# Adverse Event Decision Pathway

FOR NURSE LEADERS/ADMINISTRATORS



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The Adverse Event Decision Pathway (AEDP) was created in response to requests from nurse leaders and regulatory bodies for a tool to assist nurse leaders/administrators responsible for evaluation of adverse events and the regulatory reporting of unprofessional conduct or practice errors committed by nurses. This tool was developed in collaboration with nursing leaders from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) and the American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL).

Following principles of the systems approach and just culture, the AEDP suggestions include a complete investigation of the adverse event, as well as the nurse's behavioral choices which may have contributed to any adverse event. The AEDP reflects a balance between justice and fairness on the one hand and the need to learn from a mistake and disciplinary action when appropriate on the other hand (Russell & Radtke, 2014).

The jurisdiction's regulatory body may also have specific requirements for special or mandatory reporting to the regulatory body. Information regarding reporting requirements is found in the individual laws and rules of the jurisdiction. Specific report format and process can be found on the juridiction's website.

### **DIRECTIONS**

- 1. In partnership with the facility quality team, conduct an internal investigation on the adverse event occurrence.
- 2. With your data from the investigation, use the pathway starting with the question at the top, and progress to other questions based on affirmative or negative answers.

### **DEFINITIONS**

# **Regulatory Body**

Jurisdiction's governmental agency responsible for the regulation of nursing practice. Includes any other terminology to refer to the regulatory authority (i.e. board, commission, examiner, department or college)

# **Mitigating Factor**

Extenuating, explanatory or justifying fact, situation or circumstance

# **Reasonably Prudent Nurse**

A nurse who uses good judgment in providing care according to accepted standards

### **Remedial Education**

Education or training to correct a knowledge or skill deficit

### **Substantial Risk**

A significant possibility that an adverse outcome may occur

# **System**

An organization's operational methods, processes or infrastructure/environment

### Adverse Event Decision Pathway Were the actions of the nurse intended to YES deliberately harm the patient? FOR NURSE LEADERS/ADMINISTRATORS NO This tool is designed to assist you in determining action steps for adverse events/errors or unprofessional Were there circumstances involving the system which conduct involving a nurse. The pathway provides contributed to the adverse event/error? questions regarding system error, mitigating factors and YES NO behavioral choices of the nurse which, when used with data from your investigation, will promote a consistent framework for making important patient safety decisions.\* Follow internal policies for system failure (evaluate & remedy to prevent system failure reoccurrence) and continue to follow the pathway. Was the nurse terminated, suspended or resigned in lieu of termination? YES NO Did the nurse knowingly Did the nurse fail to report Did the nurse follow Is there a history or pattern disregard safety or the adverse event/error or NOfacility policies and YES-> NOof adverse events/errors by consciously take a procedures? falsify the records? this nurse? substantial risk? J YES NO J YES NO YES Did the nurse previously Were there significant mitigating Could a reasonably prudent receive remediation or **←** YES factors that should be considered nurse have done the same in counseling for a similar adverse in the decision? similar circumstances? event/error? NO YES YES NO NO At Risk Behavior Intent to Harm **Reckless Behavior or Nurse Human Error** Terminated, Suspended or Resigned in lieu No report to the regulatory body No report to the regulatory body Report to regulatory body of Termination necessarv necessary Follow facility policy (i.e., termination, law Report to regulatory body • Follow facility policy for action plan to • Follow facility policy for action plan to enforcement notification) assist the nurse in prevention of repeated Follow facility policy and procedure for action assist the nurse in prevention of repeated error (i.e., focused remedial education, plan to assist the nurse in prevention of error (i.e., monitoring, focused remedial coaching and counseling) repeated error (i.e., discipline, monitoring, education, coaching and counseling) focused remedial education)

