

Risk Matrix – Impact/Consequence Definitions

Descriptor	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Injury (physical and psychological) to patient/visitor/ staff.	Adverse event leading to minor injury not requiring first aid.	Minor injury or illness, first aid treatment required.	Agency reportable, e.g. RIDDOR, Police (violent and aggressive acts). Significant injury requiring medical treatment and/or counseling.	Major injuries/long term incapacity or disability (loss of limb) requiring medical treatment and/or counseling. Broken bone.	Incident leading to death or major permanent incapacity.
Patient Experience	Reduced quality of patient experience/clinical outcome not directly related to delivery of clinical care.	Unsatisfactory patient experience/ clinical outcome directly related to care provision – readily resolvable.	Unsatisfactory patient experience/ clinical outcome; short term effects – expect recovery <1wk.	Unsatisfactory patient experience/ clinical outcome; long term effects – expect recovery >1wk.	Unsatisfactory patient experience/ clinical outcome; continued ongoing long term effects
Staffing and Competence	Short-term low staffing level temporarily reduces service quality (< 1 day). Short term low staffing level (>1 day), where there is no disruption to patient care.	Ongoing low staffing level reduces service quality. Minor error due to ineffective training/implementation of training.	Late delivery of key objective / service due to lack of staff. Moderate error due to ineffective training/implementation of training. Ongoing problems with staffing levels.	Uncertain delivery of key objective/ service due to lack of staff. Major error due to ineffective training/ implementation of training.	Non-delivery of key objective/service due to lack of staff. Loss of key staff. Critical error due to ineffective training/ implementation of training.
Objectives / Project	Barely noticeable reduction in scope, quality or schedule.	Minor reduction in scope, quality or schedule	Reduction in scope or quality of project; project objectives or schedule.	Significant project over-run.	Inability to meet project objectives; reputation of the _rganization seriously damaged.
Complaints / Claims	Locally resolved verbal complaint.	Justified written complaint peripheral to clinical care.	Below excess claim. Justified complaint-involving lack of appropriate care.	Claim above excess level. Multiple justified complaints.	Multiple claims or single major claim Complex justified complaint
Service / Business Interruption	Interruption in a service that does not impact on the delivery of patient care or the ability to continue to provide service.	Short-term disruption to service with minor impact on patient care.	Some disruption in service with unacceptable impact on patient care. Temporary loss of ability to provide service.	Sustained loss of service which has serious impact on delivery of patient care resulting in major contingency plans being invoked.	Permanent loss of core service or facility. Disruption to facility leading to significant “knock on” effect
Financial (including damage / loss / fraud)	Negligible organisational/ personal financial loss. (£<1k). (NB. Please adjust for context)	Minor organisational/personal financial loss (£1-5k).	Significant organisational/personal financial loss (£5-50k).	Major organisational/personal financial loss (£50k-300k).	Severe organisational/personal financial loss (£>300k).
Inspection / Audit	Small number of recommendations which focus on minor quality improvement issues.	Recommendations made which can be addressed by low level of management action.	Challenging recommendations that can be addressed with appropriate action plan.	Enforcement action. Low rating. Critical report.	Prosecution. Zero rating. Severely critical report.
Adverse Publicity / Reputation	Rumours, no media coverage. Little effect on staff morale.	Local media coverage – short term. Some public embarrassment. Minor effect on staff morale/public attitudes.	Local media – long-term adverse publicity. Significant effect on staff morale and public perception of the organisation.	National media/adverse publicity, less than 3 days. Public confidence in the organisation undermined. Use of services affected.	National/international media/adverse publicity, more than 3 days. MSP/MP concern (Questions in Parliament). Court Enforcement. Public Inquiry/ FAI.

Emergency planning/ Region wide	Insignificant numbers of injuries or impact on health.	Small number of people affected, no fatalities, and a small number of minor injuries with first aid treatment.	Limited number of people affected, no fatalities, some hospitalisation and medical treatment. Localised displacement of small number of people for 6-24 hrs.	Significant number of people in affected area, with multiple fatalities, multiple serious or extensive injuries, significant hospitalization. Large number of people displaced 6-24 hrs or possibly beyond.	Very large number of people (100s) in affected area impacted, significant numbers of fatalities, large number of people requiring hospitalization with serious injuries with longer-term effects.
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Table 2 – Likelihood Definitions

Descriptor	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain
Probability	Can't believe this event would happen – will only happen in exceptional circumstances.	Not expected to happen, but definite potential exists – unlikely to occur.	May occur occasionally, has happened before on occasions – reasonable chance of occurring.	Strong possibility that this could occur – likely to occur. Not persistent.	This is expected to occur frequently / in most circumstances – more likely to occur than not. Persistent

Risk Levels

Likelihood	Consequences / Impact				
	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
Almost Certain	Medium	High	High	V High	V High
Likely	Medium	Medium	High	High	V High
Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	High
Unlikely	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
Rare	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium