



# PATIENT SAFETY INCIDENT RESPONSE POLICY

## Introduction and Purpose

This policy supports the requirements of the Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF) and sets out Mobile Physio's approach to developing and maintaining effective systems and processes for responding to patient safety incidents and issues for the purpose of learning and improving patient safety.

This policy supports development and maintenance of an effective patient safety incident response system that integrates the four key aims of: compassionate engagement and involvement of those affected by patient safety incidents; application of a range of system-based approaches to learning from patient safety incidents; considered and proportionate responses to patient safety incidents and safety issues and supportive oversight focused on strengthening response system functioning and improvement.

## Scope

This policy is specific to patient safety incident responses conducted solely for the purpose of learning and improvement across Mobile Physio. There is no remit to apportion blame, determine liability or preventability in a response conducted for the purpose of learning and improvement. Other processes, such as claims handling, human resources investigations into employment concerns, professional standards investigations, coronial inquests and criminal investigations, exist for that purpose. The principle aims of each of these responses differ from those of a patient safety response and are outside the scope of this policy. Information from a patient safety response process can be shared with those leading other types of responses, but other processes should not influence the remit of a patient safety incident response.

This policy applies to all members of staff, including temporary staff and should be read in conjunction with the other relevant policies (Policy for Incident Reporting, Duty of Candour Policy, Complaints Policy, Risk Management Policy, Clinical Governance Policy).

## Our Patient Safety Culture

Mobile Physio promotes a culture of fairness, openness and learning by aiming to make staff feel confident to speak up when things go wrong, rather than fearing blame. Supporting staff to be open about mistakes allows valuable lessons to be learnt so the same errors can be prevented from being repeated. Staff are supported by the Physiotherapy Manager and provided with regular opportunities to discuss concerns including regular, individual supervision sessions and team meetings. The Physiotherapy Manager is also available remotely (by telephone and email) on a daily basis for immediate concerns. Where staff do not wish to speak to the Physiotherapy Manager, Debbie Rose is available as our Freedom to Speak Up guardian.

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Mobile Physio also promotes a climate that fosters a just culture by ensuring that patient safety incident responses are conducted for the sole purpose of learning and identifying system improvements to reduce risk. The service will not seek to inappropriately suspend staff involved in patient safety incidents. In addition, Mobile Physio aims to have an integrated approach in its reporting systems for patient safety incidents, safeguarding, complaints and Freedom to Speak Up reports. This is to triangulate information, ensure risks are identified and responded to in the most effective way.

### **Patient safety partners**

Mobile Physio aims to engage with and involve all its safety partners including staff, patients and their families when developing and maintaining our patient safety response processes. Compassionate engagement should be demonstrated throughout the organisation: from the trustees, the Physiotherapy Manager and all other employees. Mobile Physio invests time in training its staff in these processes during their induction and also through regular supervision sessions within their work. Mobile Physio welcomes feedback from their patients and their families in the form of a satisfaction questionnaire but also through a formal complaints process and feedback forms on our website.

### **Addressing health inequalities**

Our patient safety incident response policy aims to promote health equality and reduce inequality. We will use a flexible approach, analysing data to help identify any disproportionate risk to patients with specific characteristics. In the event of a patient safety incident, we will ensure compassionate engagement with the individual, their family and any staff members, considering any particular needs and responding to them appropriately.

### **Engaging and involving patients, families and staff following a patient safety incident**

The patient safety incident response framework recognises that learning and improvement following a patient safety incident can only be achieved if supportive systems and processes are in place. It supports the development of an effective patient safety incident response system that prioritises compassionate engagement and involvement of those affected by patient safety incidents (including patients, families and staff). This involves working with those affected by patient safety incidents to understand and answer any questions they have in relation to the incident and signpost them to support as required.

### **Patient safety incident response planning**

PSIRF supports organisations to respond to incidents and safety issues in a way that maximises learning and improvement, rather than basing responses on arbitrary and subjective definitions of harm. Beyond nationally set requirements, organisations can explore patient safety incidents relevant to their context and the populations they serve rather than only those that meet a certain defined threshold. As a small organisation, Mobile Physio can respond quickly and effectively to patient safety incidents and does not require an extensive team due to the small number of historical incidents/expected number of incidents.

