

# CANADIAN DISCLOSURE GUIDELINES

## *Checklist for Disclosure Process*

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# APPENDIX D – CHECKLIST FOR DISCLOSURE PROCESS

- The immediate patient care needs are met.
- Ensure patient, staff and other patients are protected from immediate harm.

## DISCLOSURE PROCESS PLAN

- Gather existing agreed upon facts.
- Establish who will be present at the meeting(s), and who will:
  - Lead the discussion during the meeting(s)
  - Be the point of contact for the family
  - Support those providers involved in the incident and
  - Coordinate the disclosure process.
- Set when the initial disclosure will occur.
- Formulate what will be said and how effective disclosure will be accomplished.
- Locate a private area to hold disclosure meetings, free of interruptions.
- Be aware of your emotions and those providers involved in the process and seek support if necessary.
- Anticipate patient's emotions and ensure support is available, including who the patient chooses to be part of the discussion such as family, friends or spiritual representatives.
- Contact your organization's support services for disclosure if uncertain on how to proceed.

## INITIAL DISCLOSURE

- Introduce the participants to the patient, functions and reasons for attending the meeting.
- Use language and terminology that is appropriate for the patient.
- Describe the agreed upon facts of the patient safety incident and its outcome known at the time.
- Describe the steps that were and will be taken in the care of the patient (changes to care plan as applicable).
- Avoid speculation or blame.
- Apologize using the words "I'm sorry." Inform the patient of the process for analysis of the event and what the patient can expect to learn from the analysis, with appropriate timelines.
- Provide time for questions and clarify whether the information is understood.
- Invite the patient and/or family to discuss the event from their point of view.
- Be sensitive to cultural and language needs.
- Review what was discussed and document what was said and decided, giving the patient an opportunity to read and review the documentation about the disclosure in the medical record.
- Offer to arrange subsequent meetings along with sharing key contact information.
- Offer practical and emotional support such as spiritual care services, counseling and social work, as needed.
- Reimburse expenses related to the disclosure process, as appropriate.
- Facilitate further investigation and treatment if required.

## SUBSEQUENT AND POST-ANALYSIS DISCLOSURE

- Continued practical and emotional support as required, for the patient, family and providers.
- Reinforcement or correction of information provided in previous meetings.
- Further factual information as it becomes available.
- A further apology which might include an acknowledgement of responsibility for what has happened as appropriate.
- Describe any actions that are taken as a result of internal analyses such as system improvements.

## DOCUMENT the disclosure discussions as per organizational policies and practices and include:

- The time, place and date of disclosure.
- The names and relationships of all attendees.
- The facts presented.
- Offers of assistance and the response.
- Questions raised and the answers given.
- Plans for follow-up with key contact information for the organization.