



Emotional, Psychological and Verbal abuse allegations

Last review date: October 2021 (new practice guidance)
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Owner: General Manager Historic Claims

Emotional abuse is the collective term that also includes variations of psychological and verbal abuse. It will be in the allegation description that the variation will be documented, but for the purpose of recording, this type of allegation is recorded as emotional.¹

Emotional abuse when it accompanies other types of abuse

We accept that emotional abuse is a likely partner to most abuse experienced, so it is not required that you list a separate emotional abuse allegation when it accompanies other forms of abuse. For example, where verbal abuse escalates to physical abuse, the verbal abuse is not recorded as a separate allegation of emotional abuse, though it can be reflected in the allegation description. Where emotional abuse is present by nature of the physical or sexual abuse alleged, the emotional abuse does not need to be documented separately; it forms the contextual part of the allegation.

Severity of emotional abuse

We generally do not differentiate between low, moderate or serious emotional abuse. Emotional abuse severity is difficult to determine without a psychological assessment, as it is often in its long-term impact that the seriousness is realised.

There are however situations where the severity of the emotional abuse will need to be defined, including:

- in situations where the severity of the abuse is so significant that a Category 4 payment or above would be recommended if taken into account (e.g. being forced to watch a sibling being sexually abused by a caregiver over a prolonged period).

Routinely emotional abuse will be recorded as 'Not applicable' (to reflect that we generally do not differentiate severity) unless, on its own, the seriousness is such that it requires assessing as moderate/chronic or serious. These should be considered on a case-by-case basis and will likely be 'exceptions', with a clear rationale outlining the basis for the increased severity.

Where consideration is being given to whether an allegation of emotional abuse should be assessed as an exception, advice can be sought from Team Leader and/or the Lead/Senior Claims Advisors to support a consistent threshold to this being applied.

Step 2's and emotional abuse

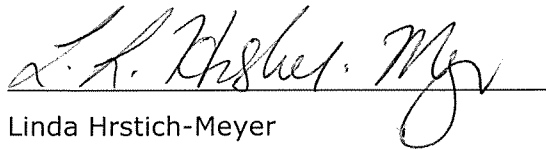
¹ This is consistent with the interchangeable use of terms in social sector research
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When it is evident that the emotional abuse allegation is an exception (moderate/chronic or serious) consideration will need to be given to whether a Step 2 may be required.

- For Responsible Adult abuse allegations, a Step 2 is required if the abuse is so significant that if taken into account it would justify a Category 4 payment or above.
- When considering 'Inaction contributing to emotional abuse' the inaction matrix in the definition sheet can be used to guide when a Step 2 is required. For most emotional abuse allegations being recorded as 'low' they will generally reach either low or medium levels of inaction and therefore will not require a Step 2. When it is evident that the emotional abuse allegation is an exception then refer to the inaction matrix to determine if the emotional abuse represents high levels of inaction in which case a Step 2 will be completed.

Approve practice guidance – Emotional, Psychological and Verbal abuse allegations

Approve/~~Decline~~



Linda Hrstich-Meyer

General Manager Historic Claims

26.10.2021

Date