A Persian perspective on patient rights:
A qualitative study

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2007
Abstract

**Background**: Patients are one of the most vulnerable social groups which their particular situation makes their rights more sensitive in health care system. They fully relegate themselves to the health system and trust to the health professionals but unfortunately they encounter problems from the time entering hospital. This makes them more vulnerable and increases the risk of their rights being neglected. In such a context the existence of tools and strategies for assuring patients rights advocacy, seems to be necessary. To designing and establishing these tools participation of all stakeholders is important and vital according to WHO’s recommendations. The first step in this direction is entering to the world of the particular groups involving in patients’ rights practice in their daily activities and hearing their voices. The aim of this study is to explore patients’ rights practice in patients’, patients’ companions’, nurses’ and physicians lived experiences with patients’ rights practice.

**Methods**: This is a phenomenological study based on Van Mannen’s approach to investigate a shared experience from different perspectives. Data was gathered via semi-structured interviews with 9 patients, 3 patient’s companions, 8 nurses and 5 physicians in a central teaching hospital in Tehran. The transcribed interviews were analyzed through the process of Van Mannen’s thematic analysis.

**Findings**: Five themes and eleven sub-themes were captured from analyzing the participants’ lived experiences. Holistic care was the main theme as the meaning of patients’ rights practice. This was presented by the sub themes including: patient focused care, compassion, effective communication,
informed participation, advocacy, and meeting patients’ basic needs. The theme awareness of rights included sub themes like public awareness of rights and health professional awareness of rights. Adequacy of resources was the other theme presented with human resources, basic facilities as well as vital supplies. Accountability and integrate rights of patients and health care providers were two other main themes emerging in this study.

**Conclusion:** patients’ rights monitoring tools can be realistic and usable when be based on all stakeholders’ expectations and needs. The findings of this study can reflect the meaning of patients’ rights from the patients’, patients companions’, nurses and physicians’ perspectives and through their lived experiences. This can be in use for the policy makers who are interested in considering their main partners perspectives in revising patients’ rights monitoring tools.

**Key words:** lived experience, patients’ rights, phenomenology