



# NIISQ Agency Reportable Incident Policy

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# What is a reportable incident?

A 'reportable incident' is where any of the following acts or events have occurred (or are alleged to have occurred) in connection with the provision of treatment, care and support services by a service provider:

- The **death** of a NIISSQ participant whether it is expected or unexpected, or the death of a provider worker where it involves or affects a NIISSQ participant, or the death of any other person where it involves or affects a NIISSQ participant.
- **Deliberate self-inflicted injury** of a NIISSQ participant.
- **Material accidental injury** of a NIISSQ participant. In determining whether an injury is 'material', consideration should be given to the level of harm caused. A material injury includes, but is not limited to:
  - fractures
  - burns
  - cuts beyond merely superficial
  - extensive bruising, including large individual bruises, or a number of small bruises
  - head or brain injuries which might be indicated by concussion or loss of consciousness
  - any other injury requiring medical treatment
- **Abuse or neglect** of a NIISSQ participant by any person, including but are not limited to:
  - **Physical abuse** – non-accidental physical acts towards a NIISSQ participant that are intended to cause harm or fear of harm, including acts that result in that person experiencing pain, shock or other unpleasant sensation.
  - **Psychological or emotional abuse** – verbal or non-verbal acts that cause emotional or psychological distress including verbal taunts, threats, harassment, humiliation or intimidation, or a failure to interact with a NIISSQ participant or acknowledge their presence.
  - **Financial abuse** – improper or illegal use of money, property, resources or assets of a NIISSQ participant including improperly withholding finances from that person, and coercing or misleading the NIISSQ participant as to how the funds or property will be used.
  - **Systemic abuse** – a failure to recognise, provide, or attempt to provide adequate or appropriate services, including services that are appropriate to the person's age, gender, culture, support needs or preferences, that has a significant physical, emotional or psychological impact on the NIISSQ participant.

In addition to single instances of abuse, there may also be a pattern of abuse that occurs in any or all of the above categories. Patterns of abuse involve repeated behaviour towards a NIISSQ participant which may not seem like instances of abuse when considered in isolation. Service providers' incident management systems must be able to record incidents in a way that allows for repeated minor instances of these types of behaviour to be identified easily so that any pattern of abuse can be identified and reported as a single reportable incident.

The types of **neglect** that meet the criteria for a reportable incident include, but are not limited to:

- **Grossly inadequate care** – e.g. depriving a NIISSQ participant of basic necessities such as food, drink, shelter, medical care or clothing.
- **Failure to access medical care** – e.g. depriving a NIISSQ participant from receiving required medical attention to assess and treat a condition or prevent an illness or condition from worsening.
- **Supervisory neglect** – e.g. intentional or reckless failure to adequately supervise or support a NIISSQ participant that results in or has the potential to result in, the death of, or significant harm to the NIISSQ participant or intentional or reckless failure to adequately supervise or support a NIISSQ participant that involves a gross breach of professional standards.
- **Unlawful sexual or physical contact** with, or assault of, a NIISSQ participant. The types of unlawful sexual or physical contact can include:
  - **Sexual or indecent assault:** specific offences involving a person having unlawful sexual contact with another person without their consent, or where their age or circumstances preclude consent, including where a person is forced, threatened, coerced or tricked into sexual acts.
  - **Physical behaviour** towards a NIISSQ participant that is a criminal offence.

- **Inappropriate sexual conduct**, conducted against, with or in the presence of a NIISQ participant, including conduct of a sexual nature that may, but does not necessarily amount to a criminal offence. It can include, but is not limited to:
  - sexually explicit comments or overtly sexual behaviour
  - crossing professional boundaries in a way that has sexual implications or connotations e.g. forming an intimate relationship with a NIISQ participant
  - grooming of the person for sexual activity
- **Unauthorised use of restrictive practices** in relation to a NIISQ participant
- **Medication error** including, the administration of incorrect medication, missed administration of medication or an error in the dispensing of medication (*e.g. there was an error in the written instructions or medication provided by a pharmacist that resulted in the administration of incorrect medication*) or any other case of clinical mistake.

**Other reportable incidents** that do not relate directly to the provision of treatment, care or support by a service provider include those that may be observed during the delivery of these services, including:

