**DISCLOSING A PATIENT SAFETY INCIDENT INVOLVING ANOTHER TEAM OR ORGANISATION**

Open disclosure is a core professional requirement which is anchored in professional ethics. A health services provider may suspect or identify that a patient safety incident has occurred in another team or organisation. This can be a challenging situation and may raise questions such as whether an error or failure in the delivery of care has occurred, how or why the incident happened, what actions have been taken to date, which professionals carry the responsibilities in relation to open disclosure and how to talk to the patient/relevant person about the incident.

When we are faced with a potential patient safety incident involving another team or organisation a professional response should lead us to turn towards, rather than away from those involved. Making the effort to understand what happened and ensure appropriate communication with the patient/relevant person is the priority. The open and transparent disclosure of patient safety incidents is a shared professional responsibility. Only a collective approach to accountability can fully meet the needs of patients and families after patient safety incidents. Ultimately the responsibility for the initiation of the open disclosure process lies with the team whose care the patient is under at the time the patient safety incident becomes known. How the process is managed and by whom will be agreed in discussion with the other team/organisation involved.

**Establish the facts and agree the way forward**

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| 1. Explore / do not ignore. | 1. Establish the facts together with the team involved and do not rush to judgement. |
| 1. Establish if the team involved has initiated the open disclosure / incident review process. | 1. Frame the conversation to avoid accusation or defensiveness. Avoid speculation and blame. |
| 1. Use open questions and be mindful of your body language and tone of voice. | 1. Be professional and supportive so that the facts in relation to the incident are established. |
| 1. Discuss and agree the best way forward in relation to managing the incident, the care of the patient and the open disclosure process. | 1. Agree who will meet with the patient/relevant person and lead on the open disclosure discussion.   Note: The other team or organisation may wish to meet with the patient/relevant person to explain what has happened and to apologise, if appropriate. |

**It is our ethical duty and professional responsibility to ensure that the rights of the patient come first**

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| The rights of the patient to have full knowledge of their healthcare must be respected and met. | The patient must be communicated with in an open, honest, timely, compassionate and empathic manner. This will help maintain or rebuild their trust and confidence in the service. |
| The patient is treated with dignity and respect. The patient must be given all appropriate support. | The patient must be given an opportunity to discuss any matters impacting on their care and treatment. This will ensure informed consent so that they are aware of what is happening and may be treated fully with appropriate clinical management of their condition according to their wishes. |