



## England – Risk Assessment and Registration at the National Health Service (NHS)



Public Procurement Principle: **Risk management**



Procurement Stage: **Pre-tendering, Tendering**



Audience: **Procuring entity, Policy makers**

### Description

---

#### *Identification and registration of risks*

Risks can be identified in a number of ways and from a range of sources. Once a risk is identified it must be documented using a Risk Assessment Form, assessed and an action plan developed to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. Risk assessments can and should be made at any level in the organisation. However, before a risk can be formally recorded on DATIX Risk Management system (a web-based incident reporting and risk management software for healthcare and social care organisations), it must be reviewed and approved by the relevant risk forum to ensure that the minimum level of information required is captured and facilitate appropriate challenge. Specifically, the risk forum is required to assess and approve:

- The initial / current risk score with existing controls but prior the treatment plan.
- The achievability of the treatment plan, considering such aspects as affordability, timescales, service delivery etc.
- The scoring of the target risk score.
- The frequency of review.

Guidance and support is available from the Patient and Healthcare Governance department.

#### *Escalating the risks*

Risks rated as Moderate or above (i.e. risk score 4 or more (out of max. 25)) shall be reported to the Risk Validation Group (RVG) who will validate the score and risk grade

and provide a monthly report to Safety and Risk Management Board and Trust Executive Group (TEG). This provides further opportunity to scrutinise and challenge the risk assessment and action plan. It also allows for consideration of where the management of the risk best lies.

### *Risk aggregation*

Ensuring appropriate aggregation of common risks is a key challenge of any risk management process. Many departments and directorates face similar risks e.g. in-year cost pressures, recruitment problems etc which may be assessed as low rating and locally managed. Taken individually these risks will not significantly impact on the organisation but collectively have the potential to threaten achievement of the strategic objectives.

On an ongoing basis, relevant risk forums must consider the potential for risk aggregation when reviewing new risks. The potential may result from several common risks being identified across a number of areas or as a result of a risk having been identified in one area that has implications across a wide number of services. In such circumstances, a new risk assessment of the aggregated risk should be undertaken and documented on the Risk Assessment Form (ensuring that all the subordinate risks are fully described) and registered on DATIX. It is possible that the aggregated impact score will be different from the individual risks and also that the action plan will require revision. The aggregated risk will supersede the subordinate risks, which should be removed from DATIX. The Risk Validation Group will consider the implications for risk aggregation and will report these issues as they arise to Safety and Risk Management Board and TEG.

### *Reviewing a risk registered in DATIX*

Risks registered on DATIX must specify when the current risk score, action plan and target risk score will be reviewed. It is expected that as action plans are progressed the current risk score will move towards the target risk score and may be closed (if the risk has been eliminated) or tolerated (if the risk remains but all planned mitigating action has been taken). This may be achieved within one review period but it may take longer, in which case a new review date must be set. All risks must be reviewed at least once a year. A new Risk Assessment Form shall be completed for all subsequent reviews and must be uploaded on to DATIX

Source: Boryczka, M., D. Bochnar and A. Larin (2019), "[Guidelines for assessing the quality of internal control systems](#)", SIGMA Papers, No. 59, OECD Publishing, Paris

