

# Medical malpractice in pakitan essay



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Roll Number: 2014-02-0433 Name: Mohammad Mudassar Javed Course: SS-100 Instructor: Razia Waseem (sec 1) 13th May 2011 Medical malpractice in Pakistan “ Medical malpractice is defined as professional negligence by act or omission by a health care provider in which care provided deviates from accepted standards of practice in the medical community and causes injury or death to the patient, with most cases involving medical error” (Medical Malpractice).

Although, doctors are solely held responsible for any medical malpractice in Pakistan’s hospitals, but other factors such as the role of the hospital administration towards that medical error, the pharmaceutical companies and ignorance of the patient himself should be considered before passing on the blame to the doctors. Before putting the blame on any specific person or area for medical negligence let us first consider the position of Pakistan.

Pakistan being a third world country does not have enough resources to improve its health care system and with the ongoing war on terror and disputes with neighboring countries, Pakistan cannot afford to reallocate its expenditure from defense to any other sector. The same can be said about the health sector of Pakistan to which only 0.7% of the GDP was allocated in recent years. (Pakistan – Past, Present and Future) With the government’s failure to provide better health facilities and increased awareness about health among people; a large gap has been created between the supply and demand of health facilities.

To shorten this gap, private sector has stepped in and has been somewhat successful in improving the health facilities in Pakistan. Private sector has

played a huge part in improving health facilities in Pakistan. This has been done by building new hospitals, using latest technology and increasing the doctor's salaries. Although, great work has been done in the past decade to improve the overall health position in Pakistan but what underlines this fact is that the number of incidents of medical malpractice has greatly increased, especially in private hospitals.

This is a major cause of concern and should be stopped by implementing certain measures This essay is going to highlight how the negligence on the part of hospital administration in handling their staff, the pharmacy inside hospital leads to the death of patients. Furthermore, it is going to discuss how a pharmaceutical company is motivated by profits, hence, playing with the lives of the patients. Finally, it is going to discuss how the patient themselves contribute to medical malpractice in Pakistan.

By giving logical arguments this essay is going to conclude that doctors are not only responsible for medical malpractice in Pakistan, but it is a combination of all the factors mentioned above which leads to a patient's death. The essay will conclude by saying that medical malpractice is increasing day by day and should be stopped by imposing certain measures. Before discussing the negligence of hospital administration let us discuss the responsibility of the hospitals. Hospitals whether private or public have a responsibility on themselves, that is, to provide efficient medical service to humanity.

They can provide efficient medical service to humans only if they have a capable administration. If this administration does not perform its duty with

responsibility, medical malpractice could creep in, so hospitals administration can be held responsible not for their own negligence but also for negligence of their employees. Pakistan hospitals are not run by efficient administration. A hospital's medical staff consists of licensed physicians and other licensed health care providers, such as nurses, physician's assistants, and nurse practitioners.

In hiring its medical staff, hospitals should make sound inquiries into an applicant's education, training and licensing but sadly such is not the case in Pakistan where such jobs are given freely and not without the required consideration. Any person working in the hospital should have a proper background check which includes their education, their previous record both criminal and medical, but this is rarely done. They do not realize that hiring untrained staff or inappropriate person for the job could lead to death of patient. The same happened with a 3 year old girl Imanae Malik.

Although she had a minor burn on her hand, it was not something serious. Instead of receiving treatment on her hand she was given some lethal medicine injection which brought her life to an end (Imanae Malik Killed by Doctors Hospital Lahore, Pakistan). Hospital administration is not only responsible for their staff but is also responsible for the pharmacy that is located inside the hospital. Although it has been given to someone on a contract basis, there should be a check on what the pharmacy is selling. The price and expiration date of the medicine should be checked, but sadly this is not being done in Pakistan.

As a result there is an increase in the number of cases of medic malpractice. This was found true in the case of Imanae Malik where it was found that pharmacy in Dr. Hospital sold expired drugs. (Imanae Malik Killed by Doctors Hospital Lahore, Pakistan) They were subsequently banned from selling medicine so it can be said that it was not only the doctor's fault but the administration as well. The facilities here in Pakistan are not adequate to treat a patient successfully especially in public hospitals where the demand for medical health care is high.

