

Clinical Harm Score 1 Incidents

4.3.1 Issues with Individual Clinicians

Section 4.3.1 of the Incident Management Policy Directive PD2020_047 states that *Preliminary Risk Assessments (PRAs) and Serious Adverse Event Reviews (SAERs) conducted under this Policy must not attempt to assess an individual's conduct, performance or competence. Where a question of individual conduct, performance or competence arises, it is managed via the performance management system and/or the NSW Health Policy Managing Complaints and Concerns about Clinicians ([PD2018 032](#)), with support from Human Resources, as required.*

PRA and SAER teams can use decision trees available from the [CEC website](#) to help determine individual versus systemic issues. If the team has identified that the incident raises issues that relate to individual conduct the CE must be notified in writing as per section 21J of the Health Administration Act. If no system issues can be identified the team may be decommissioned.

If the SAER team determine that there have been individual performance issues and the SAER team continues to review the incident for systems issues, the CEC recommends including a statement in the final SAER report to acknowledge this. This should be discussed with the Director of Clinical Governance (DCG). Examples statements might be similar to:

The SAER team identified concerns that have been referred for investigation outside of this review

Or

The SAER team identified issues outside the scope of the review which have been referred to the CE

Or

The SAER team escalated concerns outside of the scope of this review, in accordance with section 21J of the Health Administration Act 1982, for consideration and appropriate action.

Addressing individual performance issues should be balanced with consideration of human factors where errors can inevitably occur. Care should be exercised when writing the SAER report that language around human factors type errors do not apportion blame or fixate exclusively on a particular staff member.