

## INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS, FAMILIES AND CARERS

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# The Duty of Candour

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**This leaflet provides information on the Duty of Candour process and what to expect.**

### What is the Duty of Candour?

Healthcare staff should talk with you openly throughout your care. The Duty of Candour is a formal requirement to be open and honest with a patient if they have suffered harm. This means that if you suffer any unexpected or unintended harm during your care we will:

- Tell you about it
- Apologise
- Investigate
- Give an open explanation of what happened.

### Why do things go wrong?

Healthcare is very complex and things can change rapidly and unexpectedly. Occasionally things do not go to plan and a patient can be harmed despite our best intentions.

We regret every case of harm to our patients, but we make sure we use the opportunity to learn and stop similar things happening again.

### What can I expect?

- A member of staff will speak to you honestly and openly as soon as possible after the event to discuss what happened, your condition and your ongoing care plan.

- All of the facts may not be clear at this time so staff may not be able to answer all of your questions until we have investigated.
- If you are not in a condition to receive the information, for example if you are too ill or recovering from an anaesthetic, staff will inform your next of kin or the person named by you in your healthcare record.
- You can involve family members or carers in these discussions.
- You will be treated with dignity and respect, and you will receive an apology.
- You can expect to be involved in and contribute to decisions made about your care.
- You will normally be given a named person to speak to about any further queries or concerns.
- We will investigate what went wrong and you will be informed about the findings.
- You can expect confidentiality.

### **Should I have someone with me when staff are talking to me about what happened?**

It is recommended that you do choose someone to support you during the discussion. This should be somebody that you are comfortable with, can talk to easily and who you do not mind hearing personal information. Please let us know if you wish somebody to be with you for the discussions. An advocate can be arranged for you if required.

Please remember that when something goes wrong it is distressing for everyone involved, including the members of staff.

### **Who will speak to me about what happened?**

One or more staff may talk to you, depending on what happened. Usually, the person leading the conversation will be someone from your healthcare team who knows the most about what happened and will be able to answer any questions you may have.

## How should I prepare for a Duty of Candour conversation?

**Before the conversation you may find the following advice helpful:**

- Think about what questions and fears/concerns you have in relation to what has happened, your condition and your ongoing care.
- Write down any questions or concerns you have.
- Think about who you would like to have with you to support you.
- Think of what things may assist you moving forward.

## What happens next?

Further meetings may be necessary if all of the information you need is not available.

We will tell you our findings and offer to share the outcome from our investigation.

If you have any clinical questions or concerns relating to the investigation, in the first instance please contact your named **Duty of Candour lead** (their details are on your letter). I

If you have any questions around the investigation process, please contact the **Quality Governance lead** overseeing your investigation (their details are on your letter).

Alternatively, contact the **Governance Support Team** on telephone 01623 622515, extension 6348, 6378 or 4720, who will be able to direct your call to the relevant member of the team.

## Further sources of support

### **Sherwood Forest Hospitals' Chaplaincy Service**

This is a confidential service available to all patients, families and carers. The team offer help on all aspects of pastoral care to members of all faiths and to people who have no religious beliefs. Sacred spaces are also available.

**Contact:** 01623 622515, extension 4137, 3047 or 6201

### **Healthwatch**

Healthwatch Nottinghamshire is an independent organisation that helps people get the best from their local health and social care services.

**Website:** [www.healthwatch.co.uk](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk)

**Contact:** 0115 956 5313

### **Supporting you**

PohWER is an independent advocacy service which assists people if they wish to make a complaint about the NHS.

**Website:** [www.pohwer@pohwer.net](mailto:www.pohwer@pohwer.net)

**Contact:** 0300 456 2370

### **Carers UK**

Provide free expert advice, information and support on issues including financial and practical matters relating to caring.

**Website:** [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

**Contact:** 0808 808 7777

### **Cruse Bereavement Care**

Provide support to those who have experienced the death of a close friend or relative.

**Website:** [www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)

**Telephone:** 0808 808 1677

**Email:** [helpline@cruse.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cruse.org.uk)

## Further sources of information

NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)

Our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk)

### **Patient Experience Team (PET)**

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

**King's Mill Hospital:** 01623 672222

**Newark Hospital:** 01636 685692

**Email:** [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net)

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net).

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email [sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net) or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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