

OPEN DISCLOSURE POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

Open disclosure is the “open discussion of adverse events that result in harm to a patient while receiving health care with the patient, their family and carers.”

Key Principles include:

- Expression of regret
- Disclosure of a clinical incident to a patient
- Staff support and training
- Support for incompetent adults and minors
- Patient support
- Clinical governance
- Confidentiality
- Fairness

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

To establish a standardised approach for health practitioners working at Albany Community Hospice, to communicate with the patient and/or their nominated relatives/carers after an adverse event, near miss or a no-harm incident

To ensure that communication with, and support for all affected patients and staff, occurs in a supportive and timely manner

This policy, as amended from time to time, applies to all directors, staff, contractors, contractors' employees and volunteers of Albany Community Hospice, hereafter referred to as employees.

DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

Apology

Civil Liability Act 2002 definition “an expression of sorrow, regret or sympathy by a person that does not contain an acknowledgement of fault by that person”

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Adverse Event	An incident in which a person receiving healthcare was harmed
Harm	Impairment of structure or function of the body and/or any deleterious effect arising therefrom including disease, injury, suffering, disability and death. Harm may be physical, social or psychological
Near miss	An incident that did not cause harm but had the potential to do so
No-harm incident	An error or system failure that reaches the patient but does not result in patient harm

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Hospice Manager

The Hospice Manager will:

- In the event of an incident, be guided by Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care and the Australian Open Disclosure Framework 2013
- Be committed to treating patients and staff with fairness, confidentiality and respect
- Ensure an Adverse Event Management System in place
- Ensure appropriate staff training and access to support is provided.

Medical Practitioners and nurses

Medical Practitioners and nurses will:

- In the event of an adverse event, near miss or no-harm incident be guided by Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care and the Australian Open Disclosure Framework 2013
- Ensure training attended
- Provide open, supportive and timely communication to patient, their family and/or carers, acknowledgement an adverse event, near miss or no-harm incident has occurred and an apology given.
- Follow Albany Community Hospice Clinical Incident Management policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Albany Community Hospice is dedicated and committed to providing safe and high quality health care to patients. However, despite the best intentions of our highly skilled and committed health professionals, occasionally things go wrong. Clinicians will follow key principles and processes following detection of a clinical incident. Clinicians have a professional and ethical responsibility to ensure Open Disclosure of an adverse event, near miss or no-harm incident to a patient, their family and/or carer while receiving health care at Albany Community Hospice.

Open Disclosure is a patient right.

Open Disclosure Process

Following detection of a clinical incident the Medical practitioner or nurse:

- reports the incident to the Hospice Manager
- completes a Clinical Incident report
- provides regular, informed feedback to the patient, their family and/or carer- the initial disclosure occurs as soon as possible following discussion with the patients' medical

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practitioner and Hospice Manager to determine the most appropriate person to talk to the patient.

- ensures an apology is given
- provides known clinical facts and develops an agreed plan for the ongoing care of the patient- in consultation with the medical practitioner, health care team, patient, their family and/or carer

Medical Practitioner and Nurse Precautions During Open Disclosure

Health Practitioners take care not to:

- state or agree that they are liable for the harm caused to a patient
- state or agree that another health professional is liable for the harm caused to the patient
- state or agree Albany Community Hospice is liable for the harm caused to the patient

REFERENCES

1. Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. Australian Open Disclosure Framework. 2013
2. WA Open Disclosure Policy OD 0592/15

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