

## Severity Assessment Code (SAC) examples 2019–20

This list is for guidance only. All events should be rated on actual outcome for the consumer. For adverse events in the maternity sector, please refer to the maternity SAC examples.<sup>1</sup> The always report and review list 2017–18<sup>2</sup> and the SAC rating and triage tool for adverse event reporting<sup>3</sup> contain more guidance on adverse event reporting.

<b>SAC 1</b> <b>Death or permanent severe loss of function</b>	<b>SAC 2</b> <b>Permanent major or temporary severe loss of function</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suicide by any person receiving care, treatment and services in a continuous care setting or within 72 hours of discharge, including from the emergency department; includes approved and unapproved leave status</li> <li>• Wrong site procedure resulting in removal of healthy limb or organ</li> <li>• Hypoxic brain injury resulting in permanent brain damage; may be SAC 2 depending on severity of outcome</li> <li>• Medication or treatment plan error resulting in death or causing renal failure and need for permanent renal replacement therapy</li> <li>• Delayed referral, diagnosis or treatment resulting in treatment options limited to palliation (delay direct contributor)</li> <li>• Healthcare associated infection resulting in permanent disability or death</li> <li>• Delayed recognition of patient deterioration resulting in permanent disability or death</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious self-harm by any person receiving care, treatment and services in a continuous care setting or within 72 hours of discharge, including from the emergency department; includes approved and unapproved leave status</li> <li>• Suspected suicide or serious self-harm by community mental health service user, or within 28 days of discharge from service</li> <li>• Fall resulting in fracture</li> <li>• Grade 3, 4 or unstageable pressure injury</li> <li>• Inadvertent injury to spleen during abdominal procedure requiring removal of the spleen</li> <li>• Induced condition that requires cardiopulmonary resuscitation</li> <li>• Delayed recognition of patient deterioration resulting in unplanned transfer to intensive care or to another hospital for higher acuity care, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and/or intubation</li> <li>• Medication or treatment plan error resulting in major harm (eg, requiring dialysis, intervention to sustain life, anaphylaxis)</li> <li>• Serious assault occurring within staffed care setting when a known safety plan in place is not upheld (eg, protection order)</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Available at: [www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/adverse-events/publications-and-resources/publication/2938](http://www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/adverse-events/publications-and-resources/publication/2938).

<sup>2</sup> Available at: [www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/adverse-events/publications-and-resources/publication/2936](http://www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/adverse-events/publications-and-resources/publication/2936).

<sup>3</sup> Available at: [www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/adverse-events/publications-and-resources/publication/2937](http://www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/adverse-events/publications-and-resources/publication/2937).

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SAC 3</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Permanent moderate or temporary major loss of function</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SAC 4</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Requiring increased level of care</b> <b>OR no injury, no increased level of care; includes near misses</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage 2 pressure injury</li> <li>• Fall resulting in laceration requiring sutures</li> <li>• Failure of essential service with moderate consequence to consumer</li> <li>• Missing person with a risk of serious harm to self or others where there is psychological trauma, either direct (affecting the person) or vicarious (affecting others, eg, whānau), or both</li> <li>• Any of the following because of the event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Unplanned transfer to higher level of care, including hospitalisation (eg, from community setting)</li> <li>○ Increased length of stay (greater than one day)</li> <li>○ Surgical or other significant intervention required</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional monitoring, investigations or minor interventions because of the event</li> <li>• Medication error with no resulting harm</li> <li>• Missing person with a risk of serious harm to self or others</li> <li>• Breach of confidentiality from disclosure of violence resulting in risk to consumer/caregiver</li> <li>• Stage 1 pressure injury</li> </ul>