Critical Incident Reporting Requirements for Specialist Disability Service Providers

If you are registered as a NDIS provider, where should you report?

Please refer to the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission website for Incident Management and reportable incidents, located here: https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/provider-responsibilities/incident-management-and-reportable-incidents or the Fact Sheet: Then and now for Providers in the ACT.

If you are not registered as a NDIS provider, the following information applies to your business...

What is a Critical Incident?

A Critical Incident is any event that poses a serious risk to the life, health or safety, of an individual who is receiving services from your organisation.

It can include incidents where staff, clients and third parties feel unsafe and under stress. It is impossible to describe every situation that may be a critical incident, however the following examples, in conjunction with the above information should give some guidance, if the incident involves:

- A missing client;
- A significant injury;
- Probable hospitalisation;
- Possible involvement by the Police or other emergency services;
- An alleged sexual assault;
- Recognising a client who may be at risk of suicide or seriously injuring someone else;
- A fire in the individual’s home;
- Alleged fraud; or
- Incorrect medication.

Why Must I Report Critical Incidents?

Critical incidents are at the ‘pointy end’ of the safeguarding spectrum – there are no matters more serious in this context than threats to the life, health or safety of a vulnerable person. Therefore, reporting obligations should not be seen as an inconvenience but as a necessary protection and the primary focus at all times should be the wellbeing and safety of the affected person.

Section 10 of the Disability Services Regulation 2014 (under the Disability Services Act 1991) requires that all Critical Incidents must be reported to the Director-General of the Community Services Directorate. Reports are made to the Director-General of the Community Services Directorate via the Human Services Registrar.
How do I report a Critical Incident?

Critical Incidents can be reported by contacting the office of the Human Services Registrar on 02 6207 5474 or by emailing quality@act.gov.au.

At the time or soon after the incident...

Your first priority is ensuring the safety of people involved in the incident. If you have an opportunity in the early stages, notification can be made to the HSR of the details that are on hand:

- Brief description of the incident;
- What immediate actions are being taken?

For example:

At [time] a resident of Service X had fallen and sustained several injuries. The ambulance was in attendance and the individual is currently at Hospital Y. Further details will be provided shortly.

Within the days following the incident...

Within a reasonable timeframe following the incident (usually a few days) a more detailed account of the incident will need to be provided. If an incident report form has been completed, please provide that report. Otherwise, please provide as much of the following information as possible:

- What occurred- including who was involved, where it occurred, circumstances surrounding incident, when it occurred;
- What has been done to ensure the person’s safety;
- What has occurred subsequently;
- Whether established procedures were followed;
- Actual or intended outcomes, for example, review of procedures, training or communication mechanisms;
- Information on what has been learned from the incident; and
- Steps (if any) that have been taken to prevent the situation from occurring again.

Critical Incidents must be reported to the Human Services Registrar as soon as possible.

What happens after I report a Critical Incident?

After you report a Critical Incident to us we will review the information. Our primary goal is to ensure that risks to people using your service are managed appropriately. We may seek further information from you, we may conclude that all appropriate actions have occurred, or we may and make specific recommendations on improvements.

Who can I contact for questions on Critical Incidents?

For any questions relating to Critical Incidents please contact the Human Services Registrar on (02) 6207 5474, or email quality@act.gov.au.