

Responding to Adverse Events



We are committed to continuously improving the quality and safety of the care we deliver.

What you can expect when something goes wrong

When a client experiences harm while receiving services from us, we take it very seriously, and we set in place a process of finding out what happened, why it happened, and how it can be prevented from happening again.

Part of that process involves full and complete disclosure to the client. That is why we have an Adverse Events Disclosure Policy, which guides our response when an adverse event occurs, and outlines our responsibility to report to those who have experienced harm while receiving services.

Our response to adverse events

When we visit a health care professional or organization, we expect to receive the safest health care possible. But sometimes things don't work out as they should. For example, a client may receive the wrong dose of medication, which is referred to as an adverse event. Most adverse events are minor, and fortunately they do not result in harm. But when an adverse event does occur and the client is harmed, he or she has the right to know what happened and what will be done to prevent such events from happening again.

What happens if I experience an adverse event?

If an adverse event causing harm occurs, we follow a process of disclosure which involves communicating with you about the event. This will happen as soon as possible after the event occurs and may be done verbally or in writing – however you prefer. Throughout this process, you have the right to:

- Have a support person(s) of your choice present at the meeting
- Identify specific people (family or caregiver) that you would like to be kept informed about the situation
- Ask for a second opinion from another health care provider
- Pursue a complaints process

Who should I identify as a support person?

- Someone you are comfortable with and can talk to easily – this can be a family member, a caregiver, or a friend
- Someone with whom we can share your personal information
- Someone who is able to take the time to be part of the process

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Who from CMHA Toronto will talk to me?

The staff person who talks to you about the adverse event and how we as an agency are responding will be someone who:

- Is a member of the team that provides you with service (your Program Team)
- You are comfortable with and can talk to easily
- Has been involved in your care and knows the facts
- Can take steps to ensure that the problem does not happen again

Who else will be present?

The staff person who will be discussing the adverse event may also choose to have someone present to assist and support them. This is because we recognize that adverse events are distressing, not only for the client and their family and/or supports, but also for the staff and the Program Team involved.

What can I expect?

The staff person, along with their Manager and Director, will investigate what went wrong, why it happened, and together they will take the necessary steps to ensure that it does not happen again. You will be kept up to date with the progress of the investigation. You can also discuss any changes to your care plan that may be needed.

We are committed to working hard to improve the quality of the care we deliver every day.

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