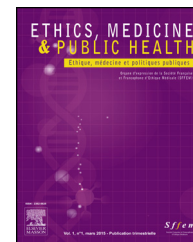




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PRACTICES AND CONCEPTS

Informed consent for shared decision-making in Lebanese psychiatric care



Le consentement éclairé pour un processus de décision partagée en soins psychiatriques au Liban

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Lebanon;
Mental competence;
Psychiatry

Summary

Background. – Quality approach within a mental health facility is essential to enhance safety of care. Among the determinants of quality of care are: patient participation, assessment methods, and appreciate vulnerability.

Methods. – A survey with psychiatrists using a questionnaire and semi-directive interviews aiming to determine the assimilation of the concept of informed consent in psychiatric care and identification of the obstacles that might hinder care. This was coupled with the auditing of patients' medical records in the Lebanese psychiatric care centres.

Results & discussion. – Data analysis revealed a discrepancy of the value of the human person as potential patient. Our study showed: (i) a misunderstanding of the principle of autonomy endorsed by the marginalization practiced on the vulnerable patients, (ii) absence of a written form of informed consent, (iii) absence of feasible capacity assessment policies and a complete

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reliance on clinical judgment and/or tools not adapted to the Lebanese patient, (iv) absence of protective legislations or guidelines that target psychiatric patients, (v) a lack of doctor–patient information exchange and follow-up.

Conclusion. – Informed consent can be challenging in psychiatric disorders. We have moved to a new concept of the Human Person being capable of making his/her own decisions. Vulnerability is rejected in the current practice.

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MOTS CLÉS

Capacité
décisionnelle ;
Qualité de soins ;
Consentement
éclairé ;
Liban ;
Compétence
mentale ;
Psychiatrie

Résumé

Introduction. – L'approche qualité au sein d'une structure de santé mentale est essentielle pour renforcer la sécurité des soins. Parmi les déterminants de la qualité des soins, nous citons : la participation du patient, les méthodes d'évaluation ainsi que l'appréciation et l'accueil de la vulnérabilité.

Méthode. – Une enquête menée avec les psychiatres libanais utilise un questionnaire et un entretien semi-directif dans le but d'évaluer l'assimilation du concept de consentement éclairé en psychiatrie. De même, l'étude a identifié les obstacles qui peuvent entraver et influencer la prestation de soins. Cette enquête a été associée à un audit des dossiers des patients soignés dans les centres psychiatriques libanais.

Résultat & discussion. – L'analyse des données révèle une disparité dans la perception de la valeur de la personne humaine qui n'est que « le patient potentiel ». Notre étude montre : (i) une confusion au niveau du principe d'autonomie associé à la marginalisation du patient vulnérable dans le monde réel de la pratique médicale, (ii) l'absence d'une culture de traçabilité au niveau du consentement éclairé, (iii) l'absence d'un protocole d'évaluation de la compétence mentale et beaucoup d'attachement au jugement clinique et/ou aux tests neuropsychologiques non adaptés sur le plan social et culturel, (iv) l'absence d'un cadre législatif protecteur ou de protocoles qui concernent le patient psychiatrique, (v) des difficultés majeures dans la communication entre soignant et soigné ainsi qu'une insuffisance dans le suivi offert.

Conclusion. – Le consentement éclairé demeure un dilemme en psychiatrie. La médecine doit s'acculturer avec un nouveau concept de la personne humaine capable de faire ses propres choix. La vulnérabilité semble rejetée dans la pratique actuelle.

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Overview

The implementation of a quality approach within a mental health facility is essential to enhance the safety of care. Evaluation of performance is today a major component in the development of any profession. It involves indispensable qualifications combining a competence defined on evidence-based medicine to the concern of respecting the patient in its body and spirit.

With the recognition of new rights for patients, the physician–patient relationship is experiencing rapid change. "Care of the twenty-first century needs to become patient-centred... a new culture of decision-making, transparency, communication, and patient participation in the world of health care" is a must [1]. Therefore, the determinants of quality of care are:

- participation of the patient;
- medical excellence;
- methods of assessment and improvement;
- technical excellence; and
- the embracement of mental and physical vulnerable patients as fragile [2].

Considering that these determinants of health care quality are cumulative and cannot be limited to one, we proceeded to determine whether those concepts are respected by the Lebanese psychiatric community and assess the quality of medical services provided in this regard. In addition to this major goal, we tried to:

- evaluate the principle of autonomy of the mentally vulnerable patient in order to neutralize paternalism that is still influencing the Lebanese health care practice [3];
- identify and discuss the major international and national legislations;
- analyze the practice of informed consent in psychiatric patients;
- discuss the elements of informed consent, namely the complications and risks of particular therapies (anti-psychotic, anti-depressant, electric shock, deep brain stimulation, etc.);
- promote the culture of writing and traceability as the most secure language;
- prior identification of the risk of each treatment option and train to discuss with the patient, his proxy/surrogate or person of trust as defined by the Lebanese Law of 2004

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