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## **Adverse Incident, Serious Adverse Incident or Adult Safeguarding Referral**

**If a patient without capacity eg older person with dementia or adult with a learning disability, is sent home from hospital with a cannula still in their arm, is this classed as;**

### **1) Adverse Incident**

This would meet the definition of an Adverse Incident.

“Any event or circumstance that could or did lead to harm, loss or damage to people, property environment or reputation.”

Once drawn to the Trust’s attention, it would be expected the service staff ensure the incident is recorded as an adverse incident and managed in keeping with Trust Adverse Incident procedures.

Staff from the service who provided the in hospital care to the service user would manage the incident, including communicating with the service user and their family and reviewing the incident details to consider what happened & how it could have been prevented. This process could lead to following the protocols and procedures for ASG referral if appropriate.

### **2) Serious Adverse Incident**

Serious Adverse Incident (SAI) is an incident or event that must be reported to the Strategic Planning & Performance Group (SPPG) where that incident or event meets the criteria as outlined in the Procedure for the Reporting and Follow up of Serious Adverse Incidents (2016):

1. Serious injury to, or the unexpected/unexplained death of:

- a service user (including Looked After Child or a child whose name is on the Child Protection Register and those events which should be reviewed through a significant event audit)
- a staff member in the course of their work
- a member of the public whilst visiting a HSC facility

2. Unexpected serious risk to a service user and/or staff member and/or member of the public.

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3. Unexpected or significant threat to provide service and/or maintain business continuity

4. Serious self-harm or serious assault (including attempted suicide, homicide and sexual assaults) by a service user, a member of staff or a member of the public within any healthcare facility providing a commissioned service.

5. Serious self-harm or serious assault (including homicide and sexual assaults)

- on other service users,
- on staff or
- on members of the public

by a service user in the community who has a mental illness or disorder (as defined within the Mental Health (NI) Order 1986) and/or known to/referred to mental health and related services (including CAMHS, psychiatry of old age or leaving aftercare services) and/or learning disability services, in the 12 months prior to the incident.

6. Suspected suicide of a service user who has a mental illness or disorder (as defined within the Mental Health (NI) Order 1986) and/or known to/referred to mental health and related services (including CAMHS, psychiatry of old age or leaving aftercare services) and/or learning disability services, in the 12 months prior to the incident.

7. Serious incidents of public interest or concern relating to:

- any of the criteria above
- theft, fraud, information breaches or data losses
- a member of HSC staff or independent practitioner

This type of incident is unlikely to routinely meet the criteria for reporting as an SAI.

### **3) Adult Safeguarding**

Within Northern Ireland, the Adult Safeguarding Operational Procedures 2016 set out definitions of an adult at risk of harm and an adult in need of protection.

An 'adult at risk of harm' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their personal characteristics and/or life circumstances. Personal characteristics may include, but are not limited to, age, disability, special educational needs, illness, mental or physical frailty or impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain. Life circumstances may include, but are not limited to, isolation, socio-economic factors and environmental living conditions.

An 'adult in need of protection' is a person aged 18 or over, whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect may be increased by their: A. personal characteristics and/or B. life circumstances AND C) who is unable to protect their own well-being, property, assets, rights or other interests; AND D) where the action or inaction of another person or persons is causing, or is likely to cause, him/her to be

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harmed. In order to meet the definition of an 'adult in need of protection' either (A) or (B) must be present, in addition to both elements (C), and (D).

The Adult Safeguarding Operational Procedures 2016 set out that the threshold for referral to the HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service is likely to be met if one or a number of the following characteristics are met:

- the perceptions of the adult(s) concerned and whether they perceive the impact of harm as serious;
- it has a clear and significant impact on the physical, sexual, psychological and/or financial health and well-being of the person affected;
- it has a clear and significant impact, or potential impact, on the health and well-being of others;
- it involves serious or repeated acts of omission or neglect that compromise an adult's safety or well-being;
- it constitutes a potential criminal offence against the adult at risk;
- the action appears to have been committed with the deliberate and harmful intent of the perpetrator(s);
- it involves an abuse of trust by individuals in a position of power or authority; and
- it has previously been referred to a regulated service provider for action, and has not been sufficiently addressed.

If there is doubt about whether the threshold for Adult Protection has been reached, the concern should be discussed with the HSC Trust Adult Protection Gateway Service and a DAPO will advise whether the matter meets the threshold.

On this basis and on the basis of the information provided as part of this request, the circumstances outlined would not necessarily prompt an adult safeguarding referral. However following management on the incident within the Adverse Incident reporting process, should information come to light which indicate the adult or other adults are in need of protection due to the circumstances of the incident, an adult in need of protection referral would be appropriate.