

Annual Duty of Candour Report 2020/21

1. Introduction

The organisational Duty of Candour provisions of the Health (Tobacco, Nicotine etc. and Care) (Scotland) Act 2016 (The Act) and The Duty of Candour Procedure (Scotland) Regulations 2018 set out the procedure that organisations providing health services, care services and social work services in Scotland are required by law to follow when there has been an unintended or unexpected incident that results in death or harm (or additional treatment is required to prevent injury that would result in death or harm).

This is to ensure that if something goes wrong, in Health or Social Care Services, that the people affected are offered an explanation, an apology and an assurance that staff have learned from the error. The learning is shared across Scotland through the provision of this report.

An important part of this duty is that organisations are required to produce an Annual Duty of Candour Report and to publish it in a way that is publicly accessible, for example, on the website.

This report describes how Combat Stress has implemented its Duty of Candour obligations throughout its services from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

2. About Our Organisation

Combat Stress provides mental health services to veterans in Scotland. Our organisational aims and objectives are to provide specialist treatment and support for veterans from every service and conflict, focusing on those with complex mental health issues related to their military service.

Although our clinical staff were unable to meet veterans in person in 2020-21 due to Covid-19, we have adapted and enhanced our phone and digital services to provide 1-1 therapy sessions, introduced a range of online resources on our website and offered access to our online peer support community. During the COVID-19 pandemic. The need for our specialist services has remained critical.

Combat Stress has a Being Open and Duty of Candour Policy which details the organisational duty and approach when dealing with Duty of Candour incidents. The Being Open and Duty of Candour Policy contains a detailed procedure, which details how any Duty of Candour event will be managed and monitored, including detailed roles and responsibilities of all staff within the organisation.

3. Incident Reporting

During the reporting period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, there have been no Duty of Candour Incidents.

Type of Unexpected or Unintended Incident	No of Incidents
Someone has died	0
Someone has permanently lost bodily, sensory, motor, physiological or intellectual functions	0
Someone's treatment has increased because of harm	0
The structure of someone's body has changed because of harm	0
Someone's life expectancy has become shorter because of harm	0

Someone's motor, sensory, or intellectual functions have been impaired for more than 28 days	0
Someone experienced pain or psychological harm for more than 28 days	0
A person needed health treatment to prevent them from dying	0
A person needed health treatment to prevent other injuries	0

4. Our Policy and Process

We have a clear Being Open and Duty of Candour Policy. This is easily available to all staff on our website. This Policy sets out the procedure to follow if an incident causes harm of such severity that it meets the Duty of Candour threshold.

All incidents are recorded using our Incident reporting and management system. All staff are responsible for identifying and reporting incidents in their area using the incident reporting system, overseen by their line manager.

Our policy is very clear that Combat Stress is committed to providing high quality care to our veterans. A key part of that is ensuring that we are open with veterans and their families, inform veterans and their families when things go wrong, investigate, provide them with support, information about what happened and an apology.

It is important to recognise that Duty of Candour incidents can have a significant impact on staff who were involved or who may have witnessed the incident. Staff will want to know what happened and why and what can be done to prevent the incident happening again.

The Duty of Candour forms part of our core Quality & Clinical Governance induction training, where staff are taken through a process to understand the principles, practice, and their responsibilities in this area.

We publish our Annual Duty of Candour Report on our website.

5. Learning

As there have been no Duty of Candour incidents within the reporting period, we have no specific learning points identified from this period. However, Combat Stress has a clear process for the management of serious incidents and for ensuring that learning from incidents is disseminated across the whole organization, as part of its clinical governance procedures.

6. Contact

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