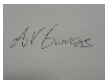
Patient safety incident response policy

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Purpose

This policy supports the requirements of the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF) and sets out **Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen** approach to developing and maintaining effective systems and processes for responding to patient safety incidents and issues for the purpose of learning and improving patient safety.

The PSIRF advocates a co-ordinated and data-driven response to patient safety incidents. It embeds patient safety incident response within a wider system of improvement and prompts a significant cultural shift towards systematic patient safety management.

This policy supports development and maintenance of an effective patient safety incident response system that integrates the four key aims of the PSIRF:

- compassionate engagement and involvement of those affected by patient safety incidents
- application of a range of system-based approaches to learning from patient safety incidents
- considered and proportionate responses to patient safety incidents and safety issues
- supportive oversight focused on strengthening response system functioning and improvement.

Scope

This policy is specific to patient safety incident responses conducted solely for the purpose of learning and improvement across **Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen.**

Responses under this policy follow a systems-based approach. This recognises that patient safety is an emergent property of the healthcare system: that is, safety is provided by interactions between components and not from a single component. Responses do not take a ‘person-focused’ approach where the actions or inactions of people, or ‘human error’, are stated as the cause of an incident.

There is no remit to apportion blame or determine liability, preventability or cause of death in a response conducted for the purpose of learning and improvement. Other processes, such as claims handling, human resources investigations into employment concerns, professional standards investigations, coronial inquests and criminal investigations, exist for that purpose. The principle aims of each of these responses differ from those of a patient safety response and are outside the scope of this policy.

Information from a patient safety response process can be shared with those leading other types of responses, but other processes should not influence the remit of a patient safety incident response.

Our patient safety culture

Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen embraces a learning culture which enables everyone to contribute to a fair, safe and compassionate environment when situations do not go as planned. We want to create an environment where our staff and volunteers feel safe to report incidents and near misses, providing us with an opportunity to learn and grow. As part of our continuous improvement journey, when incidents occur, we focus on how we can change our systems and processes to reduce the risk of the incident occurring again, rather than blaming an individual, so that staff and volunteers feel supported and empowered rather than blamed.

- Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen has comprehensive information for service users that explains the support we offer and how it is provided. Confidentiality and Information Sharing are also discussed
- Referrers into the service receive the same information, so this can be shared with service user
- Staff, trustees and volunteers providing support are recruited under the Safe Recruitment Policy
- Staff, trustees and volunteers have an enhanced DBS which is renewed every 3 years
- Risk Assessments are carried out for all activities provided by HSUK
- Service user assessments and reviews are carried out by experienced practitioners, this enables transparency and provides families with information on how their information is kept and when it might be shared
- Service users are made aware of our Safeguarding Policies for both Adults and Children and what actions will be taken in the event of risk/harm or disclosure
- Quality Assurance is at the heart of all of our activities

Patient safety partners

Home-Start Blackburn and Darwen hold a variety of contracts in addition the L&SC ICB contract. As part of these contracts, we have formalised working arrangements with ELHT and BwD BC Public Health. We will continue to engage with ICB patient safety team and other agencies as required to support service user safety. Safety incidents are reported to the Strategic Manager and reviewed at Trustee Board meetings.

The Patient Safety Partner (PSP) is a role developed by NHS England Improvement to help improve patient safety across the NHS in the UK.

- oversight committees
- design and development of incident response processes including engagement and involvement.

- Active Board of Trustees

- HSUK Quality Assurance Standards

- Regular review meetings with Commissioners/Contract Managers from ICB L&SC and BwD Public Health and BwD Family Hubs

- Share HS B&D Policies for Safeguarding Children and Adults

- Provide home safety information, Safer Sleep information (Lullaby Trust)

- Work closely with 0-19 Health Child Programme – Health Visitors and School Nurses

- Work closely with a range of services providing Perinatal Mental Health Services and have pathways for supporting service users at crisis point

Addressing health inequalities

Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen aims to reduce health inequalities by making our services accessible and equitable to all in our communities and tailoring our services to the specific needs of our communities. Our work is rooted in the heart of our community, and we identify the needs of the local population to plan our services and support. Engagement of patients, families, parents, volunteer and staff following a patient safety incident is critical and we have procedures in place to ensure that we learn from incidents and adapt our way of working, if necessary.

