

# Significant Events

(Critical Incidents)

# Significant Event Audit

- A systematic and detailed way to ascertain what can be learned about the overall quality of care of an individual case and indicate changes that might lead to future improvements (Pringle)

# Why do it?

- nGMS points
- Appraisal – reflective practice
- Clinical governance
- Good for patients
- Good for the team

### C. Education and training

Education 1 4 points	There is a record of all practice-employed <b>clinical</b> staff having attended training/updating in basic life-support skills in the preceding 18 months
Education 2 4 points	<b>The practice has undertaken a minimum of six significant event reviews in the past three years</b>
Education 3 2 points	All practice-employed nurses have an annual appraisal
Education 4 3 points	All new staff receive induction training
Education 5 3 points	There is a record of <b>all</b> practice-employed staff having attended training/ updating in basic life support skills in the preceding 36 months
Education 6 3 points	The practice conducts an annual review of patient complaints and suggestions to ascertain general learning points which are shared with the team
Education 7 4 points	<b>The practice has undertaken a minimum of 12 significant event reviews in the past three years which include (if these have occurred):</b> any death occurring in the practice premises two deaths where terminal care has taken place at home one patient complaint one suicide one section under the Mental Health Act
Education 8 3 points	All practice-employed nurses have personal learning plans which have been reviewed at annual appraisal
Education 9 3 points	All practice-employed non-clinical team members have an annual appraisal

# What is a Significant Event?

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- A significant event is any event that is easily brought to mind because it changed the outcome for the patient or affected the workers involved.
- It's significant because somebody thinks it's significant
- Not necessarily clinical
- Not necessarily life & death

# Examples

- medication issues
- delayed or mis-diagnoses
- referral problems
- problems arising from minor surgical procedures
- communication failures
- complaints
- health and safety, eg accidents

# Preparation

- Identify the significant event
- Identify the stakeholders
- Document what happened
- Write down the questions it raises
- Plan a date to meet

# A note of caution

- Do you record details of patient identity?
- Do you link to patient record?
- Do you share results with patients?
- Can the findings be used in a complaint?

## **Practice complaints procedure**

- Open investigation and explanation to complainant
- Offer an apology where appropriate
- Provide patient with details of changes planned to demonstrate that the incident will not be repeated

## **Significant Event Audit**

- Open and frank discussion of the incident by healthcare professionals
- Examination of the causes of the event
- Recommendations made to improve care provided to patients, for example, review of practice prescribing protocols

## **Significant Event Audit report**

- Factual and objective
- Anonymised
- Potentially disclosable in the event of a claim
- Not disciplinary

## **Avoid using words or phrases such as:**

- Negligent treatment
- Guilty of misconduct
- Breach of duty of care
- Liability

# Possible outcomes

- good medical practice identified and acknowledged
- further investigation carried out, conventional audit,
- literature review
- immediate change implemented
- no lessons to be learned – normal primary care.

# Further reading (click underlined text to view)

- <http://www.the-mdu.com/gp/index.asp>
- <http://www.the-mdu.com/gp/advice/article.asp?articleID=119>
- Pringle M, Bradley C. Significant event auditing: a user's guide. *Audit Trends* 1994; 2: 20-23.
- Pringle M, Bradley C, Carmichael C, Wallis H, Moore A. *Significant event auditing*. London: Royal College of General Practitioners , 1995(Occasional paper 70.)
- Robinson L, Stacy R, Spencer J, Bhopal R. Use of facilitated case discussions for significant event auditing. *BMJ* 1995; 311: 315-318[Free Full Text].