

Identifying and Reporting Critical Incidents

Annual training for providers contracted with:

Meridian Medicaid Plan, YouthCare, and WellCare By Meridian D-SNP

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Critical Incidents

Critical Incidents include **actual or alleged abuse, neglect, or exploitation**, as well as any incident that threatens member health, safety, and welfare and requires immediate identification and timely reporting.

All mandated reporters are responsible for recognizing warning signs and must immediately report suspected maltreatment to the appropriate Illinois State Agency.

In addition to state reporting, **all Critical Incidents must be reported** to Meridian, YouthCare, or WellCare By Meridian D-SNP **within 24 hours of discovery** by completing the **Critical Incident & Significant Event Intake Form** and emailing it to Criticalincidents@mhplan.com.

Prevention is essential and includes community involvement, advocacy, staff and patient education, raising awareness, and ensuring members feel safe and supported.

What Is a Critical Incident?

Actual or alleged abuse, neglect, or exploitation

Any incident with potential to place a **member or member's services at risk or harm**

- **Abuse** – Physical or sexual abuse, sexual harassment, emotional or verbal abuse
 - **Neglect** – The failure of an individual to provide a member with necessities of life, including but not limited to food, clothing, shelter, or medical care
 - **Exploitation** – The illegal use of assets or resources of a member
- Abandonment
 - Fraud
 - Behavioral health
 - Death
 - Unanticipated death
 - Legal/criminal activity
 - Medication management
 - Restraint, seclusion, or other restrictive intervention
 - Medical emergency/injury/illness
 - Missing person/elopement
 - Environmental/unsafe housing/displacement
 - Falls with injury

Types of Critical Incidents

Abuse

Injury inflicted on an individual other than by accidental means, including:

Physical

- The **willful infliction of injury, unreasonable confinement, intimidation, or punishment** with resulting physical harm, pain, or mental anguish
- Often occurs in conjunction with neglect

Verbal

- When someone uses their **words to assault, dominate, ridicule, manipulate, and/or degrade another person** and negatively impact that person
- Often in conjunction with emotional abuse

Sexual

- **Unwanted touching, fondling, sexually inappropriate remarks, or other sexual activity** with a person who is unable to understand, unwilling to consent, threatened, or physically forced to engage in sexual behavior or activity.
- This includes sexual harassment, coercion, or assault allegations

Emotional

- Also known as **psychological or mental** abuse
- Form of abuse characterized by a person subjecting or **exposing another to behavior that may result in psychological trauma**, including anxiety, chronic depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder

Neglect

Failure to provide a member with the necessities of life

Neglect

Neglect is a **failure to:**

- **Notify** an appropriate healthcare professional when healthcare needs exist
- Provide or **arrange necessary services** to avoid physical or psychological harm
- Terminate residency of a member whose needs can no longer be met, causing an avoidable **decline in function**

Passive neglect is a **non-malicious** failure to provide the necessities of life, including but not limited to:

- Food
- Clothing
- Shelter
- Medical Care

Self-neglect occurs when an individual neglects to **attend to their basic needs**, such as:

- Personal or oral hygiene
- Appropriate clothing
- Feeding or nutrition
- Tending appropriately to medical conditions

Self-neglect can also be an **observed neglect of a dependent member by a caregiver**

Willful Deprivation

- **Willful denial of medications, medical care, shelter, food, therapeutic devices, or other physical assistance to a person** who, because of age, health, or disability, requires such assistance and thereby exposes that person to the risk of physical, mental, or emotional harm because of such denial
- **Except** with respect to medical care/treatment when the dependent person has expressed an intent to forego such medical care/treatment **and** has the capacity to understand the consequences

Exploitation

The **illegal use of assets or resources** of an adult with disabilities

- Exploitation includes, but is not limited to, the **misappropriation of assets or resources of the alleged victim** by:
 - Undue influence
 - Breach of fiduciary relationship
 - Fraud
 - Deception
 - Extortion
 - In any manner contrary to law



Identifying Critical Incidents

Tips for identifying signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation

If you identify an incident like the ones listed below, you **must report** it to the appropriate authorities

Patient
injury
source

Patient **could not explain the source of an injury** and the injury was not observed by anyone

Undisclosed
information

Patient tells you they **were told not to talk to you** or anyone and that you/anyone must talk to the caregiver

Lack of food

Patient often states they **do not have food** in the house.

Needs
money for
covered
benefits

Patients tells you that the **caregiver needs money for items that should be covered** as a benefit (medications, supplies, etc.)

Suspicious
patient
injuries

Patient has **injuries that are suspicious** due to the extent, location, or number of injuries at one time or multiple points in time

Illinois Reporting Agencies

Illinois Reporting Agencies

Mandated Reporting: Immediate **reporting required** of suspected maltreatment when the mandated reporter has reasonable cause to believe an individual known to the mandated reporter in a professional or official capacity may be abused or neglected



APS
866-800-1409

Report to **Adult Protective Services (APS)** for individuals who are disabled between 18-59 years old and all individuals over 60 years old living in the community



OIG
800-368-1463

Report to **Office Inspector General (OIG)** for individuals who are 18-59 years old and reside in or received mental health/developmental disability services from DHS-operated or DHS-funded state agencies



IDPH
800-252-4343

Report to **Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)** for individuals residing in a nursing home



DCFS
800-252-2873

Report to **Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS)** for individuals under the age of 18 years old



SLF
844-528-8444

Report to **Supportive Living Facilities (SLF)** hotline for individuals residing in a supportive living facility

Critical Incident Reporting Requirements

Reporting Critical Incidents to the Health Plan

Complete the Critical Incident & Significant Event Intake Form

- **Meridian Medicaid Plan:** Access the form from Meridian's Manuals, Forms and Resources page for providers
- **YouthCare:** Find the form on YouthCare's Forms page for providers
- **Wellcare By Meridian:** Find the form on the For Providers page under "Documents, Forms, and Resources"

Send completed forms via secure email to Criticalincidents@mhplan.com within 24 hours of discovering the event.



Critical Incident Prevention

Critical Incident Prevention

- **Involve your community in continuous improvement**, such as advisory committee with representation from patients and caregivers
- Implement adherence to disability rights laws and policies to **promote inclusion and combat ableism**
- **Raise awareness:**
 - **Advocate** for your patients
 - **Ensure your patients feel safe**
 - **Educate your patients and their caregivers** about abuse, neglect, and exploitation
 - **Educate staff** at all levels of your organization

If you have questions about critical incidents,
contact Criticalincidents@mhplan.com





Thank you