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Important Steps to Maintain Privacy of Patients in the Hospital

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Letter to Editor

Women are considered as vulnerable groups in our society in spite of their defined women rights by various laws [1]. This shows that unfortunately these laws are not implemented practically in the real life. Society is shaped by the individuals and everyone should be responsible for advocating their own rights as well as the right of others especially of the vulnerable groups within the population [1].

Likewise, it is also important to maintain the privacy of the patients and it is the first and foremost ethical and legal duty of the health care providers to maintain the privacy of their patients [2]. Moreover, privacy has been recognized as a basic human right that should be observed in all aspects of life, particularly in medical and nursing settings [3].

As literature supports, there is a direct and significant correlation between respecting privacy and patient's satisfaction [4]. According to one study, it was found that those participants who stated their privacy had been sufficiently observed also indicated a higher level of satisfaction [5]. Moreover, the trust between doctor and patient is highly important because when patient's privacy is breached, it could lead to a lack of trust and also badly affect the doctor-patient relationship [5].

Thus it is essential to take care of the patient and give importance to the privacy of the patients at each step of care [6]. Moreover, the privacy of the patient cannot be breached, provided doctor concentrates on the patient appropriately with required amount of time. Currently one of the important distractors is the use of mobile phones and healthcare providers easily get distracted while examining the patients. Therefore, all health care providers should not compromise the care of patients by engaging themselves with the mobile phones [7].

Another important factor in breaching the patient's privacy is the presence of other persons in the examination room. Thus, no one should enter the examination room during the examination of the patient and should wait outside the examination room unless the examination is complete.

In addition to this, health care providers sometimes forget to maintain the privacy of the patient. Although they are well

equipped with the wealth of knowledge but sometimes they also break the rules. Therefore it is essential to repeat and reinforce the importance of patient's privacy. Stakeholders of the hospital should also arrange the ongoing sessions for the health care providers and sensitize them regarding the importance of maintaining the physical privacy of the patient.

Moreover, medical or nursing students should also be given space to advocate for the patient because patient's advocacy is designed to improve health care quality and access, primarily with regards to patient-centeredness and patient's privacy [8]. Students should become more confident in advocating for the patient, and health care providers should also take that very positively for the interest and benefit of the patient. This would ultimately help to provide quality care to the patients who are main sufferers in the hospital premises.

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