



BEYOND LIMITS

Beyond the limits of conventional support

Crisis Management Policy

This policy clarifies our approach to the effective management of any crises and serious emergency incidents or events. The policy applies to all colleagues and is part of a wider commitment to responsible corporate governance.

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INTRODUCTION

Beyond Limits provide supported living services to people living in their own homes. We specialise in providing 'bespoke' packages of care for adults with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorders, mental illness, or physical disabilities.

The aim of this policy is to clarify what corporate governance measures will be taken in the event of an operational crisis that impacts upon individuals in our care and colleagues, as well as any other relevant stakeholder.

As a responsible provider, Beyond Limits accepts that crisis management is an important responsibility. It is an essential part of our duty of care. The following conditions must be applied to any future crises, as well as serious emergency incidents or events.

It is emphasised that Beyond Limits actively promote an open and fair culture within risk management that encourages the honest and timely reporting of all notifiable incidents or events. This helps to ensure that learning can occur, and risk is minimised. It is therefore required that all colleagues comply with this policy.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

Our response to a crisis, as well as serious emergency incidents or events, has the following objectives:

- Preservation of life and/or relief of suffering
- Stopping harm, further harm, or potential harm
- Protection of property and the environment
- Maintaining business continuity
- Minimising financial losses
- Minimising reputational damage
- Restoring of public, customer, and regulator confidence
- Restoring normality (or the best that can be achieved) as soon as possible.

DEFINITIONS

The definition of a crisis (in this context) is an event that significantly disrupts normal operations and has caused or is likely to cause severe distress to individuals in our care, colleagues or significant others related to the business. Although global responses are confirmed within our Business Continuity Plan (BCP), such events are likely to require extra-ordinary board oversight to restore order and normality, thus demanding immediate action from senior leadership and the board.

A crisis may present itself in many forms. These may include (for example) death or abuse of a service user, colleagues bringing the organisation into disrepute, relationships with local authorities being damaged, or 'Acts of God' (such as fire or flood). This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Any anticipated potential threat must be assessed in the company's risk matrix.

CRISIS SITUATIONS

Examples of incidents that can/will result in a crisis situation are set out below:

- Explosion, fire or the identification of a serious chemical hazard
- Significant damage and/or destruction of buildings (inc. services and administration centres)
- Terrorist incident
- Serious criminality (including allegations of sexual or physical abuse by a colleague for example)
- Serious health hazards or outbreaks of infectious diseases
- Environmental/natural disasters (often referred to as 'Acts of God')
- Serious cyber security breach (including blackmailing) and systems lockdown
- Serious threat or home invasion.

Please note, the above list is not exhaustive.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT OF CRISIS RESPONSE ACTIONS

Crisis Management is the management at a strategic level of the medium and long-term consequences of an incident. Managing a crisis effectively (or preventing an incident from becoming a crisis) will depend on speed of response. The actions taken within the initial minutes of a crisis are critical. This means having in place:

- Clearly defined procedures and lines of responsibility
- Clearly defined lines of communication and reporting
- Relevant training undertaken and completed, aligned to specific duties and responsibilities
- Up-to-date contact lists of all key stakeholders
- Colleagues and other resources (including financial) that can be deployed at short notice to deal with a sudden crisis
- Agreed principles for dealing with the media; and
- Immediate access to relevant information that may be required by media and others.

Beyond Limits are committed to implementing appropriate management strategies and processes that will identify and manage possible emergency and crisis events associated with all our business activities.

We will therefore:

- Identify potential crisis scenarios associated with all our business activities and take appropriate action to prepare for these and other unforeseen events, as part of our risk management process (which includes our Business Continuity Plan (BCP))
- Prepare appropriate plans to manage crisis events that could impact upon our business
- Wherever appropriate, support our stakeholders in preparing for, and responding to, emergency and crisis events that affect their operations and activities
- Train key management colleagues in the principles of crisis management and undertake appropriate exercises to test and evaluate our plans
- Review regularly our crisis management plans to ensure that they remain relevant, robust, and effective. Any changes or developments are communicated to relevant stakeholders
- Work closely with our stakeholders, including the emergency services and other relevant organisations, in the development and execution of our response to emergency and crisis events
- Evaluate our response to exercises and incidents and identify lessons to be learned. Following which, ensuring that systems/procedures are in place to ensure measures have been learned.

