INCIDENT DECISION TREE (IDT) - APPENDIX 1

The Trust's Risk Management Committee has agreed to adopt the IDT subject to the following amendments: -

- ❑ At the outset of any investigation, advise the individual of their right to consult a Staff Representative.
- ❑ The HR Adviser must be brought into the 'case' at the start of the IDT

National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) Incident Decision Tree

In November 2004, the Risk Management Committee approved the NPSA Incident Decision Tree (IDT), which will be used for any employee involved in a patient safety incident, whatever their professional group. Although the IDT promotes good management practice, it is not designed for use in other situations, such as poor performance or absenteeism.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can the Incident Decision Tree be used by?

It is designed for use by any manager dealing with staff involved in a patient incident. This includes Clinical Directors, Divisional Managers, Heads of Nursing, Governance Facilitators and Human Resources professionals.

When should the IDT be used?

Ideally, it should be used as soon as possible after the patient safety incident, whilst facts are still fresh in people's minds. However, this is not always possible and it can be used at any point during the investigation.

If new information comes to light, it can be worked through afresh and may or may not lead to a different conclusion.

How does the IDT work?

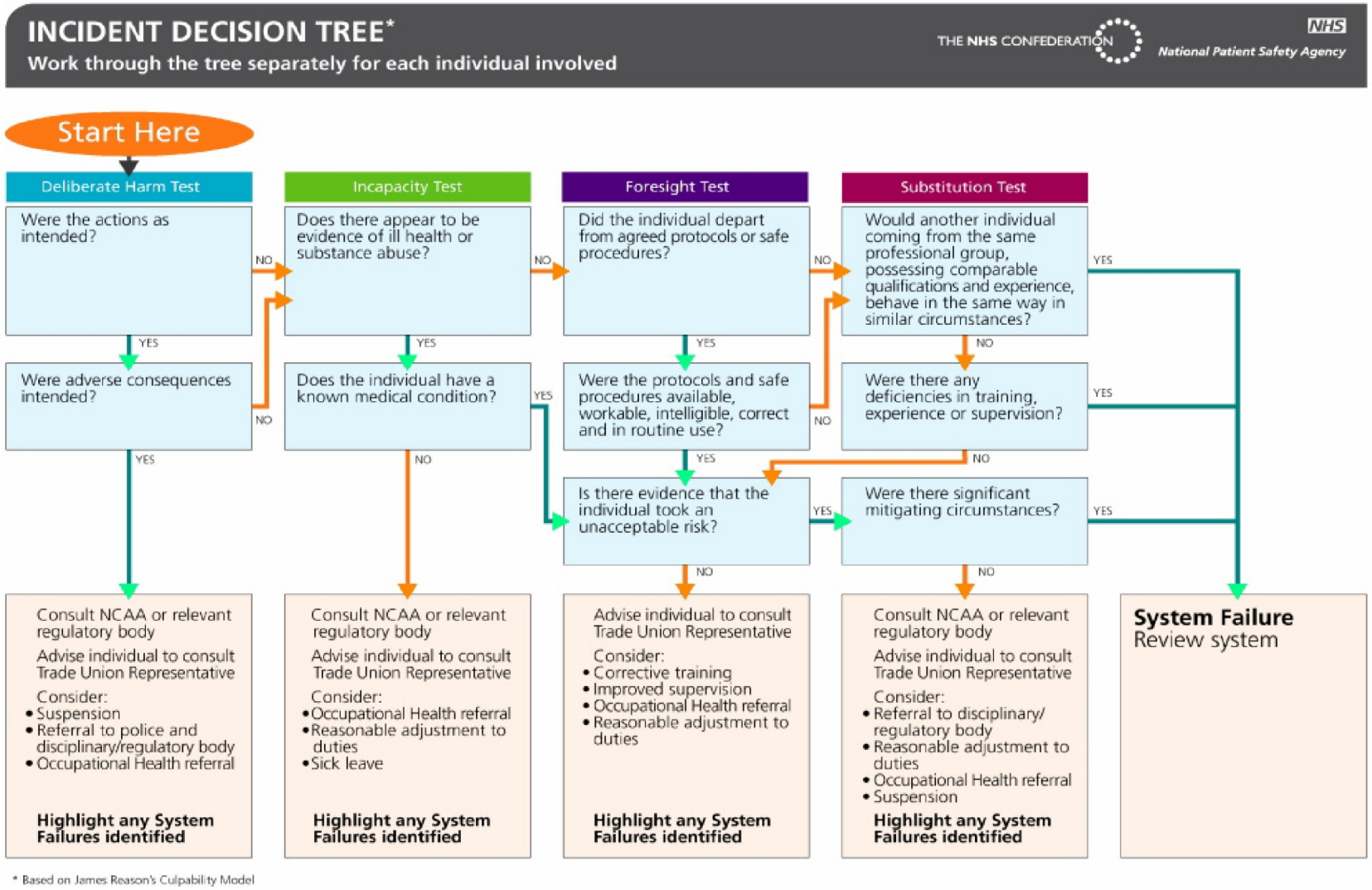
Based on a flowchart (see attached), the Incident Decision Tree guides you through a series of structured questions about the individual's actions, motives and behaviour at the time of the incident.

These questions move through four sequential 'tests':-

- ❑ The Deliberate Harm Test
- ❑ The Incapacity Test
- ❑ The Foresight Test
- ❑ The Substitution Test

Working through each test in turn, possible reasons for the individual's actions are reviewed and the most likely explanation identified. The responses lead to a list of recommended options for consideration.

In the majority of cases system failure turns out to be the cause of the patient safety incident.


INCIDENT DECISION TREE*
Work through the tree separately for each individual involved
THE NHS CONFEDERATION
NHS
National Patient Safety Agency
Start Here
Deliberate Harm Test
Were the actions as intended?
NO
YES
Were adverse consequences intended?
NO
YES
Consult NCAA or relevant regulatory body
Advise individual to consult Trade Union Representative
Consider:
• Suspension
• Referral to police and disciplinary/regulatory body
• Occupational Health referral
Highlight any System Failures identified
Incapacity Test
Does there appear to be evidence of ill health or substance abuse?
NO
YES
Does the individual have a known medical condition?
YES
NO
Consult NCAA or relevant regulatory body
Advise individual to consult Trade Union Representative
Consider:
• Occupational Health referral
• Reasonable adjustment to duties
• Sick leave
Highlight any System Failures identified
Foresight Test
Did the individual depart from agreed protocols or safe procedures?
NO
YES
Were the protocols and safe procedures available, workable, intelligible, correct and in routine use?
NO
YES
Is there evidence that the individual took an unacceptable risk?
YES
NO
Advise individual to consult Trade Union Representative
Consider:
• Corrective training
• Improved supervision
• Occupational Health referral
• Reasonable adjustment to duties
Highlight any System Failures identified
Substitution Test
Would another individual coming from the same professional group, possessing comparable qualifications and experience, behave in the same way in similar circumstances?
YES
NO
Were there any deficiencies in training, experience or supervision?
YES
NO
Were there significant mitigating circumstances?
YES
NO
Consult NCAA or relevant regulatory body
Advise individual to consult Trade Union Representative
Consider:
• Referral to disciplinary/ regulatory body
• Reasonable adjustment to duties
• Occupational Health referral
• Suspension
Highlight any System Failures identified
System Failure
Review system
* Based on James Reason's Culpability Model