- As part of the o-19 HCP Service – we are committed to working on the Vulnerable Parent Pathway
- We work with service users who are seeking Asylum and/or have Refugee status
- We respond to health inequalities through our knowledge of service pathways and having a meaningful partnership approach to supporting the service users
- All staff have regular mandatory training. In addition, specialist training around child and family health and behaviours i.e. Perinatal Mental Health; ASD.
- All information relating to a service user/family unit are recorded in a timely way. Issues relating barriers that may foster inequalities are highlighted and measures are taken to address these, such as language barriers,
- Staff and volunteers are recruited from across the borough which reflects the culture and heritage of the diverse ethnic population of BwD

Engaging and involving patients, families and staff following a patient safety incident

The PSIRF recognises that learning and improvement following a patient safety incident can only be achieved if supportive systems and processes are in place. It supports the development of an effective patient safety incident response system that prioritises compassionate engagement and involvement of those affected by patient safety incidents (including patients, families and staff). This involves working with those affected by patient safety incidents to understand and answer any questions they have in relation to the incident and signpost them to support as required.

Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen is committed to continuous improvement throughout the service we provide. We use incidents and near-misses as a learning opportunity for all involved and this is built into our current procedures.

Alongside our professional and statutory requirements for Duty of Candour, we commit to being open and transparent, regardless of the level of harm caused by an incident.

Patient safety incident response planning

PSIRF supports organisations to respond to incidents and safety issues in a way that maximises learning and improvement, rather than basing responses on arbitrary and subjective definitions of harm. Beyond nationally set requirements, organisations can explore patient safety incidents relevant to their context and the populations they serve rather than only those that meet a certain defined threshold.

Resources and training to support patient safety incident response

Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen is committed to ensuring we fully embrace PSIRF and meet its requirements. To this end, we have used the NHS England Patient Safety Response Standards (2022) to frame the resources and training required for this to happen.

Training

Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen delivers a comprehensive training course to all its volunteers prior to them undertaking any volunteering work. This includes detailed information on how they should respond to patient safety incidents.

All staff undertake an in-depth induction which includes specific guidance on how to respond to patient safety incidents. Mandatory staff training completed on an annual basis includes Safeguarding, Health and Safety, GDPR/Data Protection, PREVENT, First Aid and Domestic Violence.

We will also be introducing the following, to comply with the NHS England Health Education Patient Safety Training Syllabus as follows:

Level 1

National – E-Learning for Health patient safety syllabus module. All staff and volunteers to undertake on induction and every three years subsequently.

National – Health Education England patient safety syllabus module (Essentials for patient safety) All staff and volunteer to undertake on induction and every three years subsequently.

These modules are available as eLearning via ESR access

National – Health Education England patient safety syllabus module (Essentials of patient safety for boards and senior leadership teams).All trustees and Managers to undertake initially and every three years subsequently.

This module can be accessed directly from the Health Education England eLearning for healthcare platform or ESR

Level 2

National – Health Education for England patient safety syllabus module (Access to Practice).All staff who have the potential to support or lead patient safety incident management to undertake.

This module is available as eLearning via ESR access

The Strategic Manager and Senior Coordinators will complete Levels One and Two of the national patient safety syllabus. The Strategic Manager will undertake continuous professional development on incident response skills and knowledge. Records of training will be maintained by the Business Support Manager. Staff leading on learning responses will be expected to demonstrate competencies in applying human factors and system thinking principles.

Our patient safety incident response plan

Our plan sets out how **Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen** intends to respond to patient safety incidents over a period of 12 to 18 months. The plan is not a permanent set of rules that cannot be changed. We will remain flexible and consider the specific circumstances in which each patient safety incident occurred and the needs of those affected, as well as the plan.

Reviewing our patient safety incident response policy and plan

Our patient safety incident response plan is a ‘living document’ that will be appropriately amended and updated as we use it to respond to patient safety incidents. We will review the plan every 12 to 18 months to ensure our focus remains up to date; with ongoing improvement work our patient safety incident profile is likely to change. This will also provide an opportunity to re-engage with stakeholders to discuss and agree any changes made in the previous 12 to 18 months.

Updated plans will be published on our website, replacing the previous version.

A rigorous planning exercise will be undertaken every four years and more frequently if appropriate (as agreed with our integrated care board (ICB)) to ensure efforts continue to be balanced between learning and improvement. This more in-depth review will include reviewing our response capacity, mapping our services, a wide review of organisational data (for example, patient safety incident investigation (PSII) reports,

improvement plans, complaints, claims, staff survey results, inequalities data, and reporting data) and wider stakeholder engagement

Responding to patient safety incidents

Patient safety incident reporting arrangements

All staff and volunteers are responsible for reporting any potential or actual patient safety incidents to their Line Manager or Coordinator. The Line Manager or Coordinator will record the incident and the level of harm they know has been experienced by the person affected.

