

# Caring for patients, users and families in connection with adverse events.

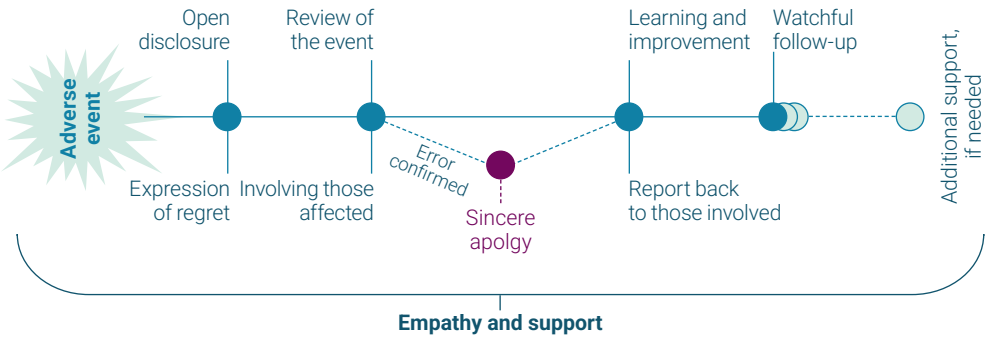
## Quick overview



### 1 Good dialog from the start

#### Clarify expectations, and inform about risk when relevant

#### Caring for patients, users and families



### 2 When something goes wrong

#### Acknowledge openly and honestly, and express regret, that something unfortunate has happened

### 3 When the event should have been prevented

#### Offer a sincere apology

There is a difference between expressing regret that an event has occurred, and apologizing for harm caused by actions, omissions or system failures, though the wording itself is not the most important. Expressing regret that something unfortunate has happened can and should be carried out as soon as possible, even though the causes are not clear. If error is confirmed, those affected should receive a sincere apology.

#### Elements in a sincere apology

- 1 Acknowledgement of error(s)
- 2 Description of what happened
- 3 Clear stance on taking responsibility
- 4 Expression of remorse
- 5 Change in behavior/practice



## Pseudo-apologies

**1**  
regretting the patient's or family's **reaction** to the event, not the event itself

**2**  
giving an **explanation** of why treatment was carried out the way it was, without expressing feeling sorry for the outcome

**3**  
**appearing forced**, or apologizing without really meaning it, because one has been told to do it

**4**  
conducting an apology as a **formality**, without emotion or empathy

## 4 Reviewing the event, learning and improving **Involve patients, users and families**

It is crucial for those affected that what they have experienced, doesn't happen again.

## 5 Over time – watchful follow-up **Keep in touch, follow along, provide additional support if necessary**

## Restorative approach

### Restoration of

- relations
  - mental health
  - trust
- 
- showing empathy
  - asking, not assuming
  - listening
  - involving in learning and improvement



Scan the QR-code to find supporting materials in English for our Guide to caring for patients, users, family and employees in connection with adverse events.