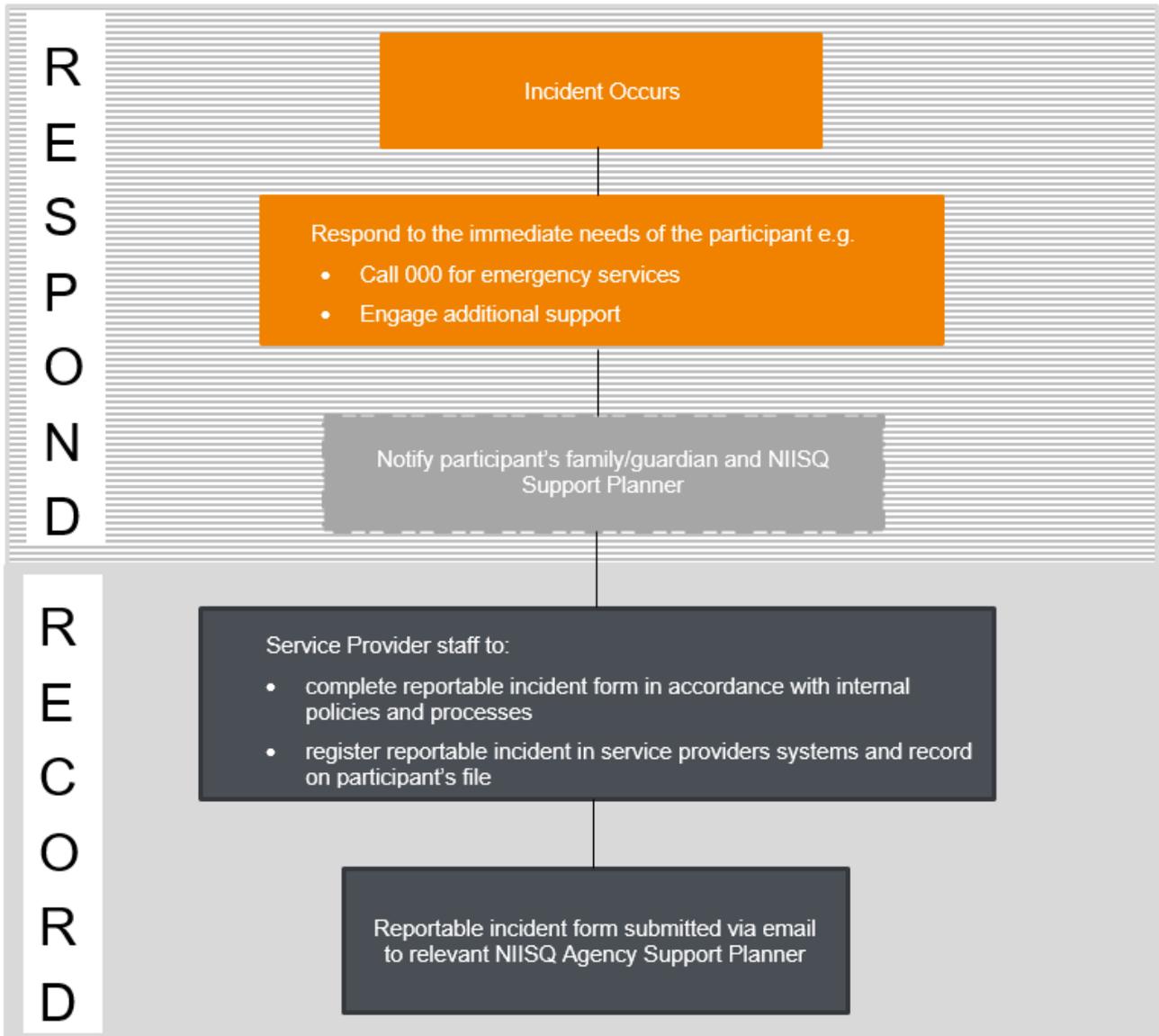
- **Absent / missing participant** – if a participant’s absence creates concerns for their safety and welfare or that of others.
- **Child at risk** – a situation where a report has been made to the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women where a NIISQ participant that is a child is at risk of harm or there are other children at risk of harm.
- **Behaviour** – participant actions that lead to or place self or others at risk of harm, cause disorder, are intrusive and/or offensive to others, sexually orientated actions by the participant in inappropriate circumstances.

## Reporting a reportable incident

It is important to report a reportable incident to ensure appropriate action can be taken. Early reporting is essential to:

- ensure timely and effective responses are taken to address immediate participant/injured worker safety and wellbeing
- ensure strategies to address the reportable incident or allegation can be effectively implemented as soon as possible
- ensure the service provider complies with their duty of care to the participant
- support the provision of high-quality services to participant/s through comprehensive reporting
- ensure the service provider continues to meet its legislative and compliance obligations, and
- help mitigate against future incidents.

# Process for reporting a reportable incident



## 1. Respond to the immediate needs of the participant

The service provider must ensure that the participant is not at risk of any immediate harm. The participant's health and safety needs should be assessed and attended to immediately, including their mental and physical needs. Service providers should seek medical assistance when required.

## 2. Contact Emergency Services (when required)

If the participant is in immediate danger or a serious allegation has been made, call emergency services on 000 (fire, ambulance, police).

## 3. Notify relevant parties

You must notify the participant's or injured worker's family or guardian and relevant NISQ Support Planner within one working day and provide details of the incident or allegation and the actions being taken to remedy it.

#### **4. Engage additional support (when required)**

When required, and once the participant's immediate needs have been met, the service provider should work with the NIISQ Agency Support Planner to identify any additional support that may be required for the participant and/or their family e.g.:

- Statewide Sexual Assault Hotline – 1800 010 120
- Acute Care Team – 1300 642 255
- National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline – 1800 880 052

#### **5. Recording the Reportable Incident**

The Service Provider's staff must complete the reportable incident form used in their organisation and email a copy to the relevant NIISQ Agency Support Planner within five business days. The reportable incident must also be recorded in the service providers relevant system and a copy of the incident report filed on the participants file.

## **Additional information**

### **Reporting alleged criminal acts**

It is an expectation that service providers report alleged criminal activity to the police as soon as possible once being made aware of the allegation.

### **Reporting to the Coroner**

In addition to reporting a participant's death through the serious incident reporting processes, a statutory obligation to report deaths to the Coroner may also apply.

For more information please see <https://www.courts.qld.gov.au/courts/coroners-court/coroners-process/reportable-deaths>