

MASTERING OPEN DISCLOSURE

CPD*
ACCREDITED

Clinical communication skills for open and honest communication with patients when things go wrong.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- ✓ Effectively engage with patients when something goes wrong
- ✓ Genuinely express regret to a patient who has suffered an adverse outcome while being cognisant of the issues of admitting liability
- ✓ Engage with the psychological and emotional state of patients suffering an adverse outcome
- ✓ Identify what and why patients want to know about adverse outcomes
- ✓ Effectively deal with patient anger and disappointment, avoiding arguments
- ✓ Connect with and address personal emotional barriers to undertaking these difficult conversations



Target Audience

All clinical healthcare professionals



Participants

Optimum: 7-15
Minimum: 5
Maximum: 20



Duration

3 Hours

*For details of CME/CPD accreditation and points call the Cognitive Institute on +61 7 3511 5000 or email enquiries@cognitiveinstitute.org

PREMISE

From Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care

6.2.1 Preparing providers for open disclosure

Australian healthcare facilities where open disclosure has been implemented successfully are modulating their approach to open disclosure. A two-step approach is advocated. First, all staff are provided with an introduction to open disclosure. Second, a core group is trained as experts who can guide other colleagues. Their training includes simulation, role-playing and facilitated discussions. This cadre of experts can be called upon to assist, mediate and facilitate actual open disclosure dialogue. In addition, junior staff who need to participate in an open disclosure process are provided with 'just in time' training either by these experts or external contractors.

Introductory training should ideally:

- cover all staff
- occur at regular intervals
- be part of official staff induction
- stress the significance of the process (in addition to the outcome) to patients, families and carers
- emphasise the communication skills necessary to conduct open disclosure successfully
- test participants for knowledge.

The core inter-professional group of open disclosure 'specialists' can counsel other staff when required or step in to perform open disclosure and are also responsible for linking open disclosure to quality improvement and clinical risk management. Training of this group should:

- utilise simulation and role-playing (where possible)
- include facilitated discussion of the simulation to maximise learning
- include feedback on performance
- occur regularly to ensure staff maintain proficiency.

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (2012), Open Disclosure Standard Review Report. ACSQHC, Sydney.

OVERVIEW

Open Disclosure requires clinicians to engage patients when something goes wrong.

But many clinicians are fearful of confronting the intense anger and emotions that can be associated with these difficult discussions and this is a major barrier to successful implementation of Open Disclosure.

Clinicians are also fearful that these discussions may inflame patient anger and encourage them to take the matter further.

This workshop takes a comprehensive approach to the difficult area of discussing adverse outcomes with patients. There is a natural inclination to want to avoid such discussions for fear of strong emotions from the patient, causing the patient distress or even loss of professional reputation.

This workshop highlights the importance of recognising patient expectations when an adverse outcome occurs and how failing to address them increases the risk of the patient turning to other avenues for accountability.

The workshop provides an overview of Open Disclosure and then progresses to providing a thorough grounding on the issues and the legal obligations and implications of these discussions.

The workshop then focuses on the communication skills required to conduct these conversations and how to handle patient anger and distress.

Clinician patient video scenarios of the various approaches to handling an adverse outcome are shown. Participants discuss the merits and disadvantages of each approach in small groups. With this understanding, participants then learn an effective model for handling adverse outcomes, called A.S.S.I.S.T.®

FORMAT

Workshop with short lectures, reflective exercises, small group facilitated discussions, group activities and rehearsal of skills.

Brief didactic presentations will provide the focus for small group sessions in which participants are able to share experience and pool knowledge, enabling critical comparison of their skills with their peers and peer learning. Video case studies will be used to enable participants to analyse and reflect upon their own skills. The format has been carefully structured to enable a mix of lectures, discussion, critical reflection and evaluation.

BENEFITS

- Effective implementation of Open Disclosure and the resulting improved safety and quality
- Greater empathy and support for patients suffering an adverse outcome
- Reduced patient anger and frustration
- Reduced complaints and exposure to litigation (where liability is not admitted)
- Reduced anxiety and stress for clinicians conducting these conversations
- Protection from unintended admission of liability



Excellent. There is a great need for communication skills education in health. **It is key to our business.**

THE A.S.S.I.S.T.® MODEL

Cognitive Institute's A.S.S.I.S.T.® model:

- helps clinicians stay focused on the patient's experience
- provides a framework for key communication tasks to be undertaken
- facilitates a discussion on possible solutions and future care.

The A.S.S.I.S.T.® approach recognises and addresses what patients are looking for in a dialogue about an adverse outcome, namely:

- an open and honest discussion
- information to their level of satisfaction
- an acknowledgement of the adverse outcome from the clinician
- sometimes a referral to another clinician for further care.

Clinicians have an opportunity to rehearse the A.S.S.I.S.T.® model to develop skills that can be used immediately. The workshop then addresses the area of important preconditions needed to conduct an effective discussion about an adverse outcome.

Clinicians are provided with a self assessing checklist they can use to help determine whether they, the patient or the situation are ideal to undertake the process.

Our KnowHow

Accountability and Professionalism
Clinical Leadership
Communication in Challenging Situations
Safety and Reliability Culture
Clinician Wellbeing and Resilience
Individual Performance

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