

Patients' Understanding of Their Treatment Plans and Diagnosis during Discharge in Emergency Ward at B. P. Koirala Institute of Health Sciences

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Abstract : Background: Understanding the diagnosis and the treatment plan is very important for the patient which reflects the effectiveness of the patient care as well as counseling. Large groups of patients do not understand their emergency care plan or their discharge instructions. With only a little more than 2/3rd of the adult population is literate and poorly distributed health service institutions in Nepal, exploring the current status of patient understanding of their diagnosis and treatment would help identify interventions to improve patient compliance with the provided care and the treatment outcomes. Objectives: This study was conducted to identify and describe the areas of patients' understanding and confusion regarding emergency care and discharge instructions at the Emergency ward of B. P. Koirala Institute of Health Sciences teaching hospital, Dharan, Nepal. Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted among 426 patients discharged from the emergency unit of BPKIHS. Cases who are leaving against medical advice absconded cases and those patients who came just for vaccination are excluded from the study. Patients' understanding of the treatment plan and diagnosis was measured. Results: There were 60% men in this study. More than half of the participants reported not being able to read English. More than 90% of the respondents reported they could not read their prescription at all. While patient could point out their understanding of their diagnosis at discharge, most of them could not tell the names and the dosage of all the drugs prescribed to them at discharge. More than 95% of the patients could not tell the most common side effects of the drugs that they are prescribed. Conclusions: There is a need to further explore the factors influencing the understanding of the patients regarding their treatment plan. Interventions to understand the health literacy needs and ways to improve the health literacy of the patients are needed.

Keywords : discharge instruction, emergency ward, health literacy, treatment plan

Conference Title : ICEM 2018 : International Conference on Emergency Medicine

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : September 27-28, 2018