

# Incident management procedure

## Objective

The Country Counsellor aims for our incident management processes to be respectful of, and responsive to, our clients wellbeing, values, and needs, and focused on continuous improvement to ensure ongoing safety for clients and staff.

All incidents occurring in connection with the delivery of therapeutic services will be recorded in the Incident Report Form and logged in the Incident Register.

## Definition of an Incident

- Acts, omissions, events or circumstances that occur in connection with providing therapeutic services to clients which have, or could have, caused harm to the client. This includes within provision of NDIS services to a person with disability.
- Acts by a private or NDIS client that occur in connection with providing service to the client and which have caused serious harm, or a risk of serious harm, to another person.
- Reportable incidents\* that are alleged to have occurred in connection with providing services to clients.

\*Reportable incidents may include: death or serious injury of a client; abuse or neglect of a client or young person; unlawful sexual or physical contact with, or assault of a client or young person; sexual misconduct committed against, or in the presence of a young person or person with disability, including grooming.

## Incident identification, recording, and reporting

1. Incidents can be identified by staff and clients, client family members or carers.
2. Where a staff member identifies an incident, they are to verbally advise the Principal Counsellor as soon as practical, and no longer than 3 hours, following incident identification, and to complete and submit an Incident Report Form. If the staff member is unable to complete an Incident Report Form, the Principal Counsellor will complete it,
3. Where a client, or person associated with a client, advises staff of an incident, the staff member is to verbally advise the Principal Counsellor, then complete an Incident Report Form and submit to the Principal Counsellor.
4. Staff member is to respond immediately to ensure safety and wellbeing of the impacted person/s.
5. If the incident requires immediate support from emergency services (e.g., SA Police, SA Ambulance Service) to ensure the safety of impacted person/s and/or where it is alleged or suspected that a criminal offence has occurred, the staff member should telephone 000 immediately.
6. All actions taken associated with the incident should be included in the Incident Report Form.
7. Incident report forms are to be completed and submitted as soon as practical, and no longer than 24 hours, after identification of the incident.
8. The Principal Counsellor is the authorised reportable incident notifier and approver. They have responsible for notifying:
  - Client's carers, guardians, family members, or emergency contact,

---

### Incident identification, recording, and reporting (continued)

- For NDIS participants, the NDIS Commission within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident (where reportable incidents occur). Notification to the NDIS Commission is to be via the NDIS Commission Portal 'my reportable incidents' page.
  - Relevant government agencies, if and when appropriate (e.g., SA Police, Department of Child Protection, SA Ambulance),
  - Updating the client's secure file with relevant information regarding the incident in The Country Counsellor's practice management software.
9. All incidents, with summary of actions, outcomes, and corrective actions, will be recorded in the Incident Register.

### Client support & involvement

1. Staff will undertake welfare checks with the impacted person/s, at the time of incident and in the days/weeks following. If additional support is required outside the scope of The Country Counsellor, referrals will be made at the request of the client.
2. Impacted person/s will be involved, to the degree they're comfortable, in the assessment, investigation, and corrective actions associated with the incident,
3. Clients are provided accessible verbal and visual information about the incident management process on intake. Information is also provided on The Country Counsellor's website and in consulting rooms.

