

# Top tips on surviving the process, from people who have been there



## Often people worry about what happens next.

If you are not sure of the next stage(s) of the process - either short-term or long-term, don't be afraid to ask. This might be your line manager, the lead investigator, or the risk team.

## It is easy to 'think the worst',

but the aim of the investigation is not to blame individuals for their actions. It is very unlikely that the incident will cause you to lose your job or your professional registration.

## You might be asked to write a statement.

This is not the same as reflection, so you don't need to include your feeling or any reflective thought; just describe the events as thoroughly as you can, as soon after the incident as possible.

## If you think you need support

(such as counselling) don't be afraid to ring occupational health to ask what is available through your organisation. This might be available more quickly than via a GP referral.

## Keep doing sensible things.

Whilst lack of sleep, feeling withdrawn and less sociable is understandable, it is still important to look after yourself physically. For example: eating well, being active and keeping an eye on your alcohol intake.

## Many organisations offer 'Human Factors' training,

or make it available to their staff. For some staff, learning about human factors can be helpful in putting their experience in context. Many clinicians who have been through an incident are highly motivated to improve the system to prevent further incidents. Human factors training can provide a structure and framework for doing this.

## You are not the first person going through the investigation process.

There will likely be a number of incidents under investigation at any one time across your organisation, with the intention of making the system better and safer for patients. Some people find it helpful to talk to colleagues who have been through the process previously for guidance and support.

## Contact your union early on.

Your union can give you legal advice if you need it, but they can also provide you with support. Clinicians say that the advice they have received from the union has been a valuable support and offered an external perspective.

## Take time off work if you need it.

Many clinicians said they felt guilty about taking time off work at the time, but with hindsight they realised that by being in work they found doing their job was more challenging, and in some cases recognised that their practice at this time was not safe.

## Talk to family and friends.

Many clinicians find the support from loved ones can encourage them to consider work-life balance during this time of stress.

## Choose who to talk to at work.

Many clinicians say that they benefit from talking to colleagues about what has happened, especially other clinicians who were involved, or close and trusted friends. However, some clinicians have also found that talking about their experienced can be draining.