POLICY

Client Incident Response, Reporting and Investigation Policy

Model of Care Outcome: 1 – Upholding Human Rights

Purpose

This policy is about making sure we look after the wellbeing of our clients.

It guides staff to make sure that incidents involving clients are responded to, reported, recorded, investigated, and finalised. This needs to be done in an effective, consistent and timely way. It must also be done in line with the law and regulations.

This policy helps staff to understand what they need to do when an incident that affects any client(s) happens, and what other teams need to do.

Policy statement

Our Model of Care shows we aim to provide safe services to clients. As part of our response to client incidents, we will:

- In an emergency, support the client and make sure they are safe first
- Look after the physical and psychological needs of the client after an incident. This is to reduce the impact of the incident and to promote the client's wellbeing
- Provide support to the client throughout the incident response and management process
- Include clients in the incident management process. We do this by:
    - providing information in an accessible way about our response to managing the incident

- o supporting clients when an incident impacts them directly
- o involving clients in incident resolution, including the outcome
- Seek to prevent incidents from happening by reviewing and analysing incident trends and by making improvements in our service delivery
- Investigate and/or review incidents with unknown causes, of significant impact to clients, linked to poor quality of care or of critical severity. The aim is to find out the cause of the incident, its impact and operational issues which can be improved to reduce the possibility of the incident happening again.

Who is this policy for?

This policy applies to clients, staff, volunteers, contractors and students.

Who is responsible for this policy?

Managers at CPA support staff to follow this policy in their work area.

All staff are responsible for following this policy and related procedures when a client incident happens.

These key managers and teams make sure staff know what the policy says and what they need to do:
- Site managers / House Managers
- Senior Operational Managers
- General Managers in client services
- Senior Quality Manager (SQM) and Safeguarding Practice Manager - responsible for the oversight, monitoring, reporting and review of the client incident management system and processes and reporting of Reportable Incidents to the Commissioner.

Policy in action

- This policy aligns with our [Model of Care](#) framework. The Model of Care explains how staff will provide supports and services to clients. It says:
  - Our services and supports are aligned with the NDIS Code of Conduct and respect the dignity, rights and values of our clients and their families
  - We make sure clients and their families receive clear information about our services, terms and conditions
  - We protect clients' privacy and only share their information outside of CPA if consent has been given (see [Consent Form](#)) or if we are required to by law
  - Staff only have access to clients' personal and health information if they need to
  - We continuously monitor and support the wellbeing of our clients
  - We create a safe environment and do all we can to protect clients and their families from discrimination, abuse and neglect
  - We train our staff to be aware of risks and respond to concerns about abuse or neglect
  - We have procedures for reporting and investigating incidents, including incidents of abuse or neglect
  - We take action to stop the same kind of incidents happening again
  - As required by law, we report to appropriate authorities any risks of harm involving children or young people, and any reportable incidents involving risk to the life, health or safety of clients
  - We regularly screen staff against appropriate state and national registers, and screen job applicants during the recruitment process
  - We encourage feedback and complaints and have proactive ways of seeking feedback
  - We listen to client concerns and act on them quickly, fairly and sensitively
  - We offer a sincere apology when a person is unhappy with any aspect of our services and work to resolve concerns to the satisfaction of everyone involved.

- An incident may be caused by an action, a failure to do something, an event or a circumstance. These kinds of incidents are recorded and managed in line with this policy:
  - o Events that have caused harm to a client, or could have caused harm to a client
  - o Acts by a client that happen in connection with the provision of supports or services and that have caused serious harm, or a risk of serious harm, to another person
  - o Reportable incidents that have occurred or are alleged to have occurred in connection with the provision of supports or services.

- When an incident happens, staff must first provide support to the client(s) and others impacted by the incident. This may include contacting emergency services.

- After providing immediate supports to the client(s), staff tell their manager (or on-call manager) if the incident appears to be of a serious nature (i.e. a Category 1 or 2 incident – see 'Incident Categories' section in the Client Incident Response and Reporting Guidelines and Table 1 for descriptions of Category 1 and 2 incidents).

- Staff are required to report incidents involving clients by filling in a Client Incident Form. Further information is provided in the Client Incident Response and Reporting Guidelines.

- Where staff are not comfortable reporting an incident to their manager, they can report the incident direct to the CEO (via the Senior Quality Manager and Safeguarding Practice Manager) instead of their manager.

- Staff can contact the Contact Team for advice if an incident involves suspected, observed or alleged assault, abuse and/or neglect of clients.

- When the Contact Team is contacted for advice about suspected, observed or alleged abuse or neglect of a client, the Contact Team will follow the requirements in the

[Contact Team Advice for Assault, Abuse or Neglect of Adults Procedure](#) or the
[Contact Team Advice for Child Safety Concerns Procedure](#).

- Incidents are responded to and actions taken to make it less likely that the incident will happen again. Where the incident is of a serious nature, greater follow-up/ incident management is required – see the [Client Incident Follow-Up and Corrective Action Guidelines](#) for more details.

- Certain incidents must be reported to an external party, such as the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, the Office of Children's Guardian (NSW), Department of Communities and Justice (NSW), Child and Youth Protective Services (ACT), the Police or other relevant body. We follow relevant requirements for reportable incidents.

- If a client incident also involves an injury, near-miss or high level of risk to an employee, then the [Reporting Hazards and Incidents](#) procedure must also be followed and an [Employee/Other Incident Form](#) filled in.

- If a medication incident occurs, refer to the [Who to Contact for Health and Medication Support Poster](#).

- Staff providing direct client services must complete training in Client Incident Response and Reporting (as per the [CPA Learning Journeys](#)).

- Staff working in Accommodation, Respite, Lifestyles or Packforce also need to complete Documentation training (as per the [CPA Learning Journeys](#)).

- Managers working in direct client services must complete Client Incident Response and Reporting and Managing a Client Incident in Salesforce training (as per the [CPA Learning Journeys](#)).

- Incident trends will be analysed, identified and responded to. Where a client has repeat incidents and there is an identified risk that is not able to be addressed with guidance from internal CPA supports and external health professionals, managers are

to consider whether a Complex Case Referral is needed (see Complex Case Review Panel Guidelines).

Definitions

(Note: The meanings of words used a lot at CPA are located in the CPA Common Definitions. The words in the list below are new and are only used in this policy and the other documents that are part of this policy).

See Definitions in Client Incident Response and Reporting Guidelines.

See descriptions of Reportable Incident categories at NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission Reportable Incidents.

Documents that are part of this policy

Guidelines
Client Incident Response and Reporting Guidelines
Client Incident Follow-up and Corrective Action Guidelines
Client Incident Formal Investigations Guidelines
Complex Case Review Panel Guidelines
Client Incidents - FAQs regarding Police
Post Client Incident Plan Reference Guide

Procedures
Decision Making – Post Client Incident Plan and Investigation Procedure
Post Client Incident Follow-up
Missing Client Procedure
Table 1: Client Incident Response and Notification Requirements

Forms
Client Incident Form (On The Hub)
Client Incident Report (For use if no access to The Hub)
Client Wound or Injury Body Chart
Client Incident Investigation Summary Report
Client Incident Investigation Executive Summary
Post Client Incident Plan
Complex Case Review Referral Form
Complex Case Review Action Plan
Referral to Adult Rehab Care Clinic Hornsby

Posters

Client Incident Poster

Practice Guides
Client Incident Response and Reporting Practice Guide

Held by QS Team (not on The Hub)
Client Incident Investigation Plan
Client Incident Investigation Report
Client Incident Investigation Checklist
Client Incident Investigation Evidence Analysis
Client Incident Investigation Terms of Reference
Complex Case Review Referral – Clinical Screening Assessment Information
Complex Case Review Referral – Clinical Screening Assessment Process
Client Death Assessment Checklist
Client Death Review
Client Death Timeline Review
NDIS QS Death Impacted Person
Practice Review Template
File Note Template
Client Incident Investigation Evidence Analysis

Related policies and further reading

Upholding Human Rights Policy
Protection of Adults from Assault, Abuse or Neglect
Contact Team Advice for Assault, Abuse or Neglect of Adults
Protection of Client Records – Sharing and Exchanging Information
Client Safety and Wellbeing – Who to Call
Child Safety Policy
Contact Team Advice for Child Safety Concerns Procedure
Behaviour Support Policy (and associated guidelines)
WHS Policy (re employee incidents)
Reporting Hazards and Incidents
Health Hotline Poster
Event of Client Death Policy

Policy Owner	Senior Quality Manager
Date Approved	31/05/24
Approval Authority	CEO
Date of Commencement	02/07/18
Date for Next Review	May 2025
Related Legislation	National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013. NDIS Amendment (Quality and Safeguards Commission and Other Measures) Act 2017. NDIS (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018. Children's Guardian Act 2019 (NSW). Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT).

