When things go wrong in eye care

Be honest with patients

• Explain the risks and possible visual outcomes of the procedure.
• Obtain written consent from the patient.
• Keep accurate records of all the care given to a patient.
• If something goes wrong, tell the patient as soon as possible.

Say that you are sorry

• Saying that you are sorry makes a big difference to the patient.
• It does not mean that you are at fault, or that you accept legal liability. A sincere apology may reduce the risk of legal action.
• When you apologise, explain what went wrong, how you will minimise or rectify the damage caused and how you plan to ensure no-one else will be harmed.

Support others and keep on learning

• Create a working environment where it is safe to admit mistakes.
• Support health workers who have been involved in a medical error.
• Record and investigate errors so you and your team can learn from them and prevent future errors.
• Invite an external review if you need more input.
• Keep up to date with your professional and legal responsibilities.