

Next steps pamphlet

Usage instructions for health service staff

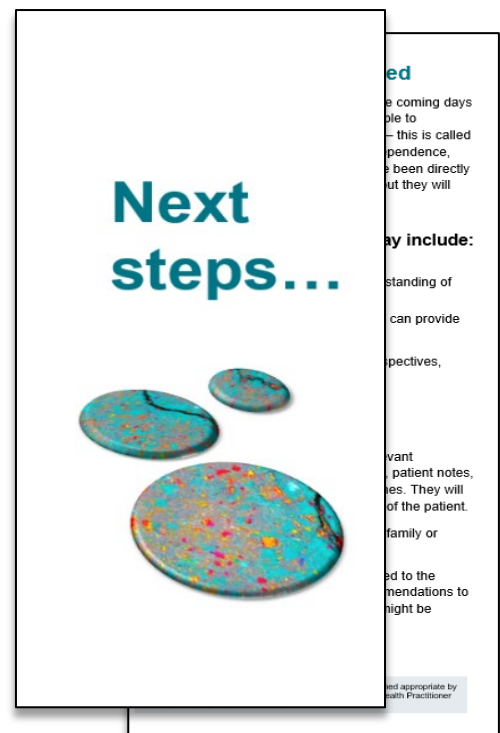
Being open with patients, families, and carers (consumers) about the review process following a serious adverse patient safety event (SAPSE) – and their right to be involved in it – is an expectation of the NSQHS Clinical Governance standards, Australian Open Disclosure Framework and Statutory duty of candour (SDC) legislation, which will come into effect from November 2022. Listening to consumers, validating their concerns and including them in the review process can help mitigate feelings of anger, frustration or mistrust that can develop when they feel left out of the process.

About the pamphlet

The **Next steps** pamphlet is a printed information resource that health service staff can provide to consumers during open disclosure or SDC discussions, to help explain the adverse event review process and invite them to be involved in it.

Why involve consumers in reviews?

- Consumers who are harmed have the right to contribute information to a review into the event that caused their harm.
- They often have information of value to review teams that might not be available through other sources, and which might therefore be overlooked, missed or remain unknown.
- They may also have practical, high-value:low-cost, patient-centred improvement recommendations that can be useful to the review team.
- Consumer involvement in reviews, and subsequent service improvement plans, can help support requirements of the NSQHS clinical governance and partnering with consumers standards.
- Under new SDC legislation taking effect from 30 November 2022, health services are required to:
 - apologise to any person seriously harmed while receiving care
 - explain what went wrong
 - describe what action will be taken and the improvements being put in place
 - provide a copy of the review report to consumers, next of kin or carers.



NOTE: Subject to health service compliance with the relevant SDC legislation, legal protections can be applied to SAPSE reviews that prevent review reports from being used in a court of law. However, this does not apply to information otherwise available to consumers under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* or the *Health Records Act 2001*.

Using the *Next steps* pamphlet

1. An ideal time to introduce the pamphlet is during Open Disclosure and SDC discussions, as this is the point consumers would naturally be made aware of the next steps the health service is taking to investigate the SAPSE (i.e. the review*), and letting them know that they can be involved in that process to the extent they wish.

(* Please note that consumers would not generally use the word 'review' in the same context as a health service, so it is important to clarify its use to consumers as meaning an investigation into what occurred.)

2. Print copies of the pamphlet (it's designed to be printed double sided, flip on short edge).
3. Appoint a staff member to act as the **Family Liaison Person** for consumers and write their details on back of the pamphlet where indicated.

- The family liaison must be at the meeting when the pamphlet is provided and should act as the single liaison point for consumers throughout the review process.
- It is up to individual health services to decide who is best placed to act as a family liaison. It may be the same person for all consumers within a health service or, depending upon the circumstances, different family liaisons may be appointed to individual SAPSEs.
- The most important criteria when appointing a family liaison is to ensure they remain informed, consistent, empathetic and available to consumers.

The image shows a rectangular form with a light blue header that reads "Your family liaison person is:". Below the header, there are four rows, each with a label on the left and a dotted line for text entry on the right. The labels are "Name", "Title", "Email", and "Phone".

4. As the pamphlet is in tri-fold format, it is designed to be part of face-to-face discussions with consumers rather than as a mail out. However, this does not preclude it being mailed out if good communication has already been established.
5. Consumers should have time to look at the pamphlet and ask questions, either at the meeting where it is provided, or by phone or email afterwards. The pamphlet is only as good as the quality of the conversation that precedes it, so how and when it is introduced needs a structured and sensitive approach.
6. At the initial Open Disclosure or SDC meeting let consumers know that you will be providing them with some written information about the review process before they leave (the **Next steps** pamphlet).
 - While it is important not to overwhelm consumers with too much information at this stage, be guided by their individual preferences.
 - Often having a written resource is helpful for consumers to take with them to look over later.
 - Additional or subsequent conversations can provide more detailed information to consumers. This might include an estimate of the review timeframe and what is involved in the process (i.e. formation of the review team, collection and examination of relevant information, interviews with involved staff, drafting the report, etc).
7. During Open Disclosure and SDC discussions, staff should capture any initial information provided by consumers that may be of relevance to the review process. Let the consumers know that this information will be provided to the review team.

8. Consumers should be encouraged to note down any key thoughts or questions that occur to them over the coming days. The 'Notes' section on the back of pamphlet can serve as a starting point for this and should be pointed out to them.
9. Let consumers know their family liaison will be in contact with them in the coming days to see if they have any further questions or information that they would like to convey to the review team. Also advise that they can contact their family liaison at any time to ask questions, get further information or to get an update on the review's progress.
 - Ask how often and by what method they would like to be kept updated about the review team's progress. **Ensure this agreed contact schedule is maintained with consumers, even if there is nothing to update them about.**
 - Depending on family circumstances, staff can ask consumers to consider nominating a central spokesperson, through which all information can be channelled / disseminated.
 - The consumer's appointed family liaison should be the health service's primary point of communication, through which all other communication or requests should be facilitated. This includes sharing the final report.

Some of the ways consumers can help with the review include:

- providing material evidence relevant to understanding the consumer's episode of care
- providing key background information / context about the consumer or their circumstances
- providing input into the draft timeline / description of the event
- fact / sense checking information obtained from other sources
- asking them where they believe things may have gone wrong and why
- inviting their feedback to the draft review report
- suggesting recommendations they feel would help address the issues they encountered.

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This resource was developed by the Patient safety review team at Safer Care Victoria: IRTreviews@safercare.vic.gov.au