

Table 1: Measures of Likelihood

Descriptor	Rare (1)	Unlikely (2)	Possible (3)	Likely (4)	Almost certain (5)
Frequency How often might it / does it happen	This will probably never happen / recur	Do not expect it to happen / recur but it is possible it may do so	Might happen or recur occasionally	Will probably happen / recur, but it is not a persisting issue / circumstances	Will undoubtedly happen / recur, possibly frequently

Table 2: Measures of Impact

Descriptor	Negligible (1)	Minor (2)	Moderate (3)	Major (4)	Catastrophic (5)
Impact on the safety of patients, staff or public (physical / psychological harm)	Minimal injury requiring no / minimal intervention or treatment No time off work required	Minor injury or illness requiring minor intervention Requiring time off work for <3 days Increase in length of hospital stay by 1–3 days	Moderate injury requiring professional intervention Requiring time off work for 4–14 days Increase in length of hospital stay by 4–15 days RIDDOR / agency reportable incident An event which impacts on a small number of patients	Major injury leading to long-term incapacity/disability Requiring time off work for >14 days Increase in length of hospital stay by >15 days Mismanagement of patient care with long-term effects	Incident leading to death Multiple permanent injuries or irreversible health effects An event which impacts on a large number of patients
Quality / complaints / audit	Peripheral element of treatment or service sub-optimal Informal complaint / inquiry	Overall treatment or service sub-optimal Formal complaint (stage 1) Local resolution Single failure to meet internal standards Minor implications for patient safety if unresolved Reduced performance rating if unresolved	Treatment or service has significantly reduced effectiveness Formal complaint (stage 2) Local resolution (with potential to go to independent review) Repeated failure to meet internal standards Major patient safety implications if findings are not acted on	Non-compliance with national standards with significant risk to patients if unresolved Multiple complaints / independent review Low performance rating Critical report	Incident leading to totally unacceptable level or quality of treatment / service Gross failure of patient safety if findings not acted on Inquest / ombudsman inquiry Gross failure to meet national standards
Human resources / organisational development / staffing / competence	Short-term low staffing level that temporarily reduces service quality (<1 day)	Low staffing level that reduces service quality	Late delivery of key objective/service due to lack of staff Unsafe staffing level or competence (>1day) Low staff morale Poor staff attendance for mandatory/key training	Uncertain delivery of key objective/service due to lack of staff Unsafe staffing level or competence (>5 days) Loss of key staff Very low staff morale No staff attendance for mandatory / key training	Non-delivery of key objective / service due to lack of staff Ongoing unsafe staffing levels or competence Loss of several key staff No staff attending mandatory training / key training on an ongoing basis

Descriptor	Negligible (1)	Minor (2)	Moderate (3)	Major (4)	Catastrophic (5)
Statutory duty / inspections	No or minimal impact or breach of guidance / statutory duty	Breach of statutory legislation Reduced performance rating if unresolved	Single breach in statutory duty Challenging external recommendations/improvement notice	Enforcement action Multiple breaches in statutory duty Improvement notices Low performance rating Critical report	Multiple breaches in statutory duty Prosecution Complete systems change required Zero performance rating 4 Severely critical report
Adverse publicity / reputation	Rumours Potential for public concern	Local media coverage – short-term reduction in public confidence Elements of public expectation not being met	Local media coverage – long-term reduction in public confidence	National media coverage with <3 days service well below reasonable public expectation	National media coverage with >3 days service well below reasonable public expectation. MP concerned (questions in the House) Total loss of public confidence
Business objectives / projects	Insignificant cost increase / schedule slippage	<5 per cent over project budget Schedule slippage	5–10 per cent over project budget Schedule slippage	Non-compliance with national 10–25 per cent over project budget Schedule slippage Key objectives not met	Incident leading >25 per cent over project budget Schedule slippage Key objectives not met
Finance including claims	Small loss Risk of claim remote	Loss of 0.1–0.25 per cent of budget Claim less than £10,000	Loss of 0.25–0.5 per cent of budget Claim(s) between £10,000 and £100,000	Uncertain delivery of key objective / Loss of 0.5–1.0 per cent of budget Claim(s) between £100,000 and £1 million Purchasers failing to pay on time	Non-delivery of key objective / loss of >1 per cent of budget Failure to meet specification / slippage Loss of contract / payment by results Claim(s) >£1 million
Service / business interruption Environmental impact	Loss / interruption of >1 hour Minimal or no impact on the environment	Loss / interruption of >8 hours Minor impact on environment	Loss / interruption of >1 day Moderate impact on environment	Loss / interruption of >1 week Major impact on environment	Permanent loss of service or facility Catastrophic impact on environment

IMPORTANT: It may be appropriate to assess more than one domain of impact, which may result in generating different scores. Use your judgement to decide on the overall score, however, as a rule-of-thumb take the highest domain score.

ii. *Scoring the Risk*

Using Table 3: Risk Score, calculate the risk score by multiplying the likelihood score by the impact score.

$$\text{Likelihood} \times \text{Impact} = \text{Risk Score}$$

Table 3: Risk Score

LIKELIHOOD	Almost Certain 5	5	10	15	20	25
	Likely 4	4	8	12	16	20
	Possible 3	3	6	9	12	15
	Unlikely 2	2	4	6	8	10
	Rare 1	1	2	3	4	5
		Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4	Catastrophic 5
		IMPACT				