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Research Article

PATIENT'S AWARENESS ABOUT PATIENT RIGHTS¹Nadia Batool, ²Sajida Abdul Rashid, ³Tahira Shaheen¹Head Nurse, Punjab Institute of Mental Health, Lahore, Email ID: nadiabatool899@gmail.com²Head Nurse, Punjab Institute of Mental Health, Lahore, Email ID: sajidatariq888@gmail.com³Nursing Instructor, Post Graduate College of Nursing Punjab, Lahore,
Email ID: ushnamna@gmail.com

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Abstract:

Objectives: To assess the level of awareness of patients' rights from the patient's point of view. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted on 100 admitted patients at Mayo Hospital Lahore from 1 January to March 2019. Data was collected using a self-structured questionnaire that evaluated their awareness regarding patient's right. **Discussion:** The awareness regarding the patient rights, associated factors and their utilization by the health care professionals was evaluated by a mean knowledge score. **Results:** About 86.0% of patients had no idea about the existence of any patient rights charter. The mean knowledge score of patient rights in this study was 9.2 ± 2.8 out of 14. Level of education influenced the knowledge score. The majority (92.0%) of respondents stated that the healthcare professionals did not informed them about the available treatment modalities. **Conclusions:** Majority of the patients lacked adequate awareness regarding their rights. Health care professionals ought to be more sensitive to practice knowledge sharing between the patients and the attendants so that coherent decision making can be designed regarding the management plan.

Key words: patient rights, awareness, knowledge score.

Corresponding author:**Nadia Batool,**

Head Nurse,

Punjab Institute of Mental Health, Lahore,

Email ID: nadiabatool899@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION:

Every patient must be protected through their basic rights because of their susceptibility in the health care system [1]. Patient rights can ensure an ideal health care and to promote ethics in clinical practice [2]. Compliance with the patient rights is considered a serious issue for the defining quality of care [3], [4]. Patient rights have the potential to protect the self-respect and contributing to the management plan by shared decision making between doctors and patients. [5]. Therefore every patient must possess optimum orientation about their rights. Every country has formulated policies and laws after United Nations declared the Human Rights Act in 1948 [6]. The World Health Organization has also endorsed that socio cultural based legislations should be formulated by each country regarding patient rights group. [7] For example Egypt. [8] Despite all the efforts sporadic misconduct and lack of interpretation has been reported between doctors and patients [9]. Some Egyptian studies have been conducted in this regard [10–14] but still there is a lack of evidence. This feedback mechanisms should be made part and parcel in the health systems for ensuring equity [15]. Therefore, the aim of this study is to evaluate the

awareness of patient rights, associated factors and their utilization by the health care professionals was evaluated by a mean knowledge score.

METHODS:

This cross-sectional study was conducted on the patients admitted at Mayo Hospital Lahore from 1 January to March 2019. Data was collected using a self-structured questionnaire that evaluated their awareness regarding patient right. Critically ill patients were excluded, the inclusion criteria being fully conscious and oriented, age above 18 years, and consent to participate. The total of 113 patients were approached of whom 9 refused to participate and 4 patients had a disturbed conscious level therefore excluded. Data was collected on the basis of the questionnaire used in previous studies for the ease of manipulation [14, 16, 17, 18, 19]. A pilot study was conducted before the commencement and necessary modifications were made in the content. Knowledge was evaluated by 16 of which 2 questions were general and the 14 were specific that addressed the common factors therefore the total knowledge score ranged between 0-14 [20]. Data was analyzed using (SPSS) version 20.

Table.1 Socio demographic details of the participants

Age (Years)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
20-29	24	12
30-39	36	18
40-49	52	26
50-59	68	34
>60	20	10
Sex		
Male	156	78
Female	44	22
Qualification		
Primary Education	122	56
Secondary Education	48	24
Higher Secondary Education	26	13
Bachelors/Masters	14	7
Occupation		
Daily Wagers	124	62
Private Business	62	31
Government Service	14	07
Monthly Salary in PKR		
<25,000	104	52
25,000 -50,000	68	34
>50,000	28	14
Marital Status		
Unmarried	108	54
Married	76	38