Patient safety incidents will be responded to proportionately and in a timely manner. This should include consideration of the Duty of Candour. If an incident occurs which is judged to require only an internal review by Home-Start in East Lancashire but where there is an opportunity for learning and improvement, these will be escalated to the ICB for support where cross system working can support with a collaborative response.

The Strategic Manager will act as liaison with external bodies and partners to ensure effective communication and point of contact with Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen.

Patient safety incident response decision-making

All reported patient safety events will be reviewed by the Strategic Manager and Board of Trustees. The meeting will agree appropriate learning and share with external agencies.

Learning responses available include:

Patient Safety Incident Investigation (PSII)

A Patient Safety Incident Investigation (PSII) is a comprehensive investigation which will utilise the System Engineering Initiative for Patient Safety (SEIPS) framework. These investigations may be initiated where it is felt a patient safety event meets the criteria to be defined as a national or local priority

Duty of Candour disclosure should take place accordingly.

After-Action Review

An After-Action Review is a method of evaluation that is used when there is an unexpected outcome of an activity or event. It aims to capture learning from these tasks to avoid failure and promote success for the future. Everyone should feel they are able to contribute without fear or retribution. After-Actions reviews are not about

accountability but learning. All incidents will be reported through LFPSE regardless of level of investigation required.

Responding to cross-system incidents/issues

Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen will work with partners and the relevant ICB to establish and maintain robust procedures to facilitate the free-flow of information and minimise delays to joint working on cross-system incidents.

Timeframes for learning responses

A learning response must be started as soon as possible after the patient incident is identified and should ordinarily be completed within one to three months of their start date. No learning response should take longer than six months to complete.

Safety action development and monitoring improvement

Following a patient safety event, we will agree and generate safety actions in relation to defined areas for improvement. Following this, the organisation will have measures to monitor any safety action and set out review steps. These actions will be overseen by the Strategic Manager and the Board of Trustees.

Safety improvement plans

Safety improvement plans bring together findings from various responses to patient safety incidents and issues. Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen patient safety incident response plan has outlined local priorities for focus for investigation under PSIRF to help focus our improvement work.

Oversight roles and responsibilities

The table below outlines the roles and responsibilities relating to Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen

Chair of Trustees	The Chair of Trustees has the ultimate responsibility for all aspects of patient safety which includes the management of incidents. This includes ensuring that appropriate structures are in place to enable appropriate investigation, analysis and learning and ensuring resources are available to comply with this policy.
Board of Trustees/Stakeholders	Board and stakeholders will receive assurance regarding the implementation of PSIRF and associated standards to ensure that the Board understands organisational safety. This will include reporting on ongoing monitoring and review of the patient safety incident response plan and delivery of safety actions and improvement.
Strategic Manager	Strategic Manager has responsibility for patient safety within Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen and is accountable for ensuring an adequate system is in place to enable appropriate and proportionate responses to safety incidents that occur.
All other staff and volunteers	All staff and volunteers across Home-Start in Blackburn with Darwen are responsible for ensuring any patient safety event are reported within 24 hours of occurrence. All staff will be required to adhere to this policy

Complaints and appeals

Home-Start Blackburn & Darwen is committed to developing the quality of its services. The organisation has a Complaints Procedure which enables referrers, other stakeholders (e.g. volunteers) and families being supported by Home-Start to make complaints about the service and to have their complaints considered.

Time Frame and Recording Requirements

1	Anyone wishing to make a complaint will be informed about this procedure and will be sent a complaint form. If a letter of complaint has been received this will be attached to a complaint form
2	All complaints received will be acknowledged **within 5 working days** and a copy sent to the chair of the trustee board. All complaints will be recorded on the Complaints record form and retained.
3	Chair of trustees will consider the complaint and respond to the complainant
4	If the complainant is not satisfied with the response an investigation will take place, normally **within 15 working days** of complaint being acknowledged. The timescale of resolving the complaint will be confirmed to the complainant. (Trustees should aim to provide a response **within 25 working days)**.
5	Result of investigation sent to complainant and recorded.
6	All complaints received should be reported to the full board of trustees.