



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is Medically Induced Trauma Support Services?

MITSS is a non-profit organization founded in June of 2002 whose mission is "To Support Healing and Restore Hope" to patients, families, and clinicians who have been affected by an adverse medical event.

We define medically induced trauma as an unexpected complication that occurs during medical and/or surgical care. It may be due to medication error; clinical or systems error; or other medical circumstances that result in a negative impact to the overall well being of an individual and/or family member.

2. How does MITSS achieve its mission?

- Education – Since 2002, MITSS has been educating the healthcare community on the uniqueness of medical trauma, the broad scope of its impact, and the crucial need for support services through participation in forums, local and national conferences, and through the media.
- Direct Support Services to Patients, Families, and Clinicians – See no. 4 and no. 5 for further detail.
- Advocacy – We encourage and consult with healthcare institutions in developing infrastructures for clinician peer support systems.

3. How can MITSS help our organization to expand on its existing patient safety initiatives?

The patient, family, and clinician support provided by MITSS offers an additional dimension to patient safety and healthcare quality improvement by increasing understanding and clarity around the causes of errors and the needs of those impacted by medically induced trauma.

4. How does MITSS support patients and families?

MITSS staff and volunteers answer hotline calls, offering encouragement and support, while providing resources and information on various related topics. Our toll free number is 1-888-36MITSS. We provide additional information on our website at www.mitss.org.

MITSS also provides educational support groups for patients and their families who have been affected by medical error or unanticipated outcome led by a licensed clinical psychologist. These 10-week long group sessions provide participants with education on trauma, the tools necessary to process and heal from the traumatic event, and the support of the group members.

5. How does MITSS support clinicians?

MITSS advocates for clinician support as we believe that caring for our clinicians can only translate into better quality healthcare for everyone. We serve as a consultant to institutions in the design and implementation of peer support systems. We are also available to clinicians through our 800 number and our website to provide referrals to various resources.

MITSS has provided support groups for nursing professionals finding themselves on the "sharp end" of an adverse event, and we will continue to do so as the need arises.

MITSS is the only organization in the country providing support services and advocating for patients, families, and clinicians following unanticipated outcomes. MITSS seeks to fill the "gaping hole" in the healthcare system by providing much needed support, educating about medical trauma's devastating effects, and by pioneering innovative approaches to dealing with this previously "taboo" subject.

6. Does MITSS involve itself with the legal issues surrounding medical errors and adverse events?

No. We do, however, advocate for disclosure, apology, and support in the aftermath of adverse medical events.

7. How is MITSS funded?

MITSS is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation funded through corporate and private donors, annual events, and individual and collaborative grants.

8. Can our organization arrange to have MITSS staff present at our facility?

Yes. Linda Kenney and Dr. Rick van Pelt frequently give presentations on the topic of support following an adverse event. Give us a call at 1-617-232-0090 to arrange a speaking engagement.

9. Does MITSS partner with healthcare organizations in order to achieve its goals?

Yes. MITSS strongly supports collaboration with the healthcare system in order to achieve our mutual goals. We have developed many strong partnerships and are actively cultivating new ones. Brigham and Women's Hospital of Boston is the first major teaching hospital in the country to commit to the development of a referral process to the MITSS program for patients and families.

On the clinician support side, MITSS welcomes the opportunity to consult with healthcare institutions regarding clinician peer support models.

Supporting Healing. Restoring Hope.