

The duty of candour

Communicating if
things go wrong

What is the duty of candour?

The duty of candour is a legal requirement to be open and honest with a patient and their family, if they have suffered harm. This means that if your child suffers any unexpected harm during their care, we will:

- tell you about it
- apologise
- review what happened
- explain to you what happened and what the next steps are

Staff should talk openly with you and your family during your child's care. We want to be open and honest with you.

Why things go wrong

Healthcare can be complicated and sometimes things change unexpectedly. We do our best to look after our patients, but sometimes things do not go as planned, and a patient can be harmed. This could be an unintended complication from a procedure, or from an unexpected error.

We regret and feel very sorry when a patient is harmed, but we also hope to learn from it and stop something similar happening again.

What you can expect

A member of staff will have spoken to you and your family honestly and openly about what happened, your child's health, and any further care they may need.

Staff might not be able to answer all of your questions at this time. It might take longer for us to understand in detail what happened.

You'll be treated with dignity and respect and receive an apology. You and your child's information will be kept confidential.

After the discussion, we'll write to you to confirm the next steps. You'll be given a named person to contact, and their contact details.

You may have more questions, fears, and concerns about what's happened, your child's health, and any ongoing care they might need.

You might also feel that you need more support at this time. If you do, please ask a member of staff to raise this with your child's consultant so that an appropriate person can speak to you.

It may be helpful before any meetings to:

- write down any questions you have
- think about who you would like to have with you for support at the meeting
- think about anything that might help you
- think about which staff you would like to attend the meeting

What happens next?

We'll review what happened to your child, in an Incident Review Meeting. We'll then discuss with you what the next steps are. This might mean that we take some immediate actions or that we start a learning response (investigation).

If there is a learning response, we'll ask you what questions you would like to be included. We'll then share a summary of findings with you and offer you the opportunity to discuss the report with a member of the team.

If you're unhappy with your child's care, you have the right to make a complaint. For information, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS),
phone 020 7188 8801
email gstt.pals-gstt@nhs.net

More information about the duty of candour is available from staff where your child is being treated, or from PALS.

Support and more information

Guy's and St Thomas' spiritual health care team

Offers religious, spiritual and cultural support to members of any faith or of no religious belief. Sacred spaces are also available at the main hospital sites.

phone 020 7188 1187
email gstt.chaplains@nhs.net

More on the next page ...

Counsellor services

The Evelina London counsellor service provides a confidential service for parents and carers of children being treated at the Evelina London. **Phone** 020 7188 4538

email gstt.parentcounselling@nhs.net

The Evelina London mediation service

Is a voluntary, confidential service supporting families, patients and healthcare professionals involved in a disagreement to talk things through supported by a trained mediator.

Phone 07802 783184

email evelina@medicalmediation.org.uk

It's Good to Talk

Information on counselling and psychotherapy, including a directory of registered services.

Web www.bacp.co.uk

Carers UK

Provides free expert advice, information and support on issues including financial and practical matters related to caring.

Web www.carersuk.org

phone 08088 087777

Cruse Bereavement Care

Provides support to those having experienced the death of a close friend or relative.

Web www.cruse.org.uk

phone 08444 779400

email helpline@cruse.org.uk

Evelina London Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's medicines, please speak to the staff caring for them or contact our helpline, **phone** 020 7188 3003, Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm

Language and accessible support services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please contact the service your child is seeing.

NHS 111

This service offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day, **phone** 111 **web** www.111.nhs.uk

NHS website

This website gives information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you take control of your health and wellbeing, **web** www.nhs.uk



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