



CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORTING POLICY

Policy Area	Service Delivery
Document type	Policy
Applicable to	Centacare Community Services
Version	2
Date approved	20 April 2015
Approved by	Senior Director, Centacare Community Services
Review date	20 April 2016
Policy Sponsor	General Manager, Service Support Division
Related policy	CCS Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy CCS Abuse, Neglect & Exploitation – Prevention and Response Policy CCS Operational Policy Restrictive Practices Full Legislative Scheme Policy Centacare Privacy Policy Archdiocese Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy
Authority	Disability Services Queensland Critical Incident Reporting Policy 2008 Coroners Act 2003 Disability Services Act 2006 Guardianship and Administration Act 2000 Public Guardian Bill 2014 Privacy Act 1988 Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) 2014 Work Health and Safety Act 2011

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to assist employees and volunteers of Centacare, in understanding their responsibilities when responding to and reporting a Critical Incident. This policy assists in establishing accurate and timely reporting of relevant incidents to management to enable an effective response and to facilitate ongoing monitoring and prevention of such incidents.

This policy also establishes procedures for recording, reporting and monitoring critical incidents involving staff and/or clients of Centacare, and ensuring appropriate support responses and follow up occurs, within the organisation and to external funding bodies (e.g. Disability Services).

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Centacare staff and volunteers, and to all official Centacare records in any format and from any source.

POLICY DESCRIPTION

PRINCIPLE 1:

If a Critical incident involves a medical emergency, Centacare staff are required to provide first response assistance.

PRINCIPLE 2:

All Centacare staff will follow an established line of communication when reporting details of a critical incident.

PRINCIPLE 3

If a staff member is the subject of a critical incident, additional reporting notification requirements will be completed.

PRINCIPLE 4

Centacare will ensure record keeping processes in relation to Critical Incidents, are kept in accordance with Centacare's Privacy Policy and meet the requirements of the relevant funding body.

Additional Funding Body Reporting Requirements:

Appendix A - Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) – Disability Support Funded Programs Only

Appendix B - Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) – Community Support (QCCS) Funded Programs Only

Appendix C - Home and Community Care (HACC) Funded Programs Only

Appendix D - National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP) Funded Programs Only

Appendix E - Veterans' Home Care (VHC) Funded Programs Only

Appendix A - Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) – Disability Support Funded Programs Only

A Critical Incident constitutes any event, either accidental or deliberate, that:

- a) Involves a client, a staff member or a member of the public; and
- b) Occurs regardless of whether a staff member is present or witnesses the event and involves –
 - I. Death; or
 - II. Risk of death; or
 - III. Abuse, neglect or exploitation; or
 - IV. Risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation; or
 - V. Abandonment; or
 - VI. Risk of abandonment; or
 - VII. Serious harm or injury; or
 - VIII. Serious risk of harm or injury; or
 - IX. Other incidents, including for example:
 - Alleged criminal activity;
 - Property damage resulting in close of a service (eg. such as destruction of premises by fire);
 - Emergency situations (eg. bomb threats, hostage situations, natural disasters); and/or
- c) In the instance of Centacare Community Services:
 - 1. The incident occurs during the delivery of a service by a funded non-government service provider, where the incident is witnessed by a Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) staff member, (including program staff), or becomes aware of the incident.

For the purpose of reporting Critical Incidents, a Critical Incident can be either:

A Child Critical Incident - a Child Critical Incident involves:

- I. Death/risk of death; or
- II. Abuse, neglect, or exploitation; or
- III. Risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation; or
- IV. Abandonment; or
- V. Risk of abandonment; or
- VI. Serious harm or injury; or
- VII. Risk of suicide or
- VIII. 'Prohibited practices' described in the definitions section of this document.

An Adult Critical Incident Level A - an Adult Critical Incident Level A involves:

- I. Death; or
- II. Risk of death; or
- III. Abuse, neglect; or exploitation; or
- IV. Abandonment; or
- V. Serious harm or injury.

An Adult Critical Incident Level B - an Adult Critical Incident Level B involves:

- I. Risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation; or
- II. Risk of abandonment; or
- III. Serious risk of harm or injury.

It is a requirement of Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) that Centacare reports Critical Incidents to the Department where the incident is directly related to Centacare programs that are Disability funded. All Critical Incidents are to be reported using the Disability Services Queensland Critical Incident Form 2008.

A Child Critical Incident or Adult Critical Incidents Level A or Level B are very serious and require the immediate attention of the Manager, Stream Manager and immediate notification to the Director/Regional Manager of Centacare Community Services.

Appendix B - Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) – Community Support (QCCS) Funded Programs Only

A critical incident is an incident that occurs as a result of, or during, the delivery of Queensland Community Care Service (QCCS). A critical incident includes:

- I. Incidents which affect or are likely to affect the delivery of services; or
- II. Incidents that may relate to clients who are subject to interventions by the department, staff and carers; or
- III. Matters where significant media attention has occurred or is likely to occur; or
- IV. Incidents that may relate to the services or client that require an emergency response, including fire, natural disaster, bomb threat, hostage situations, death or serious injury.

The **death** of a client, staff member, sub-contractor and/or volunteer does not itself constitute a critical incident. However, if the death involves circumstances that are out of the ordinary then it may constitute a critical incident. An unusual circumstance may be:

- The death occurred in unusual circumstance;
- A client dies and the standard of services provided may have been a contributing factor;
- The death has an obvious and direct correlation to the services the person was receiving;
- The death is reportable by law.