### **Our patient safety incident response plan**

Our plan sets out how Mobile Physio intends to respond to patient safety incidents over a period of 12 to 18 months. The plan is not a permanent set of rules that cannot be changed. We will remain flexible and consider the specific circumstances in which each patient safety incident occurred and the needs of those affected, as well as the plan. The plan will be reviewed annually by the Physiotherapy Manager and updated plans will be published on our website, replacing the previous version.

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## Responding to patient safety incidents

As a service, we provide musculoskeletal physiotherapy within GP surgeries and in certain cases, in the patient's home. We work closely with our partners at the three GP surgeries when reporting, investigating and responding to patient safety incidents. Previous safety incidents have been minor and only a small number recorded due to the nature and size of our service.

Patient safety incidents are any unintended or unexpected incident which could have, or did, lead to harm for one or more patients receiving healthcare. Reporting them supports the NHS to learn from mistakes and to take action to keep patients safe. Both healthcare staff and the general public are encouraged to report any incidents, whether they result in harm or not, to the national services for recording patient safety events. Members of the public should record patient safety incidents directly to the National Reporting and Learning System (NRLS) using a patient and public e-form on the relevant website. As a small organisation, Mobile Physio employees should record their patient safety incidents on the Learn from patient safety events service (LFPSE), also via an eform on [record.learn-from-patient-safety-events.nhs.uk](https://record.learn-from-patient-safety-events.nhs.uk). Certain types of safety incident will trigger mandated specific responses including compliance with Duty of Candour regulations.

The Physiotherapy Manager is responsible for carrying out a Patient Safety Incident Investigation (PSII), either an in-depth review of a single patient safety incident or a cluster of incidents to understand what happened and how. The Physiotherapy Manager is also responsible for identifying emergent issues and together with the administrator and Chair of Trustees, will agree a proportionate response. If necessary, help will be sought from other agencies where further expertise is required. This may be from the Integrated Care Board (ICB), the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP), HCPC (Health and Care Professions Council) or the CQC (Care Quality Commission). The Physiotherapy Manager will engage with those affected and lead on their involvement in the incident response. An After Action Review (AAR) may also be held, this is a structured facilitated discussion of an event, the outcome of which gives individuals involved in the event understanding of why the outcome differed from that expected and the learning to assist improvement. AAR generates insight from the various perspectives of the team and can be used to discuss both positive outcomes as well as incidents. It is based around four questions: What was the expected outcome/expected to happen? What was the actual outcome/what actually happened? What was the difference between the expected outcome and the event? What is the learning?

The Physiotherapy Manager continually reviews the following data types to inform our patient safety incident profile and shares the information as requested by the ICB:

- Patient safety incident investigation reports
- Complaints
- Freedom to Speak Up reports
- Safeguarding cases
- Staff suspensions
- Risk assessments
- Inequalities data

The Physiotherapy Manager will monitor our safety actions and ensure learning from the incident responses to inform improvements in our service.

An incident response must start as soon as possible after an incident is identified, and usually completed within one to three months. The timeframe for completing a PSII should be agreed with those affected by the incident provided they are willing and able to be involved in that decision. PSIIs should take no longer than six months, however, in exceptional circumstances (e.g., when a partner organisation requests an investigation is paused), a longer timeframe

may be needed to respond to an incident. In this case, any extension to timescales should be agreed with those affected (including the patient, family, carer, and staff).

### **Complaints and Appeals**

Complaints and appeals relating to Mobile Physio's response to patient safety incidents will be handled in line with our Complaint's Policy. A copy of this can be found on our website [www.mobile-physio-surrey.co.uk](http://www.mobile-physio-surrey.co.uk)

References: Patient Safety Incident Response Framework, August 2023, [www.england.nhs.uk/patient-safety/incident-response-framework](http://www.england.nhs.uk/patient-safety/incident-response-framework)

Engaging and involving patients, families and staff following a patient safety incident, version 1, August 2022, [www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/B1465-2.-Engaging-and-involving...-v1-FINAL.pdf](http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/B1465-2.-Engaging-and-involving...-v1-FINAL.pdf)

Report a patient safety incident, NHS England, [www.england.nhs.uk/patient-safety/report-patient-safety-incident/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/patient-safety/report-patient-safety-incident/)