

The ROYAL MARSDEN

NHS Foundation Trust

Being open

**Communicating with patients and carers
in the event of a Patient Safety Incident
that has caused unintended harm**

Patient Information



NHS

What is ‘being open?’

Despite our best efforts, mistakes occasionally happen. There are numerous safety checks to ensure that these do not affect patients. However, sometimes these systems break down and patients may be harmed while in our care. Please be assured that this happens very rarely. In the unlikely event that it happened to you, we would tell you honestly and openly.

We would also share with you our understanding of why it happened and offer you involvement in how we plan to reduce the chances of the same mistake happening again.

Duty of candour

The Royal Marsden staff have a duty to follow the ‘being open’ principles. The duty of candour is a legal requirement to ensure the appropriate processes are followed in the event of an incident that causes moderate to significant harm. We are committed to openness and honesty and as part of the duty of candour, we will keep you informed and provide support should such an incident occur.

Who would tell me something had gone wrong?

Most errors are minor in nature and do not affect a patient’s treatment or care. In the rare event that a mistake occurs that results in serious or long-lasting harm, a senior healthcare professional leading the investigation will meet with you to share information and respond to your questions.

How will I be kept informed of the investigation and its findings?

The healthcare professional leading the investigation will arrange to share their findings with you regularly. You will also be able to contact them if you have questions or concerns in between these times. When the investigation is completed, a report of the findings and any proposed changes to current practices will be shared with you.

Will my comments and suggestions be listened to?

Yes. Your views on what happened and why are essential to understanding and reducing the risk of the same mistake happening again. Please be open with us.

What if I want to make a complaint or claim for compensation?

Being open with you, and involving you in understanding what has happened, does not affect your right to make a formal complaint or claim for compensation. The contact details for the Trust's Complaints Department and Action Against Medical Accidents are included in this leaflet.

Is support available if I need it?

Yes. Details of support available can be found on page 2 and 3. In addition, the person leading the investigation will help to identify specific support relevant to your needs.

Risk Management Team

Leads the investigation process and provides an additional point of contact for patients and carers during the investigation.

Tel: 020 8661 3534

Email: *riskmanagement@rmh.nhs.uk*

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Provides confidential information, advice and support for patients and carers about the Trust's services.

Chelsea Site

Tel: 020 7808 2083

Sutton Site

Tel: 020 8661 3759

Email: *patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk*

Complaints Department

Email: *complaints@rmh.nhs.uk*

Tel: 020 7811 8186 / 8480

Action Against Medical Accidents

Provides help and advice to those who have been affected by avoidable harm in healthcare.

Helpline: 0845 123 2352

(Monday to Friday, 10am – 3.30pm)

www.avma.org.uk

Cruse Bereavement Support

Provides information and support to anyone affected by a death.

Tel: 0808 808 1677

www.cruse.org.uk

Please ask a member of staff if you would like this leaflet in another language or format.

Notes and questions

References

This booklet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available.

Details of the references used in writing this booklet are available on request from:

The Royal Marsden Help Centre

Telephone: Chelsea 020 7811 8438 / 020 7808 2083

Sutton 020 8661 3759 / 3951

Email: patientcentre@rmh.nhs.uk

No conflicts of interest were declared in the production of this booklet.

Should you require information in an alternative format, please contact The Royal Marsden Help Centre.

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royalmarsden.org

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