Healthcare-associated infection Severity Assessment Code (SAC) examples

This is for guidance only. All events should be rated on actual outcome for the consumer. See also the Always Report and Review list and the SAC rating and process tool.

Psychological, cultural and spiritual harm

Psychological, cultural and spiritual harm is dependent on the values and experiences of individual consumers and whānau, which makes identifying specific examples difficult. When rating an event, engage with the consumer and whānau to identify their perspective and ability to function as a result. For example, consider the psychological effect on a consumer when consent isn't obtained before an examination or procedure.

Psychological, cultural and spiritual harm can result from such events as unconsented student involvement, not being offered the opportunity for whānau support in the room during a procedure, care providers not being supportive of tino rangatiratanga and providers dismissing or undermining consumer wishes.

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SAC 1 – Severe: death or harm causing severe loss of function and/or requiring life-saving intervention

- Not related to natural course of illness or treatment
- Differs from the immediate expected outcome of care
- Can be physical, psychological, cultural or spiritual

Healthcare-associated infection resulting in **sepsis-related* death or permanent disability.**

For example:

- sepsis-related death
- amputation of limb following surgical site infection
- blindness following eye procedure infection

An event where severe psychological, spiritual and/or cultural harm is experienced by the consumer and/or whānau

SAC 2 – Major: harm causing major loss of function and/or requiring significant intervention

- Not related to natural course of illness or treatment
- Differs from the immediate expected outcome of care
- Can be physical, psychological, cultural or spiritual

- Healthcare-associated infection leading to ICU/HDU/1:1 care, or unplanned transfer to another hospital for higher acuity care
  Or other major complication of healthcare-associated infection.
  For example:
- sepsis leading to organ failure and/or requiring vasopressor support
- a surgical procedure to remove infected prosthetic material with subsequent reimplantation, eg, prosthetic joints, ventriculo- peritoneal (VP) shunts, vascular grafts
- pacemaker-related endocarditis
- healthcare-associated pneumonia requiring ventilation

An event where psychological, spiritual and/or cultural harm is experienced by the consumer and/or whānau requiring significant support

SAC 3 – Moderate: harm causing short-term loss of function and/or requiring moderate additional intervention

- Not related to natural course of illness or treatment
- Differs from the immediate expected outcome of care
- Can be physical, psychological, cultural or spiritual

Healthcare-associated infection that requires surgical or other significant intervention or readmission for management of healthcare-associated infection not requiring ICU/HDU/1:1 care.

For example:

- central or peripheral venous catheter bloodstream infection
- prosthetic joint infection resulting in prolonged IV antibiotics
- readmission for surgical or non-surgical management of healthcare-associated infection (not ICU/HDU/1:1 care)
- urosepsis following urinary tract manipulation, eg, after transrectal ultrasound (TRUS) biopsy or catheterization

An event where psychological, spiritual and/or cultural harm is experienced by the consumer and/or whānau requiring moderate support

SAC 4 – Minor: harm causing no loss of function and requiring little or no intervention (includes near misses)

- Minor treatment or extra investigation or observation
- Review by another clinician
- Not related to natural course of illness or treatment
- Differs from the immediate expected outcome of care
- Can be physical, psychological, cultural or spiritual

Healthcare-associated infection requiring additional **non-surgical management** only (eg, antimicrobial therapy) and resulting in minimal harm.

For example:

- device-related healthcare-associated infection, eg, peripheral intravenous catheter exit site infection
- healthcare-associated norovirus, respiratory infection
- healthcare-associated infection with a drug-resistant organism.

An event where psychological, spiritual and/or cultural harm is experienced by the consumer and/or whānau requiring support

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