

# DUTY OF CANDOUR

## If you experience significant harm from a health service



When a patient experiences significant harm, they have the right to an apology and an explanation from the health service. This open and honest process is called Duty of Candour.



### What is significant harm?

**Significant harm is a serious event that:**

- ✓ happened when a patient was under the care of a health service
- ✓ caused harm that the health service didn't expect or intend. This includes:
  - moderate harm
  - severe physical harm or death
  - long periods of psychological harm.

Significant harm is also called a **serious adverse patient safety event**, or **SAPSE**.

A registered health practitioner, such as a doctor or registered nurse, will confirm if an event has caused significant harm.



### What does Duty of Candour mean when significant harm happens?

**The health service will offer you, your family or your carer some information. The information must include:**

- 1 an apology
- 2 what happened and why
- 3 what the health service did at the time and after the event
- 4 what the health service is doing to prevent similar events from happening again.

**If you think you have experienced significant harm and the health service hasn't started a Duty of Candour process, contact the service.**

**You can ask them to review the event.**

**For more information, you can contact:**

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### For more about Duty of Candour and the laws that apply

**Go to:**

[www.safercare.vic.gov.au/duty-of-candour-resources-for-patients-families-and-their-carers](http://www.safercare.vic.gov.au/duty-of-candour-resources-for-patients-families-and-their-carers)

