

Safe Student Reports (SSR) Frequently Asked Questions

Note: This document addresses the most frequently asked questions. If you have a question not addressed within this document, please contact the Safe Student Reports research team at ssr@ncsbn.org.

Study Objective: To promote a just culture in nursing education and evaluate the types and extent of errors and near misses in order to develop methods to reduce or prevent them.

How should faculty address student errors/near misses?

The research team encourages faculty to investigate why the error/near miss occurred. Further investigation might direct actions to take such as modification in teaching approach (if many students make the same errors) or having the class prepare differently, etc. Faculty might want to meet with the student to conduct a root cause analysis in order to promote the student's awareness of his/her professional responsibility to participate in creating a safe patient environment. By allowing for open and honest dialogue between faculty and students about errors and near misses, you will be promoting a just culture in nursing education, as well as being role models for the students on the importance of a just culture for patient safety.

Further investigation should include:

- 1) What happened (what type of calculation error)?
- 2) Has it happened before with this student or other students?
- 3) Can it happen again?
- 4) What caused it to happen (student working through the problem too quickly, student stressed about something, this type of calculation wasn't taught clearly, student did not prepare for medication calculation for class, etc.)?
- 5) Who should be told? (Disch, Barnsteiner, Connor, & Brogren, 2017)

Will increased student error trends be reported to the board of nursing (BON) or be used in any way that could affect accreditation?

No. NCSBN only plans to report de-identified aggregate data so that health care educators can learn about the extent of and types of errors and near misses students make. NCSBN definitely will not report program specific data to the BON or accreditors.

How can a program ensure that FERPA rights of students will not be violated while participating in the SSR study?

NCSBN has obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality from the National Institutes of Health – National Institute of Nursing Research. NCSBN has agreed to use this certificate to protect against the compelled disclosure of personally identifiable information and to support and defend the authority of the certificate against legal challenges.

Can students/faculty skip questions on the survey if they don't want to answer?

All fields within the online data entry tool are required fields except for the open text boxes. Most sections include an open text box. Students/faculty wishing to skip questions can pick a random response to the required field and explain in the open text box that the student/faculty wished to skip that field but selected a random response and should not be included in the analysis.

Another option is for the student/faculty to opt out of submitting any data at all.

During skills lab and validations, faculty often guide and evaluate students with new procedures and expect them to make mistakes. Was the SSR tool meant to collect information on these errors?

Near misses and errors in these situations are part of the learning process and are different from errors made when performing skills that have been validated. Only errors/near misses that occur as part of summative evaluations should be reported in the SSR tool. Errors/near misses that occur prior to validation of skills should not be reported in the SSR tool unless they are outstanding errors such as needlesticks, etc.

Should only errors/near misses committed with actual bedside care be submitted?

The SSR study was meant to capture errors/near misses that occur anywhere throughout the program including clinical, simulation and learning/skills lab.

Under the "Recipient of unsafe occurrence" section of the worksheet, how should one respond to the question "Who received the injury?" if the occurrence did not result in an adverse event?

This question was meant to collect information on the recipient *or potential recipient* of the error/near miss. Please select a response based on who actually received the injury or who might have received the injury.

Under the "Follow up action" section of the worksheet, if a policy or system change doesn't occur at the time of data entry but occurs sometime thereafter, can the information be revised/edited on the SSR website?

The current SSR system does not allow revisions to initial data submission.

References

Disch, J., Barnsteiner, J., Connor, S., & Brogren, F. (2017). Exploring how nursing schools handle student errors and near misses. *AJN*, *117*(10), 24-31.

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