

**ACGME Competencies Project**

**Disclosing Adverse Outcomes**

(1/13/06)

**Learning Objectives**

1. Describe the physical setting where an adverse outcome should be disclosed
2. Describe the process of disclosing an adverse outcome, including assessing patient/family understanding
3. Recognize the need for unambiguous, clear communication
4. Recognize the importance of expressing regret
5. Recognize the importance of discussing the institutional response to the adverse outcome
6. Demonstrate the process of disclosing an adverse outcome

# Disclosing Adverse Outcomes

## Basic Format

1. **Background Reading** (read before or after noon conference; available online)
  - Article: “To Tell the Truth: Ethical and practical issues in disclosing mistakes to patients”
  
2. **Noon Conference** (or equivalent)
  - Pre-test Multiple-choice questions (5 min.)
  - Sharing of experiences where it was done well and not well (10-15 min.)
    - Critical elements to include
    - Common errors
    - Personal barriers
  - PowerPoint presentation of key elements (20 min.)
    - Preparation
    - Elements of adequate disclosure
    - Assessing patient/family reaction
  - Interactive discussion of video simulation (15 min.)
    - Scenario presented in several segments followed by discussion
    - Stop at intervals to get group feedback
  - Summarize key points at the conclusion (5 minutes)
  
3. **Field evaluation on performance with patients/families**
  - If possible, each trainee should be observed disclosing an adverse outcome and have the observer complete the evaluation form (can be a physician, nurse, social worker)
  - Pre-printed competency evaluation form available online to be printed as hard copy
  
4. **Final competency evaluation** (available upon request)
  - Repeat of pre-test questions
  - Disclose adverse event on standardized patient/family member