

## ARTICLE

# AWARENESS AND PATIENT'S RIGHTS CHARTER OBSERVANCE FROM THE PATIENTS' UNDERGOING SURGERY VIEWPOINT

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Patient's rights Charter is the defense of human rights to show respect and sufficient care of body and soul when he or she patient. Furthermore, operating room is one of the most stressful units for patients in which patient's rights observance is significant due to sensitivity of curative actions. So this study was conducted to determine the rate of awareness and patient's right observance charter in operating room from the viewpoint of patients' undergone surgery. **Materials and methods:** This study was descriptive and cross-sectional one which was conducted 478 patients from surgery wards after surgery in two education hospitals of Jahrom University of Medical Science in 2015. Data were collected, using the researcher-designed questionnaire involving demographics, awareness rate, and the rate of patient right observance charter information. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire was checked by the researcher. The questionnaire was completed using interview. We used SPSS 16 software for data analysis. **Finding:** The total mean of awareness and patient's rights observance were respecting  $17.42 \pm 5.03$  and  $25.21 \pm 1.95$  from the patients' viewpoint. The score of awareness was reported in a good level in 42.2% of patients but its observance was good in 31.4% of patients. **Conclusion:** Although the rate of patients' awareness was in a good level, the rate of observance patient rights was in a medium level. So, it is necessary to have done more research and education to improve patient rights observance in operating room.

## INTRODUCTION

Patients are one of the most susceptible social groups who are in danger physically, bodily, socially, economically that caused international assemblies paid special attention as the patient rights [1]. Today, patient rights is considered as a new topic in health sciences and clinical settings and is observed as a part of modern health care practice. In the other hand, patients are more aware of what health care professionals expect when they enter the health care setting [2]. So, their expectations have increased and they want to have active participation in curative decision-making [3]. World Health Organization knows the patient rights as a group of rights in which the people have to observe in the systems of health care providing. These rights include the right of suitable caring and curing with high quality, the right of having information, the right of private information, the right of intentional satisfaction, the right of free will, the right of benefiting health education, the right of complaining, and the right of loss compensation [4]. This organization published a detailed document in Amsterdam to improve patients' rights in Europe which representing a series of principles and strategies of patients' rights. These rules represent strategies to respect patients' rights and all of the countries must observe it [5]. In Iran, the health department of the ministry of health and medical education compiled and notified in 2002 [6]. Patients' rights observance improve the relation between patients and health professionals and increase their satisfaction and care quality. In the other hand, it reduces costs and the time of patients' hospitalization [7]. This necessitates that patients and health professionals to be acquainted and informed with the patient's rights. Furthermore, patient's rights mis observance causes patients' distrust and dissatisfaction toward health care professionals, increases costs and complains and decreases care quality [8].

The results of previous studies show that the rate of awareness and patients' right observance charter is different in various studies from patients' viewpoints. For example, Basiri Moghadam et al. the patients' awareness rate was reported good with 76.8% [1]. But in a study by Mossadegh this rate was reported poor [9]. In another study by Babamahmoodi et al. patients' rights charter was observed as 14.59% [10].

Based on the significance of the patients' rights and the results of various studies, actions should be taken into account to improve patient's rights and awareness in various units specially operating room. Operating room is one of the most stressful units for patients in which patient's rights observance is significant due to sensitivity of curative actions. In one hands this unit has specific features and patient is alone in this unit. In the other hand, most of the studies have been conducted in the other of health care units. So, the objective of the present study was to determine the awareness rate and patients' right observance from the viewpoint of patients undergone surgery in the operating rooms of Jahrom hospitals.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was a descriptive and cross-sectional one in which awareness rate and patients' rights observance charter from the viewpoint of patients undergone surgery in operating rooms of Jahrom hospitals in 2015. The samples of the study involved 478 undergone surgery patients who were selected by stratified sampling method. Inclusion criteria involved patients undergone surgery in operating room with at least 15 years old who were able to participate in the study. Exclusion criteria involved patients' unwillingness and lack of physical and psychological ability to participate in this study. We selected some

