

As per Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Open Disclosure Framework and Guidance

"..... Open disclosure is the open discussion that an aged care provider (Ananda) has with consumers when something goes wrong that has harmed or had the potential to cause harm to a consumer.

Open disclosure refers to the practice of communicating with a consumer when things go wrong, addressing any immediate needs or concerns and providing support, apologising and explaining the steps the provider has taken to prevent it happening again. Open disclosure may also involve the consumer's family, carers, and other support people and representatives when a consumer would like them to be involved.

Honest and timely disclosure to consumers is not only ethically, morally and professionally expected but also the first stage in promoting and fostering an environment and culture that, through honest discussion, encourages learning needed to improve care and services. As such, it underpins the organisational culture and behaviours needed for continuous learning and service improvement in partnership with consumers. Through improved transparency it enhances public trust in aged care services. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Open disclosure is a requirement under the Aged Care Quality Standards. There are two specific references to open disclosure in the Standards:

Standard 6: Feedback and Complaints, requires providers to use an open disclosure process when things go wrong.

Standard 8: Organisational governance, where clinical care is provided, organisations are required to have a Clinical Governance Framework which includes open disclosure.

Providers should practise open disclosure when something has gone wrong that has caused harm or had the potential to cause harm to a consumer. Harm may be physical, psychological or social resulting in loss of quality of life, impairment, suffering, injury, disability or death. This is the definition of harm used in this guidance.

Principles of Open Disclosure

- Dignity and Respect: I have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, to be listened to and understood, and to have a person of my choice, including an aged care advocate, support me or speak on my behalf
- Privacy and Confidentiality: have the right to personal privacy and to have my personal information protected:
- Transparency: I have the right to be informed about my care and services in a way I understand, to direct my care, and to access all information about myself, including information about my rights, care and services
- Continuous Quality Improvement: have the right to receive safe and high-quality care and services

Elements of Open Disclosure

- Identify when things go wrong
- Address immediate needs and provide support
- Acknowledge and apologise or express regret
- Find out and explain what happened
- Learn from the experience and make improvements

Organisational Enablers

Open disclosure is an integral part of organisational governance. To enable effective open disclosure including clinical governance, an organisation needs to have strong clinical governance arrangements in place. Clinical governance is an integrated set of leadership behaviours, policies, procedures, responsibilities, relationships, and planning, monitoring and improvement mechanisms. They are implemented to support good clinical care and clinical outcomes for each aged care consumer. The six enablers are:

- Leadership and culture;
- Consumer partnerships;
- Organisational systems;
- Monitoring and reporting;
- Effective workforce;
- Communication and relationships

Reference Open Disclosure Framework and Guidance – Australian Government Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

Link Feedback and Complaints Policy