



ISSN No: 2319-5886

International Journal of Medical Research &
Health Sciences, 2016, 5, 9S:620-624

The Rate of Nurses' Awareness about Patient's Bill of Rights in Teaching Hospitals Affiliated to the Zahedan University of Medical Sciences in 2016

Azizollah Arbabisarjou¹, Sadegh Zare^{2*}, MahnazShahrakipour³ and Adel Kadkhodaie²

¹Pregnancy Health Research Center, Zahedan University of Medical Sciences, Zahedan, Iran

²Community Nursing Research Center, Student Research Committee, Zahedan University of Medical Sciences, Zahedan, Iran

³Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology, School of Health, Pregnancy Health Research Center, Zahedan University of Medical Sciences, Zahedan, Iran

Corresponding Email: zaresadegh93@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Commitment and respect the high ethical standards are requirements of nursing profession. Nurses should be able to identify and respond appropriately to a wide range of ethical issues in their profession. This study aims to evaluate the rate of nurses' awareness of patient's rights in teaching hospitals affiliated to University of Medical Sciences in Zahedan. This descriptive study is done on 98 nurses in teaching hospitals affiliated to the Zahedan University of Medical Sciences in 2016. Sampling was done randomly. Data was collected using a two-part questionnaire. The first part was related to demographic characteristics including items of age and gender and the second part was also related to the questionnaire of patients' rights. After collecting data, they were analyzed using SPSS version 19 and descriptive data and Pearson correlation and t-test. The results of this study showed that the age average of people was 30.59 ± 6.77 . 25 nurses were male. There was a significant relation between the age and total score average of patient's right. But, the relation between gender and total score average of the knowledge of patient's right was not significant. Total score average of patient's rights awareness was 55.05 ± 3.37 which was at a good level. Results of this study showed that the nurses' awareness is at a good level and a high percent of them have high knowledge about patient's rights.

Keywords: patient's right, nurses

INTRODUCTION

Today, according to the development of social relations, humans need to know the right and learn its' rules and principles more than before [1]. Despite the youth of the science of medical ethics as an academic field, ethical concepts have been always considered along with medicals and has a history as long as medical history. For example, texts such as Hippocratic Oath, Maimonides Liturgy and Shirazi ethics are ancient texts in which principles such as the necessity of the preference of patient's interests on physician and observing the principles of confidentiality have been emphasized. However, in previous literature, physicians' obligations were used more than patient's rights [2].

Informing patients about their rights increases their expectations about their rights. Another fact is that patients have become more aware than before and take care more about themselves and care about their health issues follow-up.

Thus, today: “they will react if their expectations are not met.” Lewinsky says that people’s information in the field of health and sanitary has increased so that they consider the sanitary, health and efficiency as their fundamental right [3]. Therefore, there should be more attention to the patients’ rights, because in the last two decades, this matter has been much considered due to their vulnerability and sensitivity of international communities [4]. Patient’s rights are expectations of patients from health centers [5]. Obey and commitment to high ethical standards is necessary for nursing profession [6] and they must have the capability to identify and respond properly to a wide range of ethical issues in their work [7, 8]. In a similar study, half of the nurses stated that a patient has the right to be aware of his disease status and treatment process [9]. Studies show that factors such as increasing educational level and improving public awareness from the benefits and risks of medical advanced technology, lack of trust in experts, increasing attention to the centrality of consumers and growing civil rights movement have affected the increase of the level of aspirations and expectations of people from taking their rights as a patient; they warn the necessity of awareness and nobility of health care team in this field more than before. This way, it is essential for patients to be aware enough of patient’s right and willingness to play a supporting role. In addition to obtain patient consent, acquiring the knowledge of legal issues related to the nursing profession in order to improve permanently the care standards and protect patient’s right can also reduce the possibility of legal conflicts for nurses [10]. Since the first step of observing these rights is to be aware of it, it is essential to do some investigations for evaluating the rate of nurses’ awareness of these rights [11]. According to the above mentioned points, it is clear that awareness of patient’s rights is essential and must be respected by health service providers. So, this study aims to evaluate the rate of nurses’ awareness of patient’s rights in teaching hospitals affiliated to Zahedan University of Medical Sciences.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This descriptive study conducted on 98 nurses working in teaching hospitals affiliated to Zahedan University of Medical Sciences in 2016. Sampling of nurses was done randomly from different wards of different hospitals. Data was collected using a two-part questionnaire; the first part was related to demographic characteristics including age and gender variables and the second part was related to the questionnaire of nurses’ awareness of patient’s rights. This questionnaire includes 29 questions related to the nurses’ view about awareness of patient’s right extracted from the perspective of patient bill of rights notified by Ministry of Health, Treatment and Medical Education and has been evaluated by Yes-No scale. The score of each paragraph of the factors related to patient’s right is minimum 1 and maximum 2. If nurses choose the option No, they take score 2 and if select 1, they take score 1. The minimum score in this questionnaire is 29 and maximum score is 58. So, the score 29-38 is considered as weak, 38-48 as the average score and the score higher than 48 as a good score. This questionnaire was developed based on patient bill of right and review of the literature. Having prepared the questionnaire, it was given to 10 professors of Hospital Administration and Nursing Management and other professors and qualified individuals who had experience of writing such articles. The content validity of the questionnaire was evaluated and was approved by amendments. The questionnaire reliability was obtained via Cronbach’s alpha coefficient equal to 0.9.

First, the aim of this study was explained to nurses during data collection and the questionnaire was distributed among them after obtaining verbal consent. At the beginning of the questionnaire it was written that “Your cooperation in this matter means your conscious consent for participation in this research. Also, information of this questionnaire is confidential and no danger is to you” to inform nurses of their consent to participate in this study. After completion, the questionnaire was collected by the researcher and was revised; if it was incomplete, it was returned to the nurses and asked them politely to complete relevant sections. After collecting data, they were analyzed using SPSS software version 19 and descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation (relation between age and total score average of awareness questionnaire of patient’s rights) and t test (relation between gender and total score average of awareness questionnaire of patient’s rights). In this study, P value was considered significant at less than 0.05.

RESULTS

The results of the study showed that the age average of individuals was 30.59 ± 6.77 . 25 (25.5%) of nurses were male. There was a significant relation between age and total score average of awareness of patient’s rights ($P=0.002$). But there was not a significant relation between gender and total score average of awareness of patient’s rights ($P=0.79$). Awareness of patient’s rights had no visible difference in both genders and score average in both genders was almost at the same level. Total score average of the awareness of patient’s rights was 55.05 ± 3.37 which was at a good level. Diagram 1 has provided the information related to nurses awareness in relation with their rights and table 1 has indicated the way nurses have answered to the items of awareness questionnaire of patient’s rights.

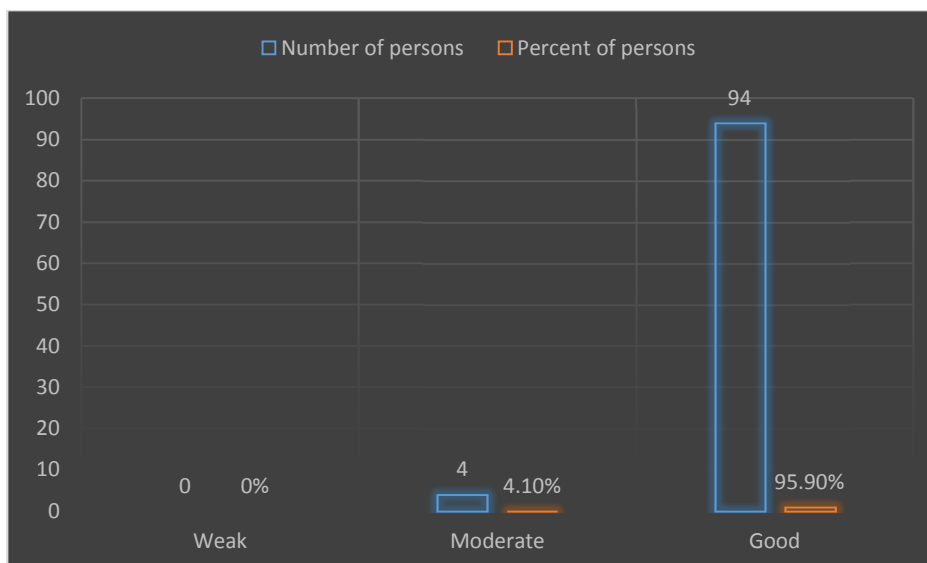


Diagram 1. Information related to the rate of nurses awareness of patients' rights

Table 1. The way of answering of nurses to the items of awareness questionnaire of patient's rights

Have you been informed about below items regarding the patient's rights?	Yes (percent)	No (percent)
Hospital staff must respect religious beliefs and... of patients.	96.9	3.1
Treatment should be done without the need to favoritism	91.8	8.2
In hospital, medical services should be provided immediately after admission.	91.8	8.2
Providing services to the elderly, children, and pregnant women in hospital should be done with kindness and attention to the wishes of patients.	93.9	6.1
Health services in hospitals should be provided without racial and sexual discrimination.	93.9	6.1
There should be more attention to the critically ill patients In hospital and they should be treated earlier.	92.9	7.1
In the absence of medical equipment and proper services in hospital, the patients should be transferred to another hospital without any hesitation.	84.7	15.3
There should be toilets particularly suited to patients in hospitals.	92.9	7.1
Hospital environment should have proper ventilation.	95.9	4.1
In hospital, patients should be able to access their records.	57.1	42.9
Reception in the hospital should explain to the patient about his legal rights.	84.7	15.3
Patients should be aware of their rights by explanations given on reception.	90.8	9.2
Hospital should guide poor patients to the aid unit in order to reduce costs.	95.9	4.1
Insurance regulations and contracted organizations in hospitals should be explained to the patient. 14.	90.8	9.2
Each of hospital clinical staffs (physicians and nurses) should introduce themselves to the patient.	88.8	11.2
In hospital, the way of treating the illness should be explained to the patient.	93.9	6.1
The way of access the doctor who is treating in hospital should be given to a person who is present with patient.	86.7	13.3
Patients should be trained with special trainings for continuing treatment at home after discharge.	90.8	9.2
After providing information to the patient, enough time should be given to the patient to decide.	89.8	10.2
The patient should have the right to accept or reject the proposed method for his treatment in hospital.	91.8	8.2
All information of patients should remain confidential in hospital.	94.9	5.1
Required facilities should be considered in order to protect the patient's privacy.	98	2
Someone at the hospital should be allowed to accompany the patient.	94.9	5.1
Patient should be able to complain in case of not obeying the patient's right.	94.9	5.1
Complaints handling systems in hospitals should inform patients about the outcome of their complaints.	90.8	9.2
The hospital should pay the damage (monetary) incurred the patient in shortest possible time.	88.8	11.2
Staffs in hospital should respect religious beliefs and ... of patients.	94.9	5.1
Patients should be aware of their rights.	90.8	9.2
Group medias should be involved in informing patients with their rights.	61.2	38.8

DISCUSSION

The results of the present study showed that the nurses' awareness rate is at a good level and a high percentage of patients have good knowledge about their rights. Ajami Ghale Rashidi et al, in a study on evaluating the relation of awareness of patient's rights with rate of respecting it in rehabilitation experts of Rehabilitation centers in Tehran showed that the awareness rate of patients' rights in 59.7% of experts were at a very good level [12]. Also, Hosseini et al, in their study in rehabilitation centers of the University of Welfare and Rehabilitation showed that 14.3% of them were at middle level of awareness and 53.6% were at good level of awareness towards the patient's bill of right [13]. But, Woogaroin his study states that the health staff have less awareness of patient's rights and there should be educational planning to promote the awareness in this field [14]. Also, evaluation of patient's rights awareness in other countries such as Mexico showed that Mexican medical knowledge towards patient's right is low [15]. Rezaei et al, in their study showed that the medical staff awareness of patient's right was at middle and weak level [16]. According to above researches, the medical staffs' awareness rate of patient's right is not in a good condition; the cause of this problem must be sought in academic period of employees. Because, there may be inadequate and incomplete training in this period due to the low level of knowledge [17-19]. One reason for different result of this study with other studies could be the emphasis of Ministry of Health on this issue [20].

The concept of natural law and human rights has been regarded for centuries and this is reflected in divine teachings of all the prophets of God in different ways and is considered as an advanced scientific and humanistic principle. Undoubtedly, every person has individual and social rights accepted by all human societies as a principle. But socially vulnerable groups have more specific rights. Patients are one of the most vulnerable social groups who are endangered whether physically and psychologically, socially and economically and this confirms the special attention of the international community of human rights to the concept of patient's rights. Hippocratic Oath, Maimonides liturgy and ethics of AghiliShirazi are ancient texts in which principles such as the need for giving priority to the interests of patient on physician and the principle of confidentiality is stressed [21].

Despite increasing awareness among nurses and other health care staff about patients' rights in recent years and following the international and national efforts and emphases in this case including the compilation and publication of patients' rights in Iran, the findings of some studies [11] showed the effect of various factors on compliance of this right. This confirms this issue that having knowledge by itself is not sufficient for observance of these rights. In fact, it can be inferred that although the findings of some studies suggested an association between nurses' knowledge and the way of respecting these rights, and whatever the nurses be informed better in this field, respecting this right will be more considered and executed [22]. In many cases, being aware of patients' rights is not associated with its observance due to the external confounding factors. Respecting patient's right need some requirements that in many cases is out of individual control of the nurse, physician or the patient. To emphasis this point, we see that however, the results of this study indicate a high level of nurses awareness of patient's right in teaching hospitals of Zahedan, but the results of other studies in one hand and observing realities in hospitals remind numerous negligence and ignoring the patients' rights [23]. Multi-sectoral collaboration along with people participation, service providers and policy makers and politicians are required to eliminate these problems.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study showed that awareness of nursing staff is at a good level and a high percentage of them have a high knowledge about patient's rights. The concept of patients' rights is an issue that still need to be discussed much and every step taken to identify and spread it can help patients to receive care based on humanistic and ethical rights.

Acknowledgement

The current study is a result obtained by a research plan in BA degree in nursing and obstetrics department in the University of Zahedan. We are hereby thankful to all of the participants in the study and also the officials and authorities of Zahedan medical sciences university who's generous and sincere helps greatly assisted us in data collection stages.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bateni SM, Sajadi Z, Hoseini SM. Patient's knowledge about patients' rights legislation. *Health information management*. 2011;485-489.
- [2] Herman HEGM. Patients' rights in the European Union: Cross-border care as an example of the right to health care. *The European Journal of Public Health*. Oxford Univ Press; 1997;7(suppl 3): 11-17.
- [3] Levinsky NG. Social, institutional, and economic barriers to the exercise of patients' rights. *New England Journal of Medicine*. Mass Medical Soc; 1996;334(8): 532-534.
- [4] Miandoab NY, Zare S, Shahrakipour M. Investigating the personnel's and student's perspectives about the ethical climate in hospitals of Zahedan. *International Journal of Pharmacy and Technology*. 2016;8(2): 12368-12378.
- [5] Özdemir MH, Ergöner AT, Sönmez E, Can İÖ, Salacin S. The approach taken by the physicians working at educational hospitals in Izmir towards patient rights. *Patient education and counseling*. Elsevier; 2006;61(1): 87-91.
- [6] Sasso L, Stievano A, Jurado MG, Rocco G. Code of ethics and conduct for European nursing. *Nursing Ethics*. SAGE Publications; 2008;15(6): 821-836.
- [7] Crisp J, Potter TC. *Perry's fundamentals of Nursing*. New York: Elsevier; 2005.
- [8] Badalamente M, Coffelt L, Elfar J, Gaston G, Hammert W, Huang J, et al. Measurement scales in clinical research of the upper extremity, part 1: general principles, measures of general health, pain, and patient satisfaction. *The Journal of hand surgery*. Elsevier; 2013;38(2): 401-406.
- [9] Altun I, Ersoy N. Undertaking the role of patient advocate: a longitudinal study of nursing students. *Nursing Ethics*. SAGE Publications; 2003;10(5): 462-471.
- [10] Mallik M. Advocacy in nursing—a review of the literature. *Journal of advanced nursing*. Wiley Online Library; 1997;25(1): 130-138.
- [11] Hooshmand A, Joolae S, Mehrdad N, Bahrani N. Nurses' information and their view points about patient's rights and practical facilitators in clinics. *Journal of hayat*. Journal of hayat; 2007;12(4): 57-66.
- [12] Ajami GRV, Foroughan M, Hosseini MA. The relationship between knowledge and observance of patient's rights in rehabilitation centers of tehran. *Journal of sabzevar university of medical sciences*. 2012;296-303.
- [13] Hosseini SA, Akbar-Fahimi N, Gharib M, Farzad M. Therapist and Client Awareness of Client's Rights. *Journal of Rehabilitation*. Journal of Rehabilitation; 2013;13(4): 28-36.
- [14] Woogara J. Patients' rights to privacy and dignity in the NHS. *Nursing Standard*. RCN Publishing Company Limited; 2005;19(18): 33-37.
- [15] López de la PXA. [Medical attitude and legal concepts about some patient rights]. *Revista de investigacion clinica; organo del Hospital de Enfermedades de la Nutricion*. 1994;47(1): 5-12.
- [16] Rezaee N, Ghaljeh M, Ghaljaei F, Rezaei N. Awareness of Patient Rights Charter In Nurses and Physicians of Zahedan University of Medical Sciences in 2009. *Scientific journal of forensic medicine*. 2011;241-246.
- [17] Arbabisarjou A, Zare S, Shahrakipour M, Hawoshki A, Arish N, Jahadpanah Y. Relationship between self-esteem and academic performance among students. *International Journal of Pharmacy and Technology*. 2016;8(2): 12263-12271.
- [18] Arbabisarjou A, Zare S, Shahrakipour M, Ghoreishinia G. The relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement motivation in university students. *International Journal of Pharmacy and Technology*. 2016;8(2): 12353-12360.
- [19] Arbabisarjou A, Zare S, Shahrakipour M, Ghoreishinia G. The relationship between academic achievement motivation and academic performance among medical students. *International Journal of Pharmacy and Technology*. 2016;8(2): 12272-12280.
- [20] Kalroozi F, Dadgari F, Zareiyan A. Patients' satisfaction from health care group in patient's bill of right observance. *Journal Mil Med*. Journal Mil Med; 2010;12(3): 143-148.
- [21] Parsapoor AR, Bagheri AR, Larijani B. Patient rights in Iran. *Med Ethics Hist*. 2009;27(special issue): 39-47.
- [22] Ersoy N, Altun Y, Beser A. Tendency of nurses to undertake the role of patient advocate. 1997.
- [23] Joolae S, Nikbakht-Nasrabadi A, Parsa-Yekta Z, Tschudin V, Mansouri I. An Iranian perspective on patients' rights. *Nursing Ethics*. SAGE Publications; 2006;13(5): 488-502.