

The many faces of error disclosure: a common set of elements and a definition.

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When medical errors occur, patients desire full [disclosure](#) about the error and why it occurred. This qualitative study used focus groups of administrators, resident and attending physicians, and nurses to analyze how practitioners would describe a hypothetical error that caused patient harm. Respondents chose to communicate information about the error in ways that did not always clearly link the error and the adverse clinical outcome, a phenomenon also noted in [prior research](#). The authors propose a formal definition of error disclosure, which incorporates admission and discussion of the error as well as providing sufficient information to "connect the dots" between the error and patient harm.