

Patient safety

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Patient Safety One of the fundamental causes of medical errors is the lack of patient's knowledge of the process and consequences of the treatment. With no knowledge of treatment, patients are susceptible to taking expired medicines, avoiding the medical tests or showing ignorance or indifference towards the results, going to the hospitals with insufficient or inadequate facilities, avoiding follow-up care, attaining unexpected results of surgery. FDA conducted a research to determine the fatal errors of medication experienced in the years between 1993 and 1998 (Stoppler, 2011). Among the errors identified, the most common error that was the cause of 41 per cent of all fatal errors of medication was poor administration of inadequate medicine dosage, while 16 per cent of the medication errors were related to the prescription of inappropriate drug and use of false administration route. Lack of consideration of the patient's age was also found to be a potential error as older patients were found to be more sensitive to the treatments as compared to the younger ones.

According to Amalberti et al. (2005) five systemic barriers that hinder the provision of ultra-safe care to the patients are the requirement to restrain the workers' discretion, the requirement to limit the autonomy of workers, the requirement to convert from the mindset of a craftsmanship to the mindset of other equivalent actors, the requirement for the arbitration of senior leadership in order to improve the strategies directed at the enhancement of safety, and the requirement to make the system simpler. In addition to that, three unique issues confront the healthcare system that reduce the safety. These issues include innumerable risks among the medical expertise, intricacy of defining the error, and the third issue covers the structural constraints that include but are not limited to chronic limitation

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of staff, teaching role and the demand of public.

AHRQ (2004) suggests five measures for the patients using which, they can enhance their safety. They are as follows:

1. Patients should feel free to consult the doctors to clarify their doubts. It is advisable for them to choose the doctor they feel comfortable interacting with. Taking a friend or relative will boost the patient's confidence in the process.
2. Patients should keep a list of all medicines they take. This will help the patient give a complete idea to the doctor about his/her situation and the doctor would be better able to guide the patient on the precautions and dosage as per the need of the hour.
3. Patients should be eager to know the results of their reports. A patient should clarify the time he/she can expect the results to arrive and should approach the doctor at the right time for that. The patient should ask the doctor whether the results are fine or there is a problem.
4. The patient should seek the doctor's opinion regarding the best hospital in the area that can address his/her need. The patient should make sure that he/she understands the follow-up care instructions before leaving the healthcare center.
5. The patient should seek information about the consequences of surgery, if required. Preferably, the patient should tend to know how the surgery will be performed.

References:

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