Divorced/Widowed	16	08
Residence		
Rural	78	78
Urban	22	22

Table.2 Awareness of patient rights by the participants

Clauses	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Have you heard about the patient right charter?		
Yes	100	100
No	0	0
Who do you heard it from?		
Doctors	20	20
Nurses	22	22
Friends and Family	26	26
Media	32	32
The right of access to useful medical services available in hospital irrespective to gender, age, religion?		
Yes	91	91
No	09	09
The right to be informed about the rights and responsibilities in a comprehensible way?		
Yes	82	82
No	18	18
The right to receive empathetic and dignified care round the clock?		
Yes	92	92
No	08	08
The right of maintaining privacy during any clinical examination?		
Yes	73	73
No	27	27
The right of confidentiality?		
Yes	77	77
No	23	23
The right to related information and informed consent?		
Yes	79	79
No	21	21

The right to of signing informed consent before any medical procedure? Yes No	84 16	84 16
The right to accept or refuse to participation in any research activity without being considered non-cooperative? Yes No	67 33	67 33
The right to have a clean and healthy environment? Yes No	100 0	100 0
The right to be educated about precautions and cost burden? Yes No	96 04	96 04
The right of choice of care? Yes No	88 12	88 12
The right to know the names of ones involved in patient care? Yes No	59 41	59 41
The right to participate in decision making about management plan? Yes No	61 39	61 39
Register a complaint/grievance against any misconduct and error? Yes No	94 06	94 06

RESULTS:

On the basis of the above statistics, it was seen that almost all 100% of the respondents had heard about the patient rights, the main source of their knowledge was media 32%, 91% stated that patients have a right of access to all available treatment facilities in the hospital irrespective of their caste, color, creed or religion, 82% said that every patient has the right to be informed about it rights and obligations during hospital stay, 92% said that it is the patient right to be provided with the empathic care round the clock in a convenient manner, 73 % said every patient possess a right to maintain privacy during clinical examinations and 77% agreed with the right of confidentiality. 79% affirmed with the right of informed consent and 84% with signing the consent form, 67% not be considered

uncooperative if refusing a research study, 100 % demanded to be provided with a clean and healthy environment, 96% to know the treatment cost, 88% with the choice of care, 59% with inquiring the name of the treating doctors and staff, 61% with sharing their input in the management plan and 94 % knew when and to whom the complaint is to be registered about any misconduct or error.

DISCUSSION:

The findings of this study indicated that almost all (100%) of the patients had heard about (100%) patient rights but they were unaware that a proper charter existed for it. This percentage was nonetheless higher from any other study like Abou Zeina et al. [13] and Ghanem et al. [14], who found that 27% of patients in

Alexandria Main University Hospital and 53% of patients in Matrouh General Hospital were not knowledgeable about the charter of patient rights. Almost 20% patients got their information from the doctors, while 22% got their information from nurses, 26% heard it from the friends and family and 32% said that media sources helped them. This was identical to the findings observed by Habib and AlSiber [21] who conducted a study in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and reported that doctors and nurses were the main source of information about patient rights. This was in agreement to Abou Zeina *et al.* [13] where the mass media constituted the main source of patients' knowledge (89.4%). The maximum awareness score of participants regarding their rights was 14 and the overall mean awareness scores by patients in Mayo Hospital Lahore was 9.2 ± 2.8 . Although almost all patients knew about the charter of patient rights, they were aware about their general rights, particularly some rights more than others. This might be due to the fact that some rights were included in the treatment process, so patients were familiar with them. Most of the patients knew about their right to obtain the most appropriate medical services available in the hospital facilities, to be respected by the health team, to have privacy during examinations, to assure confidentiality of their data and the right to know the identity/name of the treating doctor them. These results were comparable with a study conducted in Iran by Bazmi *et al.* [22]. In the current study, the poorest awareness of the patients was about their right to be know the identity of the treating doctors and nurses. 88% stated that did not inform them about the available treatment modalities before starting the management plan. These results were much higher than those observed by Ducinskiene *et al.* [26] who reported that 53.8% of the medical personnel in Lithuania did inform their patients about their job title and names This can be justified by the patient load, numerous referrals from all parts of the province and shortage of healthcare professionals in the ER settings at the Mayo Hospital Lahore leading to weak patient doctor communication. [14] In our study, education played a key role in creating awareness, as seen in Iranian study [28]. In developing countries, males enjoyed more liberty to access information than females as found in our study. Similarly iurban people had better understanding of to different aspects of the health system leading to better scoring also documented by a study conducted in Bangladesh [29].

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