

Perceptions of Doctors and Nurses About Euthanasia in Indian Scenario

Authors : B. Unnikrishnan, Tanuj Kanchan, Ramesh Holla, Nithin Kumar

Abstract : Euthanasia has been debated for the ethical, legal, social, and religious implications associated with it. The present research was conducted to study the perceptions of doctors and nurses about ethical and legal aspects of Euthanasia in Indian scenario. The study was carried out at three tertiary care hospitals of Kasturba Medical College (KMC), Mangalore, India. Practicing doctors and nurses working in the hospitals associated with KMC were included in the study after taking written informed consent from the participants. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 11.5. Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare the responses of doctors and nurses. P-value of <0.05 was taken as statistically significant. A total of 144 doctors and nurses participated in the study. Both doctors and nurses agreed that if a terminally ill patient wishes to die, the wish cannot be honored ethically and legally. A significantly larger number of nurses agreed that patient's wish for euthanasia cannot be honored ethically and legally when compared to the doctors. Though the doctors and nurses were broadly in agreement with the existing legal and ethical views on the issue, their knowledge on the issue with regard to the legal status of euthanasia in India and ethical aspects relating to it needs to be strengthened.

Keywords : euthanasia, ethical aspects, legal aspects, India

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