Revision History mailto:

Please email policyfeedback@cerebralpalsy.org.au for access to past policies and/or further revision history details.

18/03/22	Updated the following documents to add that the contributing factors section must be completed: • NS1-4-Pr1 Client Incident Response and Reporting ('Maintaining the Incident Case' section) • NS1-4-Pr2 Client Incident Follow-up and Corrective Action ('Formal Investigation and Corrective Action' section) • NS1-4-Pr4 Decision Making – Post Client Incident Plan and Investigation Procedure (in Table 2, where relevant).
20/04/22	Reviewed and updated to align with Model of Care. Further updates as follows: • Replaced the word 'employees' with 'staff'. • Added 'In an emergency always support the client and make sure they are safe first' in the Policy Statement. Added 'Staff working in Accommodation, Respite, Lifestyles or Packforce also need to complete Documentation Training (as per the CPA Learning Journeys)'.
08/07/22	Updated NS1-4-App1 Table 1 – Client Incident Response and Notification Requirements to add link to Event of Client Death Policy and change 'Senior Service Manager' to 'Service Manager' in the 'Who does QS Manager triage report to?' column for categories 3 & 4.
25/01/23	Scheduled review for currency. Updated requirements for follow-up for poor quality of care incidents. Updated Client Incident Formal Investigation Guidelines to align with current practices and as agreed with the Serious Client Incidents Committee. Updated the following: • Client Incident Response, Reporting and Investigation Policy (translated to Plain English) • Client Incident Response and Reporting Guidelines (renamed from Procedure) • Client Incident Formal Investigations Guidelines • Client Incident Follow-Up and Corrective Action Guidelines (renamed from Procedure) • Complex Case Review Panel Guidelines • Client Incident Response and Reporting Practice Guide (translated to Plain English) • Client Incident Investigation Executive Summary • Client Incident Investigation Summary Report • Client Incident Poster • Client Incidents FAQs regarding Police • Client Wound or Injury Body Chart • Decision Making Post Client Incident Plan and Investigation Procedure • Post Client Incident Plan Reference Guide

This policy and the attachments apply to Cerebral Palsy Alliance and its controlled entities. Policies do not form part of the terms of employment contracts and are not legally binding on CPA.

	• Post Client Incident Plan • Table 1 – Client Incident Response and Notification Requirements. Added the following: • Referral to Adult Rehab Care Clinic Hornsby. Deleted the following: • Analysis of Repeat Client Incidents • Client Incident Internal Investigations Process (Formal investigations only). The following documents are now held by the QS Team (not on The Hub): • Complex Case Review Referral – Clinical Screening Assessment Information • Complex Case Review Referral – Clinical Screening Assessment Process • Client Death Assessment Checklist • Client Death Review • Client Death Timeline Review • Client Incident Investigation Checklist • Client Incident Investigation Evidence Analysis • Client Incident Investigation Report • Client Incident Investigation Terms of Reference • Client Incident Investigation Plan.
02/03/23	Updated 'External Investigations' section in Client Incident Formal Investigations Guidelines to add instructions re Client Incident Investigation Terms of Reference.
10/08/23	Updated Client Incident Poster and Table 1: Client Incident Response and Notification Requirements.
06/06/24	Scheduled review. Major updates made to: • Client Incident Response Reporting and Investigation Guidelines • Decision Making Post Client Incident Plan and Investigation Procedure • Client Incident Response and Reporting Practice Guide – plain language translation • Client Incident Report (for use if no access to The Hub) • Post Client Incident Plan Minor updates made to: • Client Incident Response Reporting and Investigation Policy • Complex Care Review Panel Guidelines • Client Incident Follow-up and Corrective Action Guidelines • Client Incident Formal Investigation Guidelines • Post Client Incident Plan Reference Guide • Client Incident Investigation Executive Summary • Table 1 Client Incident Response and Notification Requirements • Client Incident Investigation Plan • Client Death Assessment Checklist • Client Incidents – FAQs regarding Police • Client Wound or Injury Body Chart • Client Incident Poster Deleted: • Post Client Incident Follow-up • Table 2: Client Incidents: Post Incident Notifications and Follow-up (held by SQM, not on The Hub) New documents added to documents held by the QS Team (not on The Hub): • NDIS QS Death Impacted Person • Practice Review Template • File Note Template • Client Incident Investigation Evidence Analysis