

Determination of the Knowledge Level of Healthcare Professional's Working at the Emergency Services in Turkey about Their Approaches to Common Forensic Cases

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Abstract : Emergency nurses are the first health care professional to generally observe the patients, communicate patients' family or relatives, touch the properties of patients and contact to laboratory sample of patients. Also, they are the encounter incidents related crime, people who engage in violence or suspicious injuries frequently. So, documentation of patients' condition came to the hospital and conservation of evidence are important in the inquiry of forensic medicine. The aim of the study was to determine the knowledge level of healthcare professional working at the emergency services regarding their approaches to common forensic cases. The study was comprised of 404 healthcare professional working (nurse, emergency medicine technician, health officer) at the emergency services of 6 state hospitals, 6 training and 6 research hospitals and 3 university hospitals in Ankara. Data was collected using questionnaire form which was developed by researches in the direction of literature. Questionnaire form is comprised of two sections. The first section includes 17 questions related demographic information about health care professional and 4 questions related Turkish laws. The second section includes 43 questions to the determination of knowledge level of health care professional's working in the emergency department, about approaches to frequently encountered forensic cases. For the data evaluation of the study; Mann Whitney U test, Bonferroni correction Kruskal Wallis H test and Chi Square tests have been used. According to study, it's said that there is no forensic medicine expert in the foundation by 73.4% of health care professionals. Two third (66%) of participants' in emergency department reported daily average 7 or above forensic cases applied to the emergency department and 52.1% of participants did not evaluate incidents came to the emergency department as a forensic case. Most of the participants informed 'duty of preservation of evidence' is health care professionals duty related forensic cases. In result, we determined that knowledge level of health care professional working in the emergency department, about approaches to frequently encountered forensic cases, is not the expected level. Because we found that most of them haven't received education about forensic nursing. Postgraduates participants, educated health professional about forensic nursing, staff who applied to sources about forensic nursing and staff who evaluated emergency department cases as forensic cases have significantly higher level of knowledge. Moreover, it's found that forensic cases diagnosis score is the highest in health officer and university graduated. Health care professional's deficiency in knowledge about forensic cases can cause defects in operation of the forensic process because of mistakes in collecting and conserving of evidence. It is obvious that training about the approach to forensic nursing should be arranged.

Keywords : emergency nurses, forensic case, forensic nursing, level of knowledge

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