

Abstract

Original Article

Human Rights and Health Services: Results from a case study of Cyprus

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Abstract

Background: It has been observed that health services provided to certain patients in Cyprus do not fully meet their human rights.

Objective: This study was conducted to identify the main shortcomings of the Health System in Cyprus.

Methodology: The relevant administrative decisions of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Cyprus between years 2007 and 2014 were studied. The four most frequently occurring categories were selected: a) Triage in the emergency departments, b) Counseling the mentally ill, c) In-house treatment of children, d) A comprehensive approach to treating the chronically ill. Interviews were then conducted with 15 senior executives having decision making authority, to examine their understanding and proposed solutions of said issues through a questionnaire based on the conclusions of the Ombudsman. Descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis was used along with MS Excel 2013.

Results: All respondents stressed that there is no comprehensive treatment of chronically ill patients. 92% believed that a triage is necessary in the emergency departments. 81.8% considered child treatment at home to be unsatisfactory. 80% considered psychological support of mentally ill patients and their families to be essential.

Conclusions: The paper concludes that implementing guidelines in accordance with international best practices, the establishment of at-home treatment and nursing facilities, counseling the mentally ill in a way that promotes their social integration and occupational rehabilitation, ongoing education of health professionals along with relevant education of the community and the broad application of triage in the emergency departments will all contribute to delivering health services more effectively.

Keywords: Cyprus, health services, patient rights