

Confidentiality

Nursing

A strong duty with recognised limits, and the tests applied before any disclosure.

The duty

- Shared for care, on a need-to-know basis
- Discussion in corridors and lifts is a breach
- Records opened only for a legitimate purpose
- Access is logged and audited
- The duty continues after death and discharge
- Social media disclosure is never acceptable

Recognised limits

- The person consents to the disclosure
- Required by law or a court order
- Risk of serious harm to the person or others
- Safeguarding a child or adult at risk
- Notifiable public health circumstances
- Share the minimum necessary, and record why

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

Failing to share when there is a safeguarding concern is as serious a failure as disclosing without a basis.

Educational reference. Disclosure grounds and thresholds are set by law and local policy, and differ by country. Take advice before