

## The disclosure dilemma—large-scale adverse events.

February 17, 2011

Dudzinski DM, Hébert PC, Foglia MB, et al. The disclosure dilemma--large-scale adverse events. *New Engl J Med.* 2010;363(10):978-986. doi:10.1056/NEJMhle1003134.

<https://psnet.ahrq.gov/issue/disclosure-dilemma-large-scale-adverse-events>

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[Error disclosure](#) policies for events that affect individual patients have traditionally focused on what information to [share](#) and [how](#) to share it; of course, discussions about individual disclosure occur in the context of the active [debate](#) about whether disclosure has an impact on [liability](#) risk. This study discusses large-scale adverse events (such as failure to sterilize an endoscope used on scores of patients), which harm or carry a potential to harm groups of patients, and how individual organizations should manage their disclosure process. Drawing on a number of [representative](#) cases, the authors recommend key elements for a disclosure policy. They include developing an institutional policy, planning proactively for disclosures, communicating with the public, and planning for appropriate patient follow-up. Although the authors point out the challenge these events often raise, they advocate for disclosure as a norm to reinforce transparency, trust, and integrity with the public.