

Medical Error: Concept and Description According to Brazilian Physicians

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Abstract : The Brazilian medical profession is viewed as being error-free, so healthcare professionals who commit an error are condemned there. Medical errors occur frequently in the Brazilian healthcare system, so identifying better options for handling this issue has become of interest primarily for physicians. The purpose of this study is to better understand the tensions involved in the fear of making an error due to the harm and risk this would represent for those involved. A qualitative study was performed by means of the narratives of the lived experiences of ten acting physicians in the State of Sao Paulo. The concept and characterization of errors were discussed, together with the fear of making an error, the near misses or error in itself, how to deal with errors and what to do to avoid them. The analysis indicates an excessive pressure in the medical profession for error-free practices, with a well-established physician-patient relationship to facilitate the management of medical errors. The error occurs, but a lack of information and discussion often leads to its concealment due to fear or possible judgment by society or peers. The establishment of programs that encourage appropriate medical conduct in the event of an error requires coherent answers for humanization in Brazilian medical science. It is necessary to improve the discussion about medical errors and disseminate models of communication and notification of errors in Brazil.

Keywords : medical error, narrative, physician-patient relationship, qualitative research

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