the framework for management of Serious Incidents and will enable Beyond Limits to:

- Monitor the nature and frequency of Serious Incidents
- Provide a supportive environment to staff involved serious incidents
- Make recommendations for appropriate action
- Provide feedback to staff to improve learning across the organisation

Beyond Limits aims to offer a supportive, learning environment within a non-blame culture. It is the view of Beyond Limits that disciplinary action should not form part of a response to an incident, except where one or more of the following applies:

- Where the action causing the incident is negligent, deemed gross misconduct or far removed from acceptable practice or professional standards
- Where there is failure to report an incident in which a member of staff was either involved or aware

Any disciplinary issue raised in relation to the above will be investigated separately in accordance with the organisation's Disciplinary Procedure.

The Director of Beyond Limits has overall responsibility for ensuring the implementation of this policy and all staff are required to comply.

Definition of a Serious Incident

There is no definitive list of what a **serious incident requiring investigation** is. In broad terms, serious incidents are events in health and social care where the potential for learning is so great, or the consequences to families, people we support, and staff are so significant that they warrant using additional resources to mount a comprehensive response.

Serious Incidents include acts or omissions that result in:

- Unexpected or avoidable death
- Unexpected or avoidable injury which results in significant harm
- Incidents that prevent (or threaten to prevent) an organisation's ability to continue to deliver an acceptable quality of service
- A violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person. Abuse may consist of single or repeated acts and may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter a financial or sexual transaction to which they have not consented or cannot consent to

A near miss may be defined as *"an accident that did not lead to harm, loss or damage but had serious potential to do so and where lessons can be learnt from changes in procedures, processes and systems"*. It is expected that near misses are reported as this enables learning from these incidents to be implemented before harm occurs.

Reporting a Serious Incident Requiring Investigation

Internal Reporting

Following a possible serious incident, you must follow the Accident and Incident reporting procedures and also **notify your line manager immediately**. If your line manager is unavailable, you must inform a service leader or the person on-call. You must not delay reporting the incident.

External Reporting

Service Leaders are responsible for discussing the incident with the Director and for reporting to the relevant Clinical Commissioning Group and the Care Quality Commission.

Duty of Candour

Involving and supporting people following an incident is an important part of the investigation process. It is the principle of Beyond Limits to be open and transparent in its communication. Following a serious incident, it is the responsibility of those involved to offer an explanation and support to relatives, there should be an opportunity for families and the people we support to raise any concerns so that these can be reflected on as part of any investigation.

It is important that the view and concerns of family members are gained early in the investigation process to ensure these are properly addressed, excepting restrictions on disclosure such as the following:

- Circumstances where there are serious concerns relating to safeguarding
- Concerns that a relative is not acting in the best interests of the person

Support for those involved

Throughout the process, consideration should be given to the provision of immediate and/or independent support and counselling. The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is available to all staff and should be offered in the first instance.

Support should be given by line managers, other team members if required. Support and supervision and/or a formal debrief meeting may be enough to meet an individual's needs, however the opportunity to utilise the EAP scheme can again be offered.

At times staff may be called as a witness for either an internal or external review or a court appearance. In these cases, additional support from external sources will be provided.

Approaches from the Media

Under no circumstances should any member of staff discuss any incident with the media, all requests must be forwarded to a Director.

If any member of staff is approached directly by the media, they should be courteous and reply along the lines of “ *I am sorry I not in a position to comment at the present time, if you would like further information, please contact a Director of Beyond Limits.* ”

If an approach is made out of hours, the same advice should be given.