

Being open and duty of candour

Information for patients



Outstanding
Care for One+All

About this leaflet

We are sorry that you or your relative has been subject to a patient safety event that caused harm while in our care. Our hospitals promote a culture of openness and honesty. We are committed to investigating and learning from any incident that has affected one of our patients.

This leaflet explains what being open and the duty of candour mean, so you know what to expect from us if something goes wrong.

Why things sometimes go wrong

Keeping patients safe is our top priority. We try our best not to cause any harm, but sometimes, despite our efforts, accidents or mistakes happen. When this causes harm, it's called a patient safety event. We will investigate what happened and how we can make improvements.

What do 'being open' and 'duty of candour' mean?

- **Being Open** means we will always be honest with you and your family if a patient safety event happens, no matter how serious.
- **Duty of Candour** is a legal rule we follow when someone is harmed moderately or more seriously. Moderate harm means needing extra treatment such as antibiotics, or an extended stay in hospital (more than two weeks, but less than six months).

Our commitments to you:

- We will always treat you and those close to you with dignity and respect.
- We will communicate in the way you prefer.
- We will give a genuine apology and explain what has happened, in person if possible.
- We will work with you to investigate what went wrong.
- We will listen to your views on what investigations you would like.
- We will offer a written letter to you as a record of our conversations.
- We will give you a contact person for support and any questions.

What can I expect following a patient safety event resulting in moderate or more serious harm?

- First, we make sure you get any urgent care you need and that you're safe.
- When we are assured that your treatment or care is underway, we will carry out an investigation into what happened.
- The incident is reported through our incident systems and the patient safety team is made aware. The incident is then reviewed to see what level of investigation is needed.
- Whenever moderate or more serious harm has occurred, we will be open and honest about the care you receive and discuss the patient safety event, explaining any investigation needed.
- If you are too unwell to talk, we will speak to your next of kin or the person you have chosen (named in your healthcare record).
- If a loved one has died, we will talk with the named next of kin at the right time.
- We will explain what kind of review we are doing, how you can be involved, and what will happen next.
- You will have a named person to speak to if you have any questions or concerns.
- You can always expect confidentiality.
- We promise to keep you updated regularly and answer any questions you have. You can contact us anytime.

We offer support and have a booklet with information for patients and families, which you can find here:

➔ [www.doclibrary-rcht.cornwall.nhs.uk/
DocumentsLibrary/RoyalCornwallHospitalsTrust/
PatientInformation/QualityAndSafety/
RCHT3076SupportFollowingPatientSafetyEvent.pdf](http://www.doclibrary-rcht.cornwall.nhs.uk/DocumentsLibrary/RoyalCornwallHospitalsTrust/PatientInformation/QualityAndSafety/RCHT3076SupportFollowingPatientSafetyEvent.pdf)



Or scan the QR code using your phone's camera.

What action will the Trust take?

It is vital that we act upon the learning from incidents, both to put things right and ensure we keep our patients safe.

We will learn from what happened and take steps to improve. We will set clear actions with deadlines and keep track to make sure improvements happen.

Can I complain?

If you are not satisfied with your care or feel your concerns have not been addressed, you can talk to the investigating officer or your consultant, if this is easier for you. You also have the right to make a complaint. Our Patient Experience team can help you with this:

➔ Telephone: 01872 252793

➔ Email: rcht.patientexperience@nhs.net



To get this information in a different format
call **01872 252690**

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