

# RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

## 100 Patient Stories

Dr Ann Dadich and researchers from the CInS Research Group are working with a team of researchers from seven Australian universities to improve the communication and investigation processes for people involved in an unexpected event that resulted in harm while receiving healthcare – this includes patients, their carers and family members, as well as hospital staff. This national study is led by Professor Rick Iedema from the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) and is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing on behalf of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

'People go to hospital to get better – whether they are sick or injured, they rely on healthcare professionals to *fix whatever is wrong*,' says Dr Dadich. 'But despite the best efforts of our healthcare professionals, sometimes medical procedures don't go according to plan and sometimes mistakes are made. According to previous research, it's at these times that people want to understand *what went wrong, why it happened, and how the situation will be handled* – this is largely the process of "open disclosure". This involves the formal or planned meetings clinicians and hospital staff members have with patients who experience harm while receiving healthcare. This project is being developed to support and encourage healthcare professionals to engage in this process following an adverse event.'

To understand the open disclosure (OD) experience, one-hundred patients, their carers or family members from across Australia will be interviewed. Fifty hospital personnel will also be consulted. Interview findings will be used to develop two surveys to gauge the quality of the OD experience – one will be tailored to patients, their carers and family members, while the other will be tailored to hospital personnel. These tools will help monitor the effectiveness of OD practices.



When an adverse event occurs in the delivery of healthcare, open disclosure can be critical. It can alleviate stress and anxiety, and it can prevent similar events from occurring in the future. By understanding the experience of open disclosure from different perspectives, this study will help to improve the process for all involved, benefiting the Australian health care system.

**Project Title:** Open Disclosure research and indicator development, including the 100 patient stories project.

**UWS researchers:** Dr Ann Dadich, Associate Professor. Terry Sloan, Associate Professor Anneke Fitzgerald, and Professor Ross Chapman.

**Funding has been set at:** \$24,547

**UWS contact Details:** [a.dadich@uws.edu.au](mailto:a.dadich@uws.edu.au)  
<http://www.uws.edu.au/cinis>

**UTS contact Details:** Professor Rick Iedema 0414 553 742, [Rick.iedema@uts.edu.au](mailto:Rick.iedema@uts.edu.au)

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