Patients and their families or carers have the right to a full explanation and apology when a patient suffers significant harm, known as a serious adverse patient safety event (SAPSE). This open and honest process is called Duty of Candour.

Significant harm is a serious adverse patient safety event and is an event that:
- moderate or severe physical harm
- prolonged psychological harm
- death.

A registered health practitioner will review the event to determine whether significant harm occurred.

Duty of Candour is a process where a health service will offer the patient and/or their family or carer with:
- An apology
- The facts of the event
- The health service response to the event
- The steps being taken to prevent it from happening again.

If you think you have experienced significant harm but the health service has not begun a Duty of Candour process, you can talk to your health service and ask them to review.

For more information, contact:

To learn more about the legal requirements of Duty of Candour, go to: