



# Open Disclosure: Principles

## SUMMARY

Open disclosure refers to the way we respond to a patients/consumer, Whānau/family and carers after an adverse outcome. The following principles can support you effectively respond.

## Open disclosure principles

<b>Open, honest and timely communication</b>	Inform the patients/consumer, Whānau/family and carers with a factual and timely explanation of what happened.
<b>Acknowledgement of adverse outcome/event</b>	Acknowledge the adverse event/outcome and impact; outline consequences for the their recovery.
<b>Apology/Expression of regret</b>	Make an apology, include the words 'I am sorry' or 'We are sorry'.
<b>Supporting and meeting the needs and expectations</b>	Listen to their experience and commit to providing ongoing support to those involved including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ consumers/patients and Whānau/families/carers/advocates</li> <li>▪ those providing care</li> </ul>
<b>Good governance</b>	Maintain quality assurance processes by contributing towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ integrated clinical risk management</li> <li>▪ systems improvement</li> <li>▪ documentation and confidentiality</li> <li>▪ follow up and ongoing support</li> </ul>

## What do I need to do before an open disclosure conversation?

- Consider any local or national open disclosure policies and regulatory/legal requirements
- Arrange a convenient time to meet with the patient, their Whānau/family and/or carer
- Plan for the most senior clinician involved to undertake the discussion – perhaps with assistance of a colleague for support and/or objectivity
- Acknowledge your own emotional response
- Think of questions that may be asked
- Prepare/rehearse information to present to the patient
- Consider whether the conversation should be witnessed
- Consider the need to seek legal advice

## What do I need to do after an open disclosure conversation?

- Document detailed notes of the conversation, including exact phrasing of your apology statement
- Follow through with commitments to provide ongoing support to the patient and/or healthcare workers
- Contribute towards clinical risk management and systems improvement needs