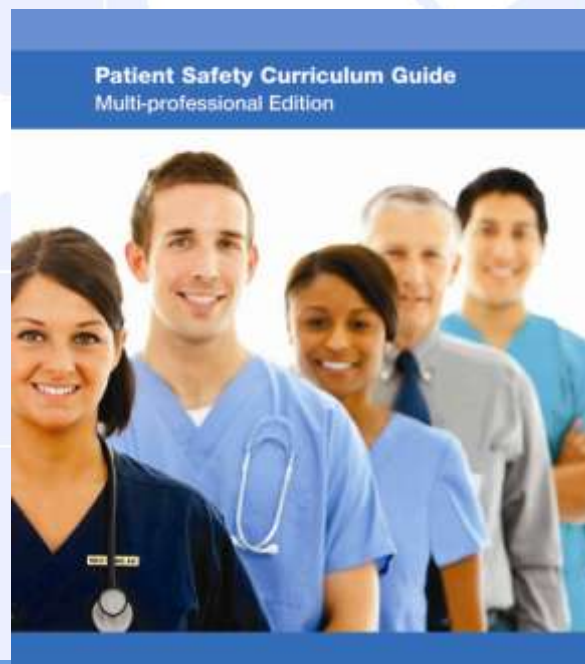


Topic 8

Engaging with patients and carers



Learning objective

Understand the ways in which patients and carers can be involved as partners in health care, both in preventing harm and learning from an adverse event

Knowledge requirements

- Basic communication techniques
- Informed consent procedures
- The basics of open disclosure

Performance requirements

- Actively encourage patients and carers to share information
- Show empathy, honesty and respect for patients and carers
- Communicate effectively
- Obtaining informed consent
- Show respect for each patient's differences, religious and cultural beliefs and individual needs
- Describe and understand the basic steps in an open disclosure process
- Apply patient-engagement thinking in all clinical activities
- Demonstrate ability to recognize the place of patient-and carer-engagement in good clinical management

Gaining an informed consent

- The diagnosis
- The degree of uncertainty in the diagnosis
- Risks involved in the treatment
- The benefits of the treatment and the risks of not having the treatment
- Information on recovery time
- Name, position, qualifications and experience of health workers who are providing the care and treatment
- Availability and costs of any service required after discharge from hospital

SEGUE framework

- Set the stage
- Elicit information
- Give information
- Understand the patient's perspective
- End the encounter

Source: Northwestern University

Cultural competence

- Understand cultural differences
- Know one's own cultural values
- Understand that people have different ways of interpreting the world
- Know that cultural beliefs impact on health
- Be willing to fit in with the patient's cultural or ethnic background

Patient role in minimizing adverse events

- Patients want to be involved in their health care (depending on which tasks)
 - 85% of patients were comfortable asking about a medication's purpose
 - 46% were very uncomfortable about asking health-care workers whether they had washed their hands

Open disclosure

Informing patients and their families of bad outcomes of health-care treatment, as distinguished from bad outcomes that are expected from the disease or injury being treated

Key principles of open disclosure

- Openness and timeliness of communication
- Acknowledgement of the incident
- Expression of regret/apology
- Recognition of the reasonable expectations of the patient and their support person
- Support for staff
- Confidentiality

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Open Disclosure

Open Disclosure is a frank discussion with a patient and their support person about a patient-related incident that may have resulted in harm or injury to the patient.

The NSW Government wants to ensure that if an incident occurs, patients receive an apology and explanation and are treated with empathy, honesty and transparency in a timely manner. Similarly, NSW Health recognises that staff also need to be supported through such incidents and is committed to providing the right environment, resources and culture to guide staff.



Open Disclosure is the right thing to do. While it is already happening in many parts of our health service, the NSW Government wants to ensure it is routinely practised by all staff, thereby strengthening the relationship and confidence between the patient and staff involved in their care.

To support this outcome, NSW Health has revised the **Open Disclosure Policy** and the **Open Disclosure Guidelines**, and is providing training opportunities for all staff in NSW Health.

Key principles of Open Disclosure

- Openness and timeliness of communication
- Acknowledgement of the incident
- Expression of regret/apology
- Recognition of the reasonable expectations of the patient and their support person
- Support for staff
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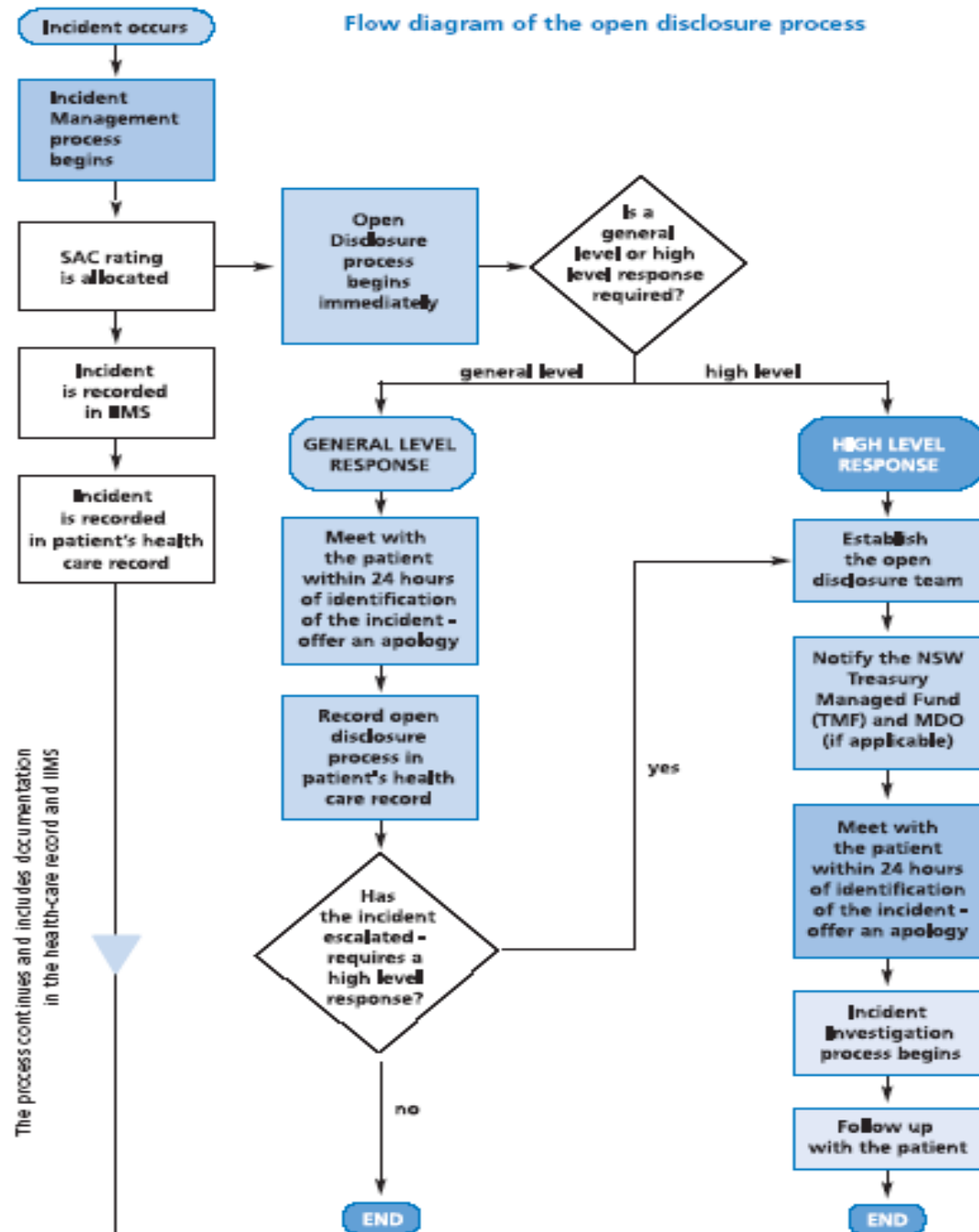
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Source: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/quality/opensdisc/index.html>

Flow diagram of the open disclosure process



Source: Adapted from flow diagram of the open disclosure process
http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/gl/2007/pdf/GL2007_007.pdf [12].

Flow diagram of the open disclosure process

Harvard Framework

- Preparing
- Initiating conversation
- Presenting the facts
- Actively listening
- Acknowledging what you have heard
- Concluding the conversation
- Documentation

Source: Harvard Hospitals. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, 2006

SPIKES

- **S**harpen your listening skills
- **P**ay attention to patient perceptions
- **I**nvite the patient to discuss details
- **K**now the facts
- **E**xplore emotions and deliver empathy
- **S**trategize next steps with patient or family

Source: R. Buckland