

Issues Management Policy and process

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1. Introduction

Lewisham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is responsible and accountable for ensuring an Issues Management Policy is in place to identify, monitor and resolve issues that may arise during the course of its business.

Issues tend to be less predictable than risks and can arise with no warning. Issue management is therefore a planned process for dealing with an unexpected issue if and when it arises.

This Issue Management policy outlines the way in which NHS Lewisham CCG has effective arrangements in place to record and monitor issues, focussing on:

- The CCG's approach to managing issues.
- The CCG's organisational and individual roles and responsibilities for issue management.
- The CCG's issue management processes

The Issue Management Policy ensures that the CCG:

- Minimises risk of physical or emotional harm to our patients and workforce;
- Maintains comprehensive and responsive arrangements to respond appropriately to emergency situations;
- Minimises the loss or wastage of resources through poor internal control procedures;
- Manages sensitively issues which have a reputational impact or public interest;
- Manages CCG resources (including financial and human) effectively;

The CCG monitors and reports on issues the following key ways:

1. The Governing Body: focusses on strategic issues that may impact the delivery of the CCG's corporate and strategic objectives, and which are assessed as having a priority of 'High' should be reported to the Governing Body.
2. The Corporate Issues Register, which focusses on issues that may impact the delivery of the CCG's strategic objectives but which are scored as medium or low priority.

2. Scope of this framework

This framework applies to NHS Lewisham CCG and applies to all employees and members of the Governing Body and its committees who must comply with the arrangements outlined in this framework.

3. Purpose

The aim of this policy and process document is to:

- Demonstrate the importance of issue management to the CCG and provide assurance to the Board that appropriate processes are in place to manage issues when they arise.
- support staff to understand their roles and have a consistent approach to issue management;
- ensure that correct and cohesive systems and processes are in place.

4. Risk management statement

NHS Lewisham CCG is committed to the active management of issues within the organisation and within the services it commissions.

The management of issues should be aligned to the Risk Management Process and NHS Lewisham CCG is dedicated to ensuring a positive risk management culture is in place that ensures that risk and issue management is an integral part of everything it does, and is part of management processes. This is supported by a comprehensive system of internal controls and risk management processes to assure the Governing Body that the CCG is doing its reasonable best to identify and manage risks to the fulfilment of statutory duties and the achievement of strategic priorities.

5. Issue management approach

5.1 Approach

NHS Lewisham CCG's approach to issue management is based on ensuring a robust management system is in place, understood and effective.

Effective issue management relies on the full engagement of people in all areas and accurate and timely receipt and analysis of information.

To support staff in embedding issue management in their day to day work, management arrangements must be effective, light touch and meaningful, and should be viewed as part of the process of 'managing'.

5.2 Key Objectives for Issue Management

The key objectives for Issue management are to:

1. Effectively identify, report and manage the issue.
2. Establish and put in place appropriate controls to manage the issue.

3. Monitor the issue and the effectiveness of mitigation strategies.
4. Proactively identify new and rising risks.

Issues are monitored through the Senior Management Team, and for those issues identified as 'high' should be specifically reported to the Governing Body in association with the Board Assurance Framework.

6. Definition of issue

Issues and risks are not the same. However, the exact nature of both is largely unknown before you begin.

An issue is known as it has already happened. With risks, you usually have a general idea in advance that there's a cause for concern and has not happened yet.

Guidance is provided for the reporting and management of risks in the Lewisham CCG Risk Management Policy and Process.

7. Governance

Accountability arrangements for issue management can be split into two elements:

- Accountability for scrutiny of processes and management
- Accountability for the management of issues.

Scrutiny of Processes and Management

This section describes the key Committees within the CCG that are involved in scrutinising issue management processes and confirms each group's specific remit for risk management.

Governing Body

NHS Lewisham CCG Governing Body is collectively responsible and accountable for setting the strategic direction for risk and ensuring that integrated risk management arrangements are in place across the organisation.

The Governing Body is responsible for seeking assurance that the CCG has taken appropriate actions to record and mitigate the issue.

The Governing Body will receive assurance through reports from the Integrated Governance Committee to ensure the issue management process is operating effectively and action any concerns escalated to them regarding risk management.

Integrated Governance Committee

Integrated Governance Committee (IGC) is responsible for:

- reviewing the issues log to ensure that appropriate actions have been taken to resolve the issue.

Senior Management Team

The Senior Management Team through the Risk Management Group is responsible for:

- overseeing the implementation of the issues management policy;
- reviewing the Issues Log to ensure that action plans are effective;
- recommending the Issues Register to the Governing Body and to Integrated Governance Committee (IGC).
- escalating issues scored as 'high' to the Governing Body in line with the Board Assurance Framework.

7.1 Roles & Responsibilities - Management of issues

Governing Body

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the management of issues within the CCG.

Accountable Officer

The Accountable Officer has overall responsibility for the process of the management of issues within the CCG.

All issues are monitored through the Governing Body's committees, with those issues identified as a high priority being specifically reported to the Governing Body through the Board Assurance Framework.

The Governing Body will receive and review the high level issues on the issues Register. These issues will be reviewed by the Governing Body upon completion of each risk reporting cycle.

Managing Director

The Managing Director has overall responsibility for the process of managing issues identified by the CCG, as delegated from the Accountable Officer. This includes receiving updates on the status of the issue, and providing information to the Governing Body.

Senior Management Team

The Senior Management Team are responsible for:

- Reviewing the content of the Issues Log for each reporting cycle, focussing on the completeness and accuracy of content and on the appropriateness of scoring and of any further actions required to manage risk.
- Ensuring sufficient resource and support is available for managing issues;
- Promoting a supportive environment to facilitate the reporting of risks, issues and incidents;

Issue Owners

A Issue owner is the individual who is responsible for the management, monitoring and improvement of an identified issue including the implementation of the selected responses.

The issue owner should be capable of managing the risk and have the knowledge, resources, and authority to deal with the risk.

Risk owners will be required to assess their issue and report on a regular basis the status of the issue as part of the bi-monthly Risk Management Group meetings.

Associate Director of Integrated Governance

The Associate Director of Integrated Governance is responsible for:

- Supporting the Senior Management Team and staff in their identification and continuous management of issues;
- Co-ordinating the Issues Log to facilitate consistency of reporting;
- Ensuring issues are appropriately reported to the Senior Management Team Committees and the Governing Body;
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All Employees

All employees must:

- Be familiar with and comply with this Issues Management Policy and the Risk Management Framework.
- Identify, record and manage issues relevant to their areas of work.

8. Issue management process

Issues need to be recorded, managed and monitored in addition to risks. The process followed should be similar to risks, as outlined in the Risk Management Framework, but the recording will show:

- The Corporate Objective
- Issue title
- A unique identifier for each Issue
- A description of the Issue
- Issue owner
- Date identified
- Actions to resolve the issue

9. Distribution and training

This policy will be made available to all staff through the CCGs internet and intranet sites. Staff will be informed of this policy through the staff newsletter and through staff briefings.

To support the implementation and embedding of this policy, training and development will be provided to risk owners and the Governing Body as appropriately identified.. All staff will be supported by the Associate Director of Integrated Governance.

Appendix I: Issue Log

Corporate Objective:	
Issue and ID	
Issue Description: (What is the issue?)	

Date submitted:		Priority:	(H,M,L)
Submitted by:		Issue Owner	
Related Risks			
Target resolution date:			

Impact:	
Actions:	
Status:	
Progress:	
Comments:	

Last updated:	Reviewed by:	Date:
	Updated by:	Date:
	Closed by:	Date Closed: