APPENDIX 10

RISK MATRIX

Table 1 Consequence scores

Choose the most appropriate domain for the identified risk from the left-hand side of the table. Then work along the columns in same row to assess the severity of the risk on the scale of 1 to 5 to determine the consequence score, which is the number given at the top of the column.

	Consequence score (severity levels) and examples of descriptors				
	1	2	3	4	5
Domains	**Negligible**	**Minor**	**Moderate**	**Major**	**Catastrophic**
Impact on the safety of patients, staff or public (physical/ psychological harm)	Minimal injury requiring no/minimal intervention or treatment. No time off work	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
Complaints Criteria	Simple, non-complex issues Delayed or cancelled appointments Single failure to meet care needs (e.g. missed call-back bell)	Several issues relating to a short period of care Event results in moderate harm (e.g. fracture) Delayed discharge	Failure to meet care needs Incorrect treatment	Multiple issues relating to a longer period of care, often involving more than one organization or individual Event resulting in serious harm Medical errors	Multiple issues relating to serious failures, causing serious harm Events resulting in serious harm or death Gross professional misconduct

Table 2 Likelihood score (L)

What is the likelihood of the consequence occurring?

The frequency-based score is appropriate in most circumstances and is easier to identify. It should be used, whenever it is possible to identify a frequency.

Likelihood score	1	2	3	4	5
Descriptor	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost certain
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	Will undoubtedly happen/recur, possibly frequently

Note: the above table can be tailored to meet the needs of the individual organisation.

Some organisations may want to use probability for scoring likelihood, especially for specific areas of risk which are time limited. For a detailed discussion about frequency and probability see the guidance notes.

Table 3 Risk scoring = consequence x likelihood (C x L)

	Likelihood				
Likelihood score	1	2	3	4	5
	Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost certain
5 Catastrophic	5	10	15	20	25
4 Major	4	8	12	16	20
3 Moderate	3	6	9	12	15
2 Minor	2	4	6	8	10
1 Negligible	1	2	3	4	5

Note: the above table can be adapted to meet the needs of the individual trust.

For grading risk, the scores obtained from the risk matrix are assigned grades as follows

- 1 - 3   Low risk
- 4 - 6   Moderate risk
- 8 - 12   High risk
- 15 - 25   Extreme risk

Instructions for use

1 Define the risk(s) explicitly in terms of the adverse consequence(s) that might arise from the risk.

2 Use table 1 above to determine the consequence score(s) (C) for the potential adverse outcome(s) relevant to the risk being evaluated.

3 Use table 2 above to determine the likelihood score(s) (L) for those adverse outcomes.

4 Calculate the risk score by multiplying the consequence by the likelihood: C (consequence) x L (likelihood) = R (risk score)

5 Include the risk in the Trust/Directorate risk register as appropriate.