

Results Patient rights have been included in the research findings as a main issue in intensive care units among other important issues, such as decision-making, privacy and end of life care. Health care professionals must understand patients' and families' wishes and increase the communication in the intensive care units in order to provide patient autonomy and privacy.

Discussion It was evident from the literature review that critically ill patients cannot actively participate in decisions about their health and treatment, but the health care professionals and families must respect them as human beings. Patient rights are fundamental for all the people in the hospitals.

Conclusion Further research is needed to determine the extent to which patients' rights are respected in intensive care units and in addition to examine the knowledge and attitudes of health care professionals and relatives regarding patients' rights of critically ill patients

146 PATIENTS' RIGHTS IN INTENSIVE CARE UNITS

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Background The principle of patient autonomy is important in all European laws about Patients Rights. However, little research has been done investigating healthcare providers, relatives and patients' knowledge and attitudes regarding patients' rights. As far, almost none has been done investigating patients rights in