The **serious injury** of a client, staff member, sub-contractor and/or volunteer does not itself constitute a critical incident. However, if the serious injury involves circumstances that are out of the ordinary then it may constitute a critical incident. An unusual circumstance may be:

- The serious injury occurred in unusual circumstance;
- The serious injury results in the hospitalisation of the client, staff member, sub-contractor or volunteer;
- A client is seriously injured and the standard of services provided may have been a contributing factor;
- The serious injury has an obvious and direct correlation to the services the person was receiving;
- The serious injury is reportable by law.

It is a requirement of Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) that Centacare reports Critical Incidents to the Department where the incident is directly related to Centacare programs that are funded under QCCS. All Critical Incidents are to be reported to the department within one business day, after you become aware of a critical incident, via phone or email.

Appendix C - Home and Community Care (HACC) Funded Programs Only

A critical incident is an incident that occurs as a result of, or during, the delivery of HACC services, and includes:

- I. The unexpected death of a client staff member, sub-contractor or volunteer;
- II. A serious injury to a client, staff member, sub-contractor or volunteer;
- III. Allegations of conduct that may result in death, harm or injury, made in relation to a service providers organisation, staff, sub-contractors or volunteers;
- IV. Allegations of unlawful or criminal activity, made in relation to a service providers organisation, staff, subcontractors or volunteers; and
- V. A serious fire, natural disaster, accident or other incident which will or is likely to prevent service provision, or which results in closure or significant damage to premises or property, or which poses a significant threat to the health and safety of clients, staff, sub-contractors or volunteers.

The **death** of a client, staff member, sub-contractor and/or volunteer does not itself constitute a critical incident. However, if the death involves circumstances that are out of the ordinary then it may constitute a critical incident. An unusual circumstance may be:

- The death occurred in unusual circumstance;
- A client dies and the standard of services provided may have been a contributing factor;
- The death has an obvious and direct correlation to the services the person was receiving;
- The death is reportable by law.

The **serious injury** of a client, staff member, sub-contractor and/or volunteer does not itself constitute a critical incident. However, if the serious injury involves circumstances that are out of the ordinary then it may constitute a critical incident. An unusual circumstance may be:

- The serious injury occurred in unusual circumstance;
- The serious injury results in the hospitalisation of the client, staff member, sub-contractor or volunteer;
- A client is seriously injured the standard of services provided may have been a contributing factor;
- The serious injury has an obvious and direct correlation to the services the person was receiving;
- The serious injury is reportable by law.

Appendix D - National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP) Funded Programs Only

If an NRCP service provider is associated with a serious event that has, or may have, affected the health, safety and/or wellbeing of care recipients while under the care of staff, volunteers or contractors, the event must be reported to the Department. Service providers are also required to report any events that may affect the health, safety and/or wellbeing of carers. Service providers must report such events as soon as possible to their local state and territory office. There are two tiers of incidents which must be reported. First tier reportable incidents are unexpected events that cause:

- Death or hospitalisation of a care recipient while in the care of the service provider; and
- Harm or suspected harm to a care recipient or service provider staff member while in the care of the service provider.

Notification of incidents under the second tier provides an opportunity for the Department to be aware of and monitor the service provider's management of the incident.

Examples of second tier notifiable events or other incidents are:

- Criminal activity on the part of service provider staff such as theft or assault;
- Accidents, including vehicle accidents where the service provider is transporting the care recipient;
- Natural disasters; and
- Incidents that may bring negative media attention to the service provider and/or the Government as the funding body.

Service providers must have policies about how to respond if there is or they suspect assault, abuse or are concerned about a risk of harm to a care recipient or to a carer.

Key considerations may include:

- Appropriate assessment, particularly where there is the suspicion or risk of abuse or harm. This may include discussion with the carer to understand the situation so that appropriate assistance can be arranged;
- Prompt provision of Emergency Respite care services and linkage with other support services such as counselling, health services and social support; and
- Contact information for emergency staff such as police, ambulance, crisis mental health team, or other relevant services.

Appendix E - Veterans' Home Care (VHC) Funded Programs Only

VHC Service Providers should advise the VHC Operations team of any serious incidents such as theft and significant injuries/accidents involving entitled persons.

Behaviours of concern may include dealing with entitled persons who are:

- uncooperative;
- angry or aggressive;
- anxious;
- depressed;
- threatening self-harm;
- socially inappropriate;
- intoxicated or drug affected;
- grieving; or
- Confused or suffering dementia.

The VHC Service Provider should have processes in place for support workers to handle the situation where an entitled person or a member of the household requires medical attention or deceased at the commencement or during a scheduled service visit.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Related processes and procedures include:

- Human Standards Quality Framework
- Centacare Privacy Procedures
- CCS Critical Incident Flowchart
- CCS Incident Reporting and Investigations Procedure
- CCS Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation – Prevention & Response Procedure
- Disability Services Queensland Critical Incident Form 2008

COMPLIANCE

Deliberate breaches of this policy will be dealt with under Centacare's misconduct provisions, as stated in the Employment Guidelines *Code of Conduct*.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Directors, Stream Managers and Regional Managers are responsible for implementing and monitoring compliance with this policy.