All crisis events will be project managed in line with Prince 2 principles, by an officer nominated by the board. The identified officer will construct a Crisis Management Plan that will determine the actions taken to manage the situation, and the officers responsible for such actions.

Key to this project management is the lessons log, so that all learning from the events can be made into opportunities to improve performance and service user experience, as well as to minimise reputational damage and maximise stakeholder assurance.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM

Key to successfully project managing a crisis situation is swiftly assembling a team of professionals (some of whom may need to be specially commissioned). This means core Crisis Management Team members, to be appointed by the Board, may include:

- A project manager
- A project administrator
- A public relations consultant
- A Human Resources (HR) advisor
- Senior operational management team members (as required)
- Independent auditors or consultants
- A Health and Safety (H&S) advisor
- Legal advisor.

Please note that the above list is not exhaustive.

Each team member should have key roles and responsibilities defined by the board or project manager on behalf of the board. The board may choose to delegate different levels of responsibility and/or financial resources to team members. However, guidance must be defined and provided on levels of permitted variance, so that this can be managed by exception.

INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATIONS

Should the crisis be deemed to have been caused or exacerbated by one or more officers in the organisation then the board may appoint an independent investigator to lead. In this event the project still needs to be managed, so the board will need to determine how this can be done. Beyond Limits can call upon the central Tristone team in this circumstance.

Appointing an independent person or team to investigate has clear advantages:

- It preserves the integrity of the investigation and therefore gives the board and relevant stakeholders confidence in the investigation
- It allows for a more independent evaluation of the functioning of the senior team
- It allows the senior officers in the business to continue with business as usual so far as possible
- If a suitably qualified and experienced person is appointed during an investigation, it doubles as an Individual Management Review (in the event of a Serious Case Review being instigated).

POST CRISIS DEBRIEF

The additional measures put into place by the board, and by definition the crisis management project itself, should not be deemed to be concluded until the project manager has presented to the board an overview report detailing:

- The overall project and its effectiveness in managing the crisis
- Any HR measures recommended to the board to manage the performance of individuals implicated in the crisis, as appropriate
- All lessons learned from the crisis, and how these will change policy and practice of the organisation moving forward
- An updated risk matrix with an assessment of what risks materialised during the crisis, as well as how these have affected the organisation, and what further risks are in need of continued mitigation.

The board must confirm formally that the project has ended and the 'crisis is over.'

[NON-EXHAUSTIVE] CORE PROCESSES & PROCEDURES

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN (BCP)

Our Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is about identifying key areas of the organisation and planning how to maintain these if there is serious incident or crisis.

It is recognised that in most situations occurring, service disruptions will be minimal and manageable within Beyond Limits management structures. However, in the event of major disruption to our organisation, by forward planning, we aim to ensure that potential disruption is minimised. Our overriding aim is to ensure that individuals, colleagues, and stakeholders are safe and that their welfare continues to be promoted.

The BCP is a global document and will trigger a crisis response action plan, which will detail actions and outcomes aligned to specific crisis incidents.

BOARD NOTIFICATIONS

It is the responsibility of the Managing Director to ensure that Board colleagues are notified in a timely way. This means Board colleagues should be notified within 6 hours of the incident. In any circumstances where this is not possible, Board must be notified as soon as possible, with a reasonable justification for the delay. A Board Notification procedure is in place. Incidents and events of which the Board must be notified are clarified below:

- An individual accessing our care, colleague, or a relevant stakeholder (of the latter, whilst accessing Beyond Limits property or services) dies
- An individual accessing our care, colleague, or a relevant stakeholder (of the latter, whilst accessing Beyond Limits property or services) is seriously injured
- A colleague, or group of colleagues, are suspected of/alleged to have abused or contributed towards the abuse of an individual accessing our care, including any form of exploitation or abuse of trust
- A referral of a person pursuant to section 35 of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 is made (resulting from the above)
- An incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to an individual accessing our care, which is serious
- There is an allegation of abuse against the service or a person working there
- There is serious illness sustained by an individual accessing our care or a colleague
- There is an outbreak of any infectious disease, likely to cause significant harm, is identified
- There is a serious complaint about a service or an individual colleague
- Any other serious incident relating to an individual accessing our care
- Any colleague suspected or alleged serious criminality.

Beyond Limits (Plymouth) Limited
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