### KEY WORDS

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patients from each surgery and used a questionnaire for data collection. This questionnaire was completed by the researcher through interview of patients after releasing from hospital. This instrument involved three parts of 15 items. The first part was about demographic information [age, sex, education, occupation, surgery type]. The second part which was designed to measure the awareness rate of patient's rights involved 6 items. The scores domain was between 0-24. The scores average was classified into four levels: high [24-21], good [20-14], medium [13-7], and poor [6-0]. The third part which was designed to measure the rate of patient right observance involved 9 items with the scores domain of 0-36. The scores of this part were classified in three levels: desirable [36-27], medium [26-14], and undesirable [13-0]. The answers were based on the 5 points Likert scale ranging from 0-4 [0: never, 1: low, 2: medium, 3: high, 4: very high]. Validity of the study was approved by 10 Faculty members of Jahrom University of Medical Sciences, Faculty of nursing and paramedics. In order to investigate the reliability of the instrument, test-retest was used and Cronbach's alpha for awareness and patient's rights observance was 0.7 and 0.83 respectively. Data were analyzed, using SPSS 16 software. For determining the rate of awareness and patient's right observance, descriptive statistics, frequency tables, averages, and standard deviation.

## RESULTS

The results of the study showed that 52.5% of the patients were men and 47.5% were women. Their average age was  $38.85 \pm 19.68$ . 34.8% of the patients had no education, 29.9% were junior high school, 21.9% were high school, and 13.4% had college degree. In terms of occupation, 42.4% were housewives, 39.8% were self-employments, 6.8% were student, 5.7% were government staffs, and 5.3% were unemployment.

The total average of awareness and patient's rights observance score from the patients' viewpoint were  $17.42 \pm 5.03$  and  $25.21 \pm 1.94$  respectively. The results showed that 45.2% of patients had a good awareness related to patient's rights charter and 6.4% were poor. The rate of patients' rights observance (66.8%) was in a medium level and 31.4% of the patients evaluated desirable these rights [Table 1].

**Table 1:** absolute and relative frequency of awareness and patient's rights observance based on the classified scores

Patient's rights awareness	Frequency (percent)
High (24-21)	30(6.4%)
Good (20-14)	120(25.6%)
Medium (13-7)	212(45.2%)
Poor (6-0)	107(22.8%)
<b>Patient's rights observance</b>	
Desirable (36-27)	8(1.7%)
Medium (26-14)	306(66.8%)
Undesirable (13-0)	144(31.4%)

The most awareness was related to the items of the best method of surgery and anesthesia based on the patient's condition with the weighted mean of 2.812, the prevention of various infections transmission to the patient's body while and after surgery (2.842), availability to the physician and other members of curing group during hospitalization and after release (2.838). The most items of patients' rights observance in operating room was related to respectful behavior of curing team without attention to the racial and cultural elements with the weighted mean of 3.485 and keeping patient's privacy was 3.350. Presenting physician and surgery and anesthesia nursing before surgery and patient's participation in selecting anesthesia method were observed low with the weighted means of 1.723 and 1.887 respectively [Table 2].

**Table 2:** Frequency and weighted mean items of awareness and patient's rights observance.

No.	Patient's rights awareness Items	Percent					Weighted mean
		Never	Low	Medium	High	Very high	
1	Receiving necessary information from curing team about disease recognition and treatment.	17%	7%	18%	30%	25%	2.393
2	Ensuring of patient's medical records confidentiality	20%	8%	12%	28%	29%	2.390
3	Performing the best method of surgery and anesthesia based on	10%	6%	15%	26%	41%	2.812

	the patient's condition						
4	Prevention of various infection transmission to the patient's body while and after surgery	10%	6%	13%	26%	42%	2.842
5	Identification of curing team members	8.1%	9%	18%	29%	33%	2.713
6	Availability to the physician and the other members of curing group during hospitalization after release	9%	3%	15%	34%	36%	2.838
No.	Patient's rights awareness						
1	Respectful behavior of curing team without attention to the racial and cultural elements	0%	0%	6%	36%	56%	3.485
2	Keeping patient's privacy	0%	1%	6%	46%	45	3.350
3	Providing a tranquil place by curing team	1%	3%	17%	36%	41%	3.136
4	Providing an opportunity to speak with the surgeon and anesthesia physician before surgery	15%	11%	20%	25%	26%	2.353
5	Patient's participation in selecting anesthesia method	31%	12%	16%	15%	24%	1.887
6	Take the necessary actions to reduce patient's pain before and after surgery	4.1%	3%	19%	49%	23%	2.840
7	Presenting physician and surgery and anesthesia nursing before surgery	35%	12%	13%	21%	16%	1.723
8	Receiving necessary information about the process of actions during surgery from physician and curing team	16%	6%	24%	33%	18%	2.302
9	Patient's medical records confidentiality by physician and curing team in operating room	1%	1%	29%	28%	38%	3.010

## DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that the awareness level of most patients about their rights was good (45.2%). Awareness level is different in various studies. For example, in a study by Sharifi et al. (2012) showed that most patients had low awareness about their rights in Kermanshah, Iran [11]. This awareness in a study by Mastaneh et al. (2013) was medium (56.4%). Another study by Ravaghi et al. (2016) in Tehran, showed that 83.4% of patients were aware of their rights [8]. In the study of Basiri Moghadam et al. (2011) which was conducted in Gonabad, Iran, most of the patients had a high level awareness about their rights [1]. However, in the study of Mossadegh Rad et al (2011) in Isfahan, this rate was poor [9]. Furthermore, in a study by Sharif et al. (2012) in Kermanshah, showed that the high level of patients' education and duration of hospitalization increases the rate of patients' awareness about their rights [11].

Due to specific features of operating room related to the other units and the low information of patients about this unit, they try to gain necessary information about their surgeries before entering operating room. As stated in the previous studies, due to ministry of health's emphasis on the patients' rights and its specific significance in clinical governance, patients are more aware of their rights compared to the past. The results of this study also showed that from the most patients, viewpoint, the rate of patients' rights observance was in the medium level. In a study by sharifi et al. patient's right observance in 72.4% of the Kermanshah hospital was in the medium level [11]. In the study of Basiri Moghadam et al. this rate was in desirable level [1]. Patients had the most awareness about "performing the best method of surgery and anesthesia based on the patient's condition", "prevention of various infections transmission to the patient's body while and after surgery", and "availability to the physician and the other members of curing group during hospitalization an after release". In the study of Bokaei et al. (2011), the rate of patients' awareness related to availability to curing group during hospitalization and release was high which was compatible with the results of this study. However, most patients had low awareness about their selection right of curing method [13]. This difference may be due to the fact that all of the participants of this study were the patients undergone surgery and because of the specific features of surgery their sensitivities were high and their expectations about selection right of curing method were high. So, they had higher awareness. The most right which was observed from the patients' viewpoint were "respectful behavior of curing team without attention to the racial and cultural" and "keeping patient's privacy". In the study by Bokaei et al., the most observed right was related to the respectful behavior of curing teams toward patients which was compatible with the result of this study [13]. Norian et al. [14] Nayeri [15], and Aghajani [16] reported the physical privacy of the most patients in a high level. This is justifiable according to Iran's culture and religion. The least observed right in the operating room was related to "presenting physician and surgery nursing to the patient. Furthermore, in Hoseinean's study, the least observed right was related to the "identification of curing team and setting" which is compatible with the result of this study [17]. In the present study, "the patient's participation in choosing anesthesia method" was one of the items which was observed low. This right was observed low in Roudi's et al. study, too. This issue maybe as the result of patriarchy features of curing teams which they think due to having more information about medical issues they have the right to decide instead of patients [18].

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results, patients' awareness was in a good level. However, its observance rate in choosing anesthesia method by the patients and identification of the members of curing team was not in a desirable level. So, for improving the rate of patient's rights observance in operating room, it is recommended that more researches to be conducted in operating room especially for the identification of the obstacles of this right and suitable strategies to facilitate its observance.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no competing interests in relation to the work.

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## FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

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