

Section: PATIENT SAFETY	Effective Date:
Subject: Disclosure of Unanticipated Outcomes	Revised Date:
Approval: _____	Page 1 of 1

POLICY

Consistent with institutional ethical practices, <<Facility Name>> recognizes the importance of maintaining effective communication with patients and their families and providing information which fosters better decision making. Therefore it shall be the practice of <<Facility Name>> to ensure that any unanticipated outcome (either positive or negative) be promptly communicated to the patient and/or patient's family.

PROCEDURE

The following procedures will provide specific guidelines for disclosing information concerning unanticipated outcomes to the patient and / or the patient's family:

1. In the event that the results from treatment or a procedure differs significantly from what was anticipated, the primary physician / caregiver shall communicate said outcome to the patient.
2. Should the patient be incapable of understanding a discussion of this nature, then the patient's guardian, power of attorney for healthcare or appropriate family member should be informed.
3. Should the unanticipated result be determined an actual or potential negative outcome, the primary physician / caregiver shall only communicate the result of the procedure. During initial disclosure of a adverse outcome, the following points may be discussed:
 - Definite consequences of the occurrence.
 - Actions taken to ameliorate the consequences and potential consequences.
 - Actions that will be taken to analyze, review and identify causation and ways to prevent occurrences from reoccurring.
4. At no time shall information be communicated to the patient concerning the causation factors until the matter has undergone thorough investigation and review by Administration and Legal Affairs.
5. In the event that the caregiver may be traumatized as a result of the outcome, and feel unable to communicate with the patient and/or patient family, he/she may choose to utilize one of the trained designees from either Patient & Family Services, Pastoral Care, Social Services or Administration.
6. At no time shall information regarding adverse outcomes be communicated to the public or representatives of the media without the explicit advanced approval and review of the CEO, Public Affairs, Risk Management and Legal Affairs.

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