



Incident Management Framework

Frequently Asked Questions for Aged Care Centre residents and family members

May 2023

What is an incident?

An incident is an event or near-miss that could or did lead to:

- injury/ illness/ death of a person (e.g. a resident, customer, employee, family member, contractor, visitor or another person)
- physical, emotional or psychological harm to a person
- failure to comply with IRT's legislative obligations
- damage to IRT facilities or assets
- loss of, or disruption to, IRT's operations.

Incidents can be identified through a range of sources - you may witness it occur, it may come up in discussion, via feedback or a complaint, an audit, or a safety meeting.

What is a near-miss?

A near-miss is an event that did not result in harm, but had the potential to do so.

What is an Incident Management Framework (IMF)?

An Incident Management Framework outlines a consistent way to identify, assess, respond to, record and manage an incident. At IRT, this process includes the following steps:

1. Identify the incident
2. Ensure safety of people and the environment
3. Record and assess
4. Escalate and report
5. Review, investigate and analyse
6. Implement learnings
7. Provide feedback
8. Act and analyse on trends

Why is IRT introducing an IMF?

IRT is introducing an IMF to enhance the way we manage incidents across the organisation. The framework will make the process of reporting and managing incidents more streamlined and efficient, and help to ensure we continue to comply with the Aged Care Quality Standards.

What are the benefits of introducing an IMF?

An effective IMF will primarily ensure a consistent approach for managing incidents across the organisation, and enable us to more effectively prevent incidents, leading to a safer living and working environment.

What does the IMF mean for residents and family members?

The IMF will support the ongoing delivery of safe and quality care to our residents by enabling a better understanding of where there is risk and how it can be avoided. It will also lead to the development and implementation of timely solutions, which will result in less chance of the same incident occurring again.

Who is responsible for identifying and reporting an incident?

Everyone is responsible for identifying and reporting incidents. This includes employees, residents, family members, visitors, contractors, volunteers, and allied health professionals.

What types of incidents should be reported under the IMF?

All incidents and near-misses must be reported.

Does this include National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) reportable incidents?

Yes, all NDIS reportable incidents must be reported under the IMF. An NDIS Reportable Incident includes an act or event that has happened (or is alleged to have happened) in connection with the provision of supports or services to a person with a disability who is registered under the NDIS. This includes:

- the death of a person with disability
- serious injury of a person with disability
- abuse or neglect of a person with disability
- unlawful sexual or physical contact with, or assault of, a person with disability
- sexual misconduct, committed against, or in the presence of, a person with disability,
- unauthorised use of a restrictive practice

Is the Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS) still in effect and how does it fit with the IMF?

Yes, the SIRS is still in effect and all incidents that may be reportable under the SIRS must also be reported under the IMF.

What is the Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS)?

The SIRS is a government initiative to help reduce the risk of abuse and neglect for people living or staying in a residential aged care home or receiving home care services.

Examples of reportable incidents under the scheme include:

- Unreasonable use of force
- Unlawful sexual contact or inappropriate sexual conduct
- Neglect
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Unexpected death
- Stealing or financial coercion by a staff member
- Inappropriate physical or chemical restraint
- Unexplained absence from care / a missing person.

Will consumer abuse also be reported under the new IMF?

Yes. Any form of consumer abuse – no matter how big or small – will be reported under the IMF. This also includes where consumer abuse is alleged or suspected.

If you or anyone you know experiences any form of consumer abuse – whether it be physical, sexual, financial, neglect or emotional abuse – we strongly encourage you to speak up. We will act on any reports of consumer abuse immediately and ensure you are supported.

How do residents or family members report an incident under the new IMF?

There is no change to the way a resident, nominated representative or family member reports an incident under the new framework. They can:

- Speak with the Care Manager
- Email us at feedback@irt.org.au
- Write to us at IRT Group, PO Box 2106, Wollongong DC NSW 2500
- Call us on 134 478
- Fill out a feedback form available at our aged care centres or on our website irt.org.au.

How do we support someone who is involved in an incident?

Some of the ways we will support someone affected by an incident includes:

- Ensuring they're provided with any care and treatment they need
- Notifying their nominated representative as soon as practicable
- Facilitating access for residents to advocates such as the Older Persons Advocacy Network
- Facilitating discussions and meetings with those affected by an incident using our Open Disclosure process
- Providing updates to those affected by the incident about the reason for the incident, what is being done to address it, and what is being done to mitigate the risk of such incidents in the future.

What is Open Disclosure?

Open disclosure is the open discussion that an aged care provider has with residents when something goes wrong that has harmed or had the potential to cause harm to a resident. It involves addressing any immediate concerns and providing support, an apology or expression of regret, a factual explanation of what happened, and what steps are being taken to reduce the likelihood of it happening again.

When should Open Disclosure be used?

We practice open disclosure when something has gone wrong that has caused harm or had the potential to cause harm to a resident. Harm may be physical, psychological or social resulting in loss of quality of life, impairment, suffering, injury, disability or death.

Employees, residents, nominated representatives and families are encouraged and supported to speak up when something has gone wrong. It is our responsibility to have open and honest communication on an ongoing basis with those impacted by an incident.

When does an incident need to be reported to the police?

We must report incidents to police if there are reasonable grounds to do so. This includes:

- unlawful sexual contact or conduct considered to be of a criminal nature (for example, sexual assault)
- a resident's unexplained absence from the aged care centre when all reasonable attempts to locate them have been exhausted

If something has gone wrong, how can I tell someone about it?

Employees, residents, nominated representatives and families are encouraged and supported to speak up when something has gone wrong.

You can:

- Speak with the Care Manager
- Email us at feedback@irt.org.au
- Write to us at IRT Group, PO Box 2106, Wollongong DC NSW 2500
- Call us on 134 478
- Fill out a feedback form available at our aged care centres or on our website irt.org.au.
- Contact the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission on 1800 951 822 or visit agedcarequality.gov.au

What advocacy services are available to residents and family members if further support is required?

The following organisations offer free, independent and confidential advocacy services:

- Older Persons Advocacy Network – call 1800 700 600 or visit opan.com.au
- Translating and Interpreting Service – call 1300 575 847 or visit tisnational.gov.au
- National Relay Service – call 1300 555 727 or visit communications.gov.au

What Aged Care Quality Standards does the IMF align to?

The IMF will ensure we continue to comply with Aged Care Quality Standard 8: Organisational governance, which focuses on being accountable for the delivery of safe and quality care and services. The IMF also supports the Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS), the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and other relevant legislation and regulations, including the Aged Care Act 1997.

Where can I find more information about the Incident Management Framework?

If you have any questions about IRT's Incident Management Framework or would like more information, please speak to your Care Manager.