

**ACKNOWLEDGE AND
APOLOGISE OR
EXPRESS REGRET**

We are in the fourth week of Open Disclosure Awareness.

As we continue our journey in understanding the Open Disclosure process, we now focus on the need to **acknowledge and apologise or express regret** when things go wrong. This is not about saying someone is at fault but instead focusses on our response to the consumer.

**When something has gone wrong and as soon as
reasonably practicable we should:**

- Communicate promptly with consumers and others
- Acknowledge the concerns of the consumer
- Provide a sincere and unprompted apology or expression of regret such as a 'I am sorry', for the harm or grievance caused.
- Follow up with the consumer to ensure they understand the acknowledgement or expression of regret.
- Provide information about what has happened in a way that can be understood. This may include:
 - involving family members or others, as per the wishes of the consumer
 - helping to link the consumer with a formal advocate
 - involving a cultural or community group/leader to which the consumer belongs
 - using appropriate translation services; or
 - using other assistance services where communication or hearing support is needed
 - providing a comfortable and appropriate environment for the discussion.

What we do at Froniditha Care:

- We listen and share genuine concern for our consumers.
- We ensure consumers are engaged in communication by offering appropriate language support, translations, informal and formal advocacy, other communication tools and a safe environment
- We have clear processes, defining the roles and responsibilities of who should lead the communication as part of this open disclosure process
- We encourage immediate communication and prompt action to events when they occur
- We foster a blame free approach

ACKNOWLEDGE AND APOLOGISE OR EXPRESS REGRET

Continuing from last week's case scenarios, below you will find how to apply Element 3 of Open Disclosure – Acknowledge and Apologise or Express Regret.

1 A personal support worker fails to attend a consumer's home for meal preparation

While speaking with Chloe over the phone the Manager expresses sincere regret regarding the events of today and acknowledges the distress caused to Chloe, including Chloe's concern for her mother's safety and the need for her to abandon her paid work following the events of today.

The Manager, who is bilingual, also speaks with Eva to say she is sorry that no one attended today to help her. These feelings of regret are also reiterated in the face-to-face home visit by the Care Advisor who has attended as a follow up.

The Care Advisor, who knows Eva and her daughter very well, ensures that the consumer and representative understand the genuine feelings of regret.

2 The case of personal belongings disposed of in the rubbish bin

The Manager Residential Services met immediately with Mr. G and acknowledged his concerns in a sincere and empathetic way, expressing regret for the unnecessary grief caused to him and the family by the series of mishaps. The Manager in the presence of the RN, Maintenance Officer and Support Service Coordinator said, "We are sorry and wish to apologise to you and to your family."

The Manager proceeded to provide detailed information about what has happened without laying blame. At this meeting the Manager continued to offer reassurance and support to Mr. G including offer of external counselling and advocacy access. Mr. G has accepted the apology and the explanation and declined the offer of counselling. He just wanted to discuss how best he will be assisted in providing a dignified service and burial to his Aunt Mrs. G.

Next week we will detail what has happened and the series of mishaps leading to the incident.

** All names and scenarios are fictional.
Any resemblance to real persons
or cases is purely coincidental.*

Resources: https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/sites/default/files/media/ACQSC_Open_Disclosure.pdf

To read the case scenario visit: <https://frondithacare.org.au/open-disclosure-awareness/>

Reminder: Training on Altura Bridge to be completed by **4 December 2020**.