



Eric Holcomb, Governor  
State of Indiana

*Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services*  
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**To:** Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services and Bureau of Quality Improvement Services individuals, families, providers and case managers  
**From:** Jessica L. Harlan-York, BQIS Director  
**Date:** September 9, 2020  
**Re:** BQIS terminology change

The Bureau of Quality Improvement Services, within the Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services, is responsible for establishing and overseeing quality assurance and quality improvement processes in order to support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities receiving services through the Bureau of Developmental Disabilities Services. BQIS' vision in accomplishing these responsibilities is that all Hoosiers are supported in navigating the opportunities and challenges they encounter in pursuit of their good life. We strive to ensure that not only are individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities healthy and safe, but that we are continuously supporting empowerment, self-determination, self-advocacy, independence, autonomy, and the right to live alongside their neighbors without disabilities.

A major component of BQIS' efforts is managing the incident reporting system. One specific term that is used in our system to categorize incident reports is "sentinel". It is used to describe certain incidents in our system that rise to a level to require specific actions. These types of incidents include but are not limited to abuse, neglect and exploitation. These sentinels require certain actions be taken by the provider to ensure immediate protective measures are in place for the individual.

BQIS is aware that the term "sentinel" has historically been confusing for teams to fully understand the critical nature of the reported incident. As of today, we will be transitioning to the term "critical", and we will no longer use the word "sentinel". This change is a terminology change only and does not impact how BQIS processes these types of incidents. The term "critical" is more familiar and better describes the critical nature of the reported incident. It is important that BQIS utilizes language that ensures appropriate understanding of the needs of individuals receiving supports through BDDS.

If you have any questions, please email BQIS at [bqis.help@fssa.in.gov](mailto:bqis.help@fssa.in.gov)