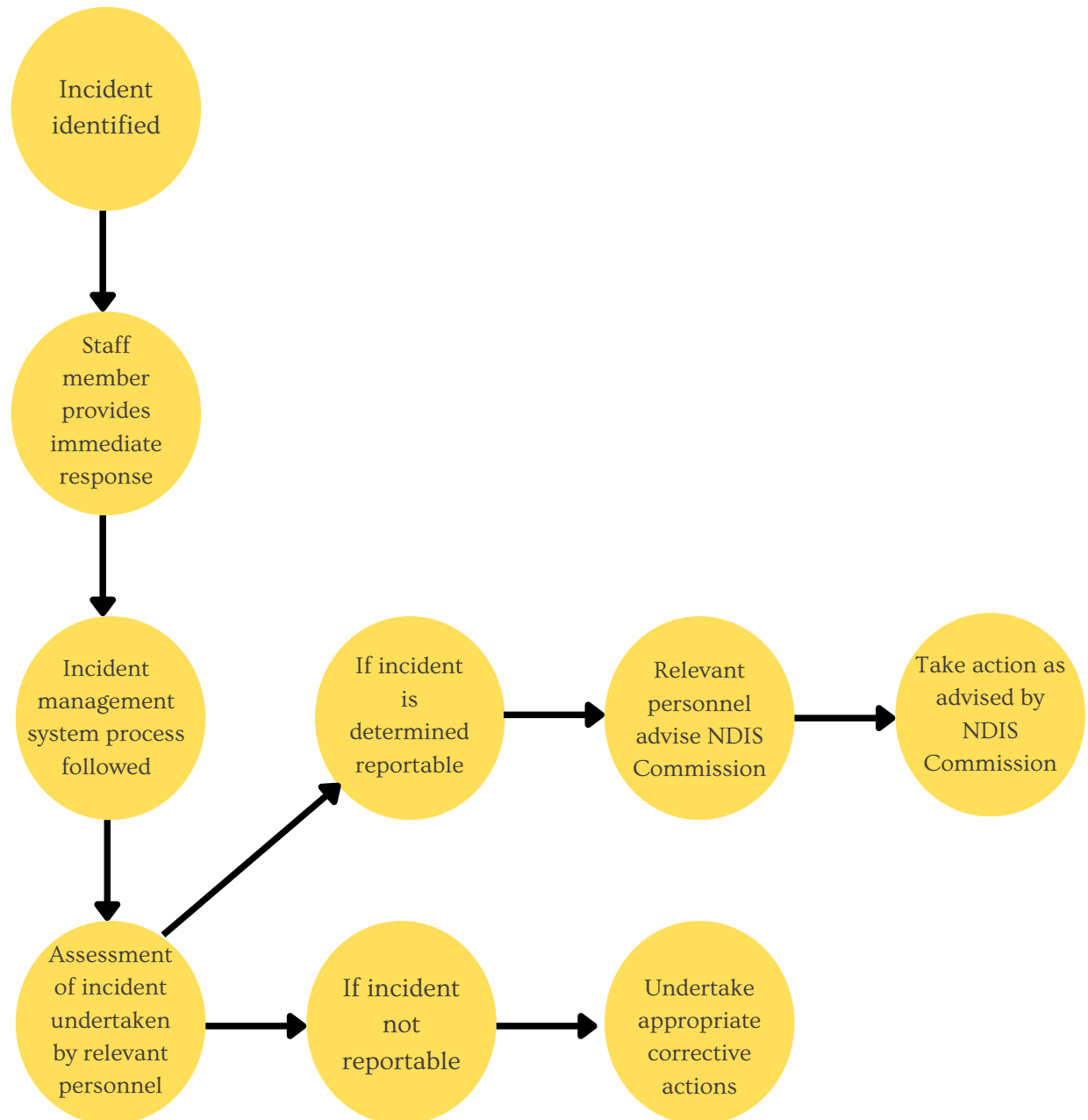
### Incident assessment

1. The Principal Counsellor will undertake an assessment of the incident, in collaboration with the impact person/s and staff member/s involved. Person-centred practice and procedural fairness are key principles in the course of all assessments/investigations,
2. If the Principal Counsellor is involved in the incident, an independent person with the skills and experience to undertake an assessment will be engaged,
3. If the incident is a reportable incident, The Principal Counsellor will notify the NDIS commission and comply with NDIS reportable incident process.
4. Any internal assessment is not to impede or interfere with Police enquiries.
5. Assessment will include a review of:
  - a. Known or suspected contributing factors,
  - b. If the incident could have been prevented,
  - c. Impact of the incident on clients and staff,
  - d. Effectiveness of the management and/or resolution of the incident,
  - e. What, if any, regulatory action needs to be taken to prevent similar incidents occurring in future or to minimise impact of incidents,
  - f. Whether other person/s or agencies need to be notified of the incident,
  - g. Corrective actions required to be undertaken by The Country Counsellor.
    - i. Corrective actions will be taken when:
      1. an incident could have been prevented or impact minimised by an action or inaction of staff,
      2. there is an ongoing risk to clients,
      3. an action by staff may prevent or minimise the risk of the incident recurring
  - h. Improvements to be implement in The Country Counsellor service delivery and/or processes resulting from the incident.

#### Documentation and information storage

- Incident Report Forms and the Incident Register are saved in a secure governance folder on The Country Counsellor's OneDrive which is hosted by AWS in Australia,
- Correspondence associated with an incident will also be saved in the secure governance folder (e.g., emails, meeting minutes, statements, discussion notes),
- Access to the file is restricted by password and provided to relevant staff,
- Incident Report Forms only use personal and sensitive information where necessary. Where possible, client details are noted as initials only,
- Transmission of incident report forms to other agencies (e.g., SA Police, NDIS Commission) will only occur if formally requested and will be done such that privacy and confidentiality is maintained.
- Documentation will be kept for a minimum of 7 years from the date the record is made,
- If an incident involves an allegation relating to a staff member, records associated with the allegation will be kept in the secure governance folder,
- Access to incident documentation will only be provided to staff members who have an approved business purpose to do so.

## Incident management procedure - at a glance



## Underpinned by

Client respect,  
autonomy,  
wellbeing



Organisational  
accountability



Service delivery  
continuous  
improvement