



Guide to Incident Management



24/7 Report & Support Call 1300 854 838

1 Pharmacist to handle the incident

Ensure the matter is handled by a pharmacist and preferably the pharmacist involved in the incident. Show concern and willingness to address the situation.

2 The importance of saying sorry

Apologising in a way that will not constitute an admission of liability will often calm the situation and may prevent it escalating to a regulator or a demand from a patient. Examples of apologising without admitting liability include: "I am sorry this has happened"; "I'm sorry this situation has caused you concern/distress." Refer to the "The Importance of Saying Sorry" article viewable by navigating to **Guides & Resources** via member login at www.pdl.org.au.

3 Get the contact details of the consumer or patient

Obtain contact details and show an ongoing interest in the welfare of the patient.

4 Empathise and invite open discussion

Be empathetic and give the individual an opportunity to express their feelings, which may provide further insight for the pharmacist or pharmacy.

5 DO NOT OFFER COMPENSATION

DO NOT OFFER COMPENSATION - It may be misunderstood as a bribe. A refund is not an offer of compensation and can be provided.

6 DO NOT mention your insurance cover

DO NOT mention your insurance cover. Do not refer to the regulators unless asked directly. Provide your name and registration number if this is specifically requested.

7 Seek expert advice from PDL immediately

Call PDL on **1300 854 838** and report the incident. You will be advised what further action to take.

8 Record the incident and make a copy

Record incident details in your organisation's recording system and make a copy for your personal records. These notes may be extremely important in any subsequent defence of a claim or complaint. If the incident involves a dispensing error, make a note on the patient's file.

9 Inform the owner and management

Inform the owner and/or senior management of the incident at the earliest opportunity. Regulators expect pharmacy owners to have oversight of incidents. Management may be first to receive a complaint or demand.

10 How to handle an investigating officer

Call PDL immediately for advice if confronted by an investigating officer seeking information. In most cases you may seek a written request from the investigator before responding.

11 Further advice in the case of a dispensing error

Review and verify the reported error. Replacement with the prescribed medicine may be appropriate if it doesn't worsen the outcome for the patient. First, consideration of the clinical implications of a replacement should be undertaken by a pharmacist, or the prescriber. Do not charge for the replacement. If it was dispensed at another pharmacy, check with that pharmacy and replace if possible. Retain any evidence such as the returned item, or an image of it, and a copy of the prescription. View the **Guide to Good Dispensing** via member login at www.pdl.org.au.

12 When an incident involves a patient or their carer

Report any incident to PDL which involves a patient or their carer, even if the incorrectly dispensed item has not left the premises. A claim or complaint could be lodged months or even years later.

13 Has medication been missed or wrong drug used?

Determine whether any of the wrong drug has been used, or medication missed. Has any adverse reaction been experienced? If so, immediately contact the prescriber for advice.

14 Go the extra distance to get in touch with the patient

If a patient has left the pharmacy and you suspect an error has been made, act promptly to correct the problem, without causing unnecessary alarm. Take all reasonable steps to contact the patient. This may include going to the patient's home, with their permission, to retrieve and replace the item.

15 Contact the prescriber

If the wrong medicine has been taken, contact the prescriber for advice and as a professional courtesy.

16 Seeking more resources?

Use your member login to the PDL portal via www.pdl.org.au and go to **Guides & Resources** to access articles designed to support and assist you further with incident management. Call us any time for a non-judgemental discussion or confidential incident and reporting guidance.