

Definition of a Serious Incident

A serious incident requiring investigation is defined by the NPSA in the *National Framework for Reporting and Learning from Serious Incidents Requiring Investigation* as an incident that occurred in relation to **NHS-funded services and care** resulting in one of the following:-

- **Unexpected or avoidable** death of one or more patients, staff, visitors or members of the public;
- **Serious harm** to one or more patients, staff, visitors or members of the public or where the outcome requires life-threatening intervention, major surgical/medical intervention, permanent harm or will shorten life expectancy or result in prolonged pain or psychological harm (the includes incidents graded under the NPSA definition of severe harm);
- A scenario that prevents or threatens to prevent a provider organisation's ability to continue to deliver health care services, for example, actual or potential loss of personal/organisational information, damage to property, reputation or the environment, or IT failure;
- Allegations of abuse
- Adverse media coverage or public concern about the organisation or the wider NHS;
- One of the core set of **Never Events**. Never Events are serious, largely preventable patient safety incidents that should not occur if the available preventative measures have been implemented by providers. All Never Events should be reported as SIs. *The Operating Framework for the NHS in England 2010/11* reaffirms that PCTs should
- use the national set of eight Never Events as part of their contract arrangements with providers;
- ensure that patient safety incidents which are Never Events are reported to the NPSA; and
- publish the numbers and types of events on an annual basis.