

# PSG supports embedding the duty of candour

To enhance patient safety in surgical practice, the Patient Safety Group (PSG) has identified several strands of work that promote research and foster collaboration, as exemplified by its support for a new project on the professional duty of candour with the University of Edinburgh and the Professional Standards Authority.

In recent years there has been a renewed focus on the need for healthcare professionals to be open and honest when something goes wrong. Since the Francis Report we have seen statutory organisational duties of candour introduced

in the UK. However, there is also a professional duty of candour as crystallised in a joint statement signed by eight of the nine health regulators in 2014: "Every healthcare professional must be open and honest with patients when something goes wrong with their treatment or care which causes, or has the potential to cause, harm or distress."

In 2019, a report by the Professional Standards Authority on progress made in embedding this professional duty of candour, "Telling patients the truth when something goes wrong", underlined that work must be done across health systems to "produce professionals who are candid...

and work environments that do not stymie that candour". Of particular relevance to the PSG is the report's emphasis on upstream interventions, and in particular on education and training.

Over the coming months the PSG will be further exploring the operationalisation of the professional duty of candour in the context of surgery.

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