

A Medical Malpractice Research Conducted in Turkey, Causes and the Role of Media

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Dear Editor,

We have read the research article entitled "Complains about Medical Malpractices in Military Hospitals Submitted to Tehran Medical Council and Forensics" that was written by Amir Farshid Fayyaz (1). Fayyaz's research included all the cases in Military Hospitals Tehran central commission, from 2006 to 2011. Totally, 41 cases had provided full information and were examined. Four cases (9.75%) were related to 2006, five cases (12.19%) to 2007, six cases (14.63%) to 2008, seven cases (17.07%) to 2009, eight cases (19.51%) to 2010, and eleven cases (26.82%) to 2011.

In Turkey, according to the data provided by the Istanbul Medical Chamber, 1525 individual complaints of medical error were lodged. The fact that there were 158 complaints from 1982 to 1997 and yet 1367 complaints in the five-year period between 1997 and 2002 has been taken as an indicator of an increase in medical errors. The findings of various researches show that in recent years, there has been an increase of 40% to 120% in errors of medical procedure (2, 3).

There were no publication about medical malpractice in Turkey military health system, but if we except military health system, malpractice claim seems to increase in the similar way in Turkey too.

In Fayyaz's research on 41 proven malpractices, 15 cases (36.58%) were of indiscretion type, 12 (29.26%) imprudence, 10 (24.39%) lack of practical and scientific skills, and 4 (9.75%) from fail to observe state regulations. Although reasons such as population growth, the ever-increasing number of physicians and insured people, and heightened consciousness about their own rights have led to an increase in the number of complaints against physicians, failure of physicians is one of the major reasons of those claims.

We have studied medical malpractice too. Our research was conducted by the participation of 222 physicians

working at Gulhane Military Medical Academy between September 2012 and November 2012. The findings of our research indicate that the main reason for medical malpractice is inadequate numbers of medical personnel, and the basic reason for the increase in the number of complaints patients advocate for their rights (4). The results obtained in our study seem to be similar to the Fayyaz's research.

In our research the reason for medical malpractice being topical is the attitude of the media, increase in complaints and cases and increase in the amounts of compensation awarded.

We found that the most frequently reason for medical malpractice being high on the agenda was the approach of the media (% 71.2, n = 158). It was surmised that this might be attributed to the increasingly active involvement of the media today. We are suggesting that, by stressing the difficult education and training processes physicians undergo as well as their deeply involved and dedicated work, the media should support the doctors to achieve the respect that they are entitled. We want to emphasize this issue here.

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