

Guidelines for initial CARE meeting

COMMUNICATION, APOLOGY AND RESOLUTION (CARE)

The initial meeting sets the tone for the negotiations between the parties. It is crucial that the insurance company, risk management and patient safety staff, and health care providers are as understanding and as genuine as possible from the moment the meeting begins.

Attendees	Role
Insurance company/companies	Co-facilitator of meeting and primarily responsible for offer
Hospital representative(s)	Co-Facilitator of meeting and primarily responsible for disclosure; secondarily responsible for apology
Health care providers*	Primarily responsible for apology (if present)
Patient/family/patient attorney	Responsible for expressing concerns and considering offer(s)

*Health care providers should only attend if the patient is comfortable with their attendance.

MEETING CRITERIA

The following criteria must be met in the first meeting if it has been determined previously that there will be an early offer to the patient. If no offer will be made, complete only disclosure requirements.

Disclosure

Responsible parties should disclose:

- All of the errors that occurred
- Specifically what caused the errors
- Which providers are responsible for the errors
- Any and all system failures that resulted in the error
- The corrective actions that have been or will be taken to prevent these errors in the future

Apology

The apology from responsible parties should:

- Demonstrate that the provider and/or health care system is responsible for the error (if possible, the apology should come directly from the responsible health care providers)
- Express empathy for the patient's injuries and suffering

Offer

The offer stated by the insurance company should:

- Include a financial figure that is expertly assessed as fair compensation that will make the patient whole

The offer can include other methods of compensation, such as being involved in the error prevention project, speaking to groups about their experience, or service recovery (for example, free parking passes for future appointments).

CONCLUSION

It is likely that the initial meeting will not be the last meeting among this group. As the meeting approaches an appropriate stopping point, patients should be encouraged to leave without making a decision and take time with their families and attorney to consider the offer. The group should meet again as many times as is beneficial and fruitful for negotiation and reconciliation.