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POLICY FOR THE REPORTING OF CLINICAL INCIDENTS

February 2000

Introduction

Clinical governance is defined as 'a system through which NHS Organisations are accountable for continually improving the quality of their services and safeguarding high standards of care by creating an environment in which excellence in clinical care can flourish'.

Clinical Risk Management is an integral part of any Clinical Governance system and a key component of this is Clinical Incident Reporting.

Definition of a Clinical Incident

A clinical incident is a situation in which a patient is involved in an event which had a potential or actual adverse clinical outcome, which would not be expected to occur in the routine course of clinical events.

Clinical Incident Reporting

Clinical Incident reporting is first and foremost an opportunity to learn and to improve our practice and secondly it acts as 'an early warning' of impending clinical negligence claims.

Clinical Incident reporting will aim to:

- reduce the occurrence of preventable adverse effects;
- minimise injury to patients;
- improve the quality of care for patients.

Clinical Incident Reporting enables clinicians or any member of staff to report a clinical incident which may or may not result in an adverse reaction for the patient being treated.

In an environment where staff feel secure and valued we want to encourage a culture of honesty and openness where mistakes and untoward incidents are identified quickly and dealt with in a positive and responsive way.

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Policy to be reviewed in one year

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Procedure for Reporting Clinical Incidents

It is extremely important that any clinical incident should be reported on the appropriate documentation. Clinical Incidents must be reported immediately to the line manager and should be recorded using the relevant section in the Incident Book. All incident forms will be sent to the Risk Management Co-ordinator who will;

- Inform the Chief Executive/Medical Director/ Director of Nursing as appropriate;
- Contact all relevant staff and obtain detailed reports;
- Provide the Trust Board with details of trends.

Duties of employees

It is clear that the success of a Clinical Incident Reporting system will be dependent on staff participation. Clinical Staff are reminded of their professional accountability under their code of conduct for the standard of care they provide and implicit in that context is the responsibility to report clinical incidents.

Quality Improvement

Reviewing incidents will enable the Trust to pay particular attention to any deficiencies in procedures or practices which may have contributed to the incidents and will formulate directions and recommendations designed to eliminate or minimise the incidence of similar occurrences.

Signed



Stella Burnside, Chief Executive