There are not even that many hospitals beds available to accommodate such number of patients. Although private hospitals have come to the rescue but most of the Pakistani population cannot afford it as they live below the poverty line. The charges of private hospitals are very high so people prefer to go to public or civil hospitals where they are forced to stand in long lines and facilities are also not up to international standards. In public hospitals there is a shortage of doctors, so the ratio of patient to doctor is very high and more often than not the doctors are nable to attend to these patients. There are not enough nurses to see such a large number of patients. Even if there are nurses they are not fully trained and often cause mixing error. Mixing error takes place when the medical staff such as nurses mixes the medication of one patient with the other. This may lead to serious problems and can even lead to death. Other than this there is no proper documentation in Pakistan's hospitals. Documentation is essential regarding each and every detail e. g. the number of visits made to the doctor and the dates, the various reports of patients.

The absence of any such documentation leads to many errors as a proper follow up is mandatory and if the hospital would not keep record of all this then effective treatment cannot take place. If the patient has been prescribed a certain course of medicine and there is no previous record of that. This can lead the patient to repeat the course which might have serious side effects. So doctors are not responsible for malpractice in Pakistan, it includes hospital administration as well which monitor the facilities provided inside the hospital such as medicine, nurses, ward boy, and finally documentation.

Failure in providing any of these to proper international standard results in loss of health. Other than blaming doctors or hospital administration, pharmaceutical are also to be blamed for medical malpractice in Pakistan. It occurs when patient takes some medicine to improve his or health, but the medicine rather than improving the health of the patient further deteriorates and causes other medical problems. Again the doctor is blamed that he did not gave the relevant medicine but this might not be the case. The pharmaceutical company in Pakistan often makes drugs of substandard quality.

They prioritize generating profits over the health of the patient. An article published in Dawn news stated that according to the World Health Organization, Pakistan is the third largest counterfeit drug producer in the world, responsible for a 13.3% share of the global production of spurious medicine. (Dawn) The reason behind Pakistan not being able to supply standard quality drugs is negligence of the companies. In order to reduce

their cost they compromise on the quality of the drug and hence play with the life of the patient.

To increase their profits pharmaceutical companies not only reduce their cost but sometimes they don't even inform the physician of the drugs side effects. The pharmaceutical companies in order to improve their sales make several contracts with the doctors and hospitals. They do this by signing deals with private hospitals and doctors. As a result only their drugs are prescribed and not the ones that is the best for the patient. This is an exceptionally immoral practice and this is one of the main reasons why medical malpractice is so common in Pakistan.

Hospital administration and pharmaceutical companies contribute a lot to medical malpractice but one would be surprised to know that the patient himself is also a major contributor to medical malpractice in Pakistan. They contribute by not going to the doctor and even if he or she goes to the doctor they do not follow his instructions properly. A patient often ignores a minor pain and rather than going to the doctor he or she bears that pain considering it as a minor niggle in the body and believes that with time it will go away, but more often than not this is not the case.

This results in increase in the pain and if the person has some sort of disease or a serious problem it starts to exacerbate and until the time he goes to the doctor the problem might have reached to a stage where the doctor might not be useful. Even if it is not too late and the patient reaches the doctor at the right time, the prescription written by the doctor is not fully followed, for

example the doctor advises the patient to follow the course for five days and revisit him, but this does not happen.

The patient gets fit in three days and leaves the medicine. As a result the patient has not fully recovered from his or her illness and the same disease attacks him again with much more venom. So it is the patient's fault not the doctor's. Another way how patients themselves contribute to medical malpractice is by using their own methods to cure a disease. This happens because the people of Pakistan are illiterate. A recent published article states that 45% of the population of Pakistan is illiterate (Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan). They do not have the awareness of health care. Rather than going to the hospital they rely on their old traditional methods to cure the disease. As a result, when the case comes to the doctors it is too late. The people go on spreading a negative word of mouth that it is the doctor's fault but in reality if the patient had referred to the doctor on time the story would have been different. Hence, it can be proved that it is also the negligence of the patient himself that contributes towards medical malpractice in Pakistan.

Let's now proceed to doctors. Being a doctor was once a noble profession where only people who wished to serve would learn to practice this profession but now because of the prestige and wealth associated with being a doctor, they by time are becoming more insincere. They are practicing this profession for all the wrong reasons and that is why they are negligent towards their patients. Their carelessness results in a human error and thus either takes the life of a patient or indulges him in other diseases.



This casualness can be seen in their writing as the patient is often unable to read it. Thus, it becomes a huge problem once a written prescription reaches a pharmacy as the pharmacist might read it in a different way and sell the wrong medicine. Not only there is a reading error sometimes there is a writing error as well. In negligence, doctors themselves write the wrong prescription to the patient and hence the patient suffers. Their slackness could also be seen by the fact that they do not give the due time to their patient resulting in many diseases gone unnoticed.

If the doctor had given right time at the initial stages of the treatment and caught that disease at that point, the patient could have been well off but that is not that case. The general attitude of the doctors has changed a lot as now money and other fringe benefits have crept in. Nowadays, doctors aim to maximize their wealth, roam around the world in the form of benefits. These are the things doctors are looking for no the overall welfare of society. So they are the ones who should be blamed for any medical malpractice occurring in Pakistan. However one has to think that they are humans.

In order to provide their family basic necessities of life, they have to earn money. As explained by the Maslow's hierarchy of needs one needs food, clothes, shelter for survival. This what the doctors are doing, making money for their survival. (Cherry, Kendra) The emergence of private medical colleges has further deteriorated the situation and increase in the number of cases of medical malpractice. In a country where politicians are roaming around with fake degrees, one would not be surprised to see doctors with fake degrees . The recent incident with the arrest of six doctors including Dr. Mubeen Akhter and Dr.

Syed Salahuddin proves that there are fake doctors practicing in hospitals. (Arafat) They are the ones who create a wrong impression of the doctors and let people believe that doctors are the only one responsible for the loss of their loved ones. Both the government and private hospital administration should enquire about the doctor's degree and experience before appointing him. This would certainly lead to decrease in medical malpractice in Pakistan. As discussed earlier it is the negligence of the doctors, hospital administration, and the pharmaceutical companies. This is because of a weak judicial system in Pakistan.

Since there is no trial on the negligence of the doctors, hospital administration staff, the element of responsibility gets diminished and these personnel become care free thus increasing the chances of any medical error. So it can be stated that a weak judicial system indirectly contributes towards medical malpractice in Pakistan. So it can be concluded that doctors are not the only one responsible for medical malpractice in Pakistan. Before blaming the doctor's one should enquire if it is really the fault of doctors or there are some other people to be blamed such as hospital administration and pharmaceutical companies.

The issue is not that who is responsible for medical malpractice. The issue is that the incidents of patients losing their lives due to negligence of all the factors mentioned above are increasing and should be stopped. The cases cannot be prevented but can be reduced to some extent by imposing certain measures. These measures include forming government regulatory bodies to keep a check on hospitals that they are hiring trained staff and doctors. Government should increase the spending on its health care. An independent <https://assignbuster.com/medical-malpractice-in-pakitan-essay/>

committee should be formed which take cares of the drugs entering in the market.

More awareness should be created amongst the people going to the doctors rather than practicing their own traditional methods. Certain laws should be passed stating strict punishment for the person whoever is responsible for medical malpractice. It is an area of concern and should be reduced by imposing all these measures. (Word count 2575) Work cited page Arafat. " DHQ Hospital MS among Six Arrested. " Dawn. Web. 08 May 2011. . Cherry, Kendra. " Hierarchy of Needs - Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. " Psychology - Complete Guide to Psychology for Students, Educators & Enthusiasts.

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