

Involvement of the bereaved in supervisory investigation of severe adverse events: A literature review

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Background: There is limited tradition for involving the bereaved in the supervisory investigation in Norway.

Objectives: To investigate how the current literature describes involvement of the bereaved in the supervisory investigations of severe adverse events in a healthcare setting.

Method: A literature search was carried out consulting 12 different databases among them Academic Search Premier, CINHALL, ERIC, MEDLINE and SocINDEX. The search terms were amongst others: next of kin, family, loved one and bereaved. Adverse event, death, harm, investigation, involvement and healthcare.

Results: No articles specifically addressed how to involve bereaved in the supervisory investigation of severe adverse events in a healthcare setting. However, several articles described the importance of involving bereaved in the aftermath and giving them the opportunity to both give and receive information concerning the event. Health personnel should be taught how to detect, handle, and inform about severe events as well as how to involve, support and follow up the bereaved in such processes.

Conclusion: The lack of relevant studies highlights the need for research investigating how the bereaved can be involved in processes of supervisory investigation.