Reducing the risk of harm to aged care consumers - **the Serious Incident Response Scheme**

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Serious Incident Response Scheme   (SIRS)

Engage
Empower
Safeguard

Aim: to prevent and reduce the risk and occurrence of incidents of abuse and neglect in residential aged care.

 The scheme -

- Strengthens existing obligations of aged care providers:

    o   Prevent and manage incidents impacting consumers
    o   Use incident data to drive improvement
    o   Report serious incidents to the Commission

- Gives the Commission new enforcement powers

- Commenced 1 April 2021, with full operation from 1 October 2021

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Reportable incidents

1. Unreasonable use of force

2. Unlawful sexual contact or inappropriate sexual conduct

3. Psychological or emotional abuse

4. Unexpected death

5. Stealing or financial coercion by a staff member

6. Neglect

7. Inappropriate physical or chemical restraint

8. Unexplained absence from care

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Provider obligations

All aged care providers	Providers of residential care and flexible care in a residential setting
• Meet revised requirements of the Quality Standards and have an incident management system in place • Identify, assess, respond to and record all incidents and near misses impacting consumers	Plus… • Notify the Commission of reportable incidents within the required timeframes • Notify the police and other bodies when there are grounds to do so

Best practice response to an alleged, suspected or confirmed incident in a residential service

Engage *Empower* **Safeguard**

1 **Ensure leadership and a safety culture**
Prepare for incidents by ensuring leadership around risk mitigation and incident management and creating a safety culture. Embed critical enablers through effective governance systems, with end-to-end policies and procedures that support staff to understand and use the incident management system.

2 **Respond to incident**
Respond to the immediate needs of those affected by the incident to ensure their health, safety and wellbeing. Assess the level of harm and mitigate any ongoing risk.

3 **Record and report the incident**
Report and record the incident to understand what occurred and the appropriate next steps (including any required notifications).

4 **Analyse the incident**
Understand underlying causes and how systems and practices could be improved to reduce the risk of similar incidents occurring in the future.

5 **Implement actions**
Implement remedial actions that help prevent future risk and improve incident response. Monitor actions for effectiveness.

6 **Close the loop**
Share lessons learned with management and leaders, staff, consumers and families. Continuously improve the quality and safety of aged care. Analyse incident trends and data and regularly review the incident management system.

Essential elements of effective incident management systems

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Role of the Commission

- Managing and administering the SIRS

- Providing guidance and education for the aged care sector

- Using information from incident reports to enhance our understanding of risk – both for specific services and across the sector

- Taking proportionate regulatory action in response to incidents *(e.g. requiring the provider to investigate and submit a report, undertaking an unannounced onsite assessment contact or investigation, taking compliance enforcement action)*

- Publishing information about incidents and risks to inform and prompt improvement across the aged care sector

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