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Patients' awareness of their rights in a developing country

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Summary

Aim: to determine the awareness of a regulation on patients' rights passed in 1998 in Turkey.

Methods: all hospitalized patients in the internal medicine and general surgery wards in three large hospitals during the study period were eligible for the study, which was performed in 2001 in the Denizli province, Turkey. The study group consisted of 166 patients. Data were collected during face-to-face interviews using a questionnaire.

Results: Only 9% of patients were aware of the regulation about patients' rights. Most patients were given equal access to health care (91%), benefitted from the capabilities of their selected healthcare institutions (86.7%), and their privacy was protected (86.1%). Those patients who stated that they had not received care in accordance with their rights identified the shortcomings as not receiving written (95.2%) or verbal (53%)

information from healthcare professionals, and the failure of healthcare personnel to introduce themselves (75.3%). On most occasions, the patients stated that they were not able to request services as stated in the PRR from healthcare professionals.

Conclusion: Few patients knew about the regulation on patients' rights, indicating a need for extensive education of patients and healthcare professionals.



Keywords

Patients'rights; Informed consent; Privacy; Patient access to records; Turkey



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