

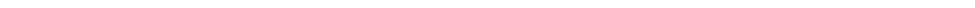


# Patient Information Service

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## **Duty of Candour**

**A guide for our patients,  
families and carers, who may  
have experienced significant  
harm whilst under our care**





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Southend University Hospital is committed to being open and honest and takes prides in its values of providing care with compassion, working together and in being professional and accountable. This means if you have experienced significant unexpected or unintended harm during your care, we will tell you about it, apologise, investigate what happened and why, and give you a full explanation of what occurred.

## **Why have I been given the Duty of Candour leaflet?**

You have been given this leaflet to explain what Duty of Candour means and how we are complying with the requirements for your care as a patient or carer.

## **What is 'Duty of Candour'?**

A law was passed in 2014 requiring all healthcare providers in England to be open and honest with their patients if they have suffered significant harm.

All healthcare providers are required to:

- Make sure they have an open and honest culture across and at all levels within its organisation
- Tell patients in person when particular incidents have occurred, what has happened and apologise
- Provide, in writing, a truthful account of the incident and an explanation about the enquiries and investigations that have undertaken



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- Offer an apology in writing
  - Provide reasonable support to the individual after the incident

## **What is significant harm?**

Harm can be moderate or severe or result in the unexpected death of a patient.

Examples of significant or moderate harm include an unplanned return to theatre for surgery, a prolonged stay in hospital, an unplanned transfer to the critical care unit or additional care or treatment as a direct result of your care and treatment.

The definition of severe harm is when there is a permanent reduction of health or loss of function to the patient, directly related to the incident. Harm may also be recognised as psychological. This is psychological harm experienced for a continuous period of at least 28 days.

## **How do our staff at Southend University Hospital comply with Duty of Candour?**

They will tell you if you have been involved in or have been observed to have come to harm or had the potential to be harmed by some aspect of the care you received. They will apologise if this has happened.

They will also report the incident to the risk & patient safety team to enable an investigation to take place to find out what happened and how it happened.

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## What happens next?

There are three stages:

1. We will write to you and confirm that an investigation has commenced. We will also provide you with contact details to enable you to keep in touch with the process
2. We will investigate the incident to determine what happened and if there are any lessons that can be learned to prevent a similar incident happening again. It may take up to 60 working days for us to complete the investigation
3. We will share our investigation findings with you. You can choose how we inform you of our investigation findings.

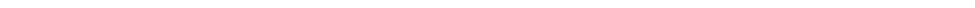
## Can I complain?

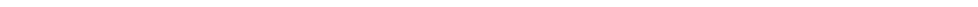
Duty of Candour does not affect your right to complain. You can make a formal complaint by contacting the complaints team by phone, letter or email.

Telephone: **01702 435555 ext 5144 or 6449**

Address:   Complaints team  
              Southend University Hospital  
              Prittlewell Chase  
              Westcliff-on-Sea  
              Essex, SS0 0RY

Email:       complaints@southend.nhs.uk





# Patient Information Service

If this leaflet does not answer all of your questions, or if you have any other concerns please contact the risk and patient safety team on: **01702 435555 ext 8113**.

[www.southend.nhs.uk](http://www.southend.nhs.uk)

For a translated, large print or audio tape version of this document please contact:

**Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)**

**Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust**

**Prittlewell Chase**

**Westcliff-on-Sea**

**Essex, SS0 0RY**

**Telephone: 01702 385333**

**Fax: 01702 508530**

**Email: pals@southend.nhs.uk**