

**REPORT TO THE TRUST BOARD – PUBLIC
9 MAY 2018**

Title	Working with families when a serious incident occurs
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Purpose of the Report:

To inform the Board what the Trust is doing to work with families and ensure they are supported when a serious incident occurs.

Summary of Key Issues:

When an incident takes place that meets the threshold for a serious incident investigation the Trust follows a national serious incident investigation process. We are committed to engaging with families and carers in these situations. This paper sets out what we currently do and our plans to provide improved support.

Strategic priorities this paper supports (Please check box including brief statement)

Improved patient experience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Families are an important support to our service users. Improving the support we provide to families will improve the quality of care we provide to service users
Improved health of the communities we serve	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Families are part of the larger community we serve.
Improved staff experience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	We will train our staff to be more confident in supporting families at the times of serious incidents.
Improved value for money	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Committees / Meetings where this item has been considered:

Date	Committee / Meeting
	N/A

Implications:

Equality Analysis	This report shows the level of support individuals are given in often distressing circumstances
Risk and Assurance	This report provides assurance that the Trust has processes in place to support individuals in often distressing circumstances. This in turn may reduce the likelihood of complaints and claims
Service User / Carer / Staff	Supporting individuals when a serious incident takes place supports their wellbeing and increases confidence in Trust services
Financial	None
Quality	Aim is to improve the quality of service we provide to service users and their families.

Glossary

Abbreviation	In full
SI	Serious Incident investigation

1.0 Current actions

1.1 The Trust does provide support to families in the following ways when a serious incident (SI) occurs:

- Immediate contact made by the team where the service user received care – to offer condolences (where appropriate) discuss what happened and offer practical and emotional support;
- A duty of candour letter sent when appropriate;
- Contact made by the lead SI reviewer within ten days of a serious incident being declared (often sooner) to offer condolences (where appropriate), signpost the family where support is required, explain the serious incident review process and help the family to formulate questions to be answered in the review;
- Continuing sensitive contact made by the SI reviewer during the course of the review, particularly where families may not be ready to be included in the process;
- SI reviewer feedback at the end of the review process;
- SI reviewer support when an inquest takes place;
- When it is not possible to identify family / next of kin, the SI reviewer will make extensive attempts via the GP, Coroner, etc., to obtain details. Sometimes this may include writing to the family via the Coroner;
- Support via the complaints team if the family make a complaint; and
- A Trust-wide learning lessons event was held last year on improving communication with families.

2.0 Identified areas for improvement

2.1 Whilst we provide support for families during SIs we have identified three main areas where we could improve this:

- Learning from NHS England and other Trusts on best practice in working to support families;
- Keeping families informed of the SI process and signposting them to external support agencies; and
- Working with staff to improve the support they provide for families.

3.0 How we plan to provide improved support

3.1 Whilst families receive a letter of condolence from the SI reviewer and an explanation of the SI process we could do more to provide support:

- An NHS England 'Making families count' learning event has been arranged for 18 June 2018 to provide support and learning for staff whose roles include supporting families during a bereavement;
- We are drafting a support leaflet which explains the process of what to do when someone dies, includes external support organisations and identifies support within the Trust;

- We are planning training for staff from outside agencies which have expertise in working to support families;
- Work other Trusts to develop best practice in working with bereaved families; and
- We aim to develop a bereavement support officer who is a point of contact for bereaved families.

4.0 Action being requested

- 4.1 The Board is asked to **RECEIVE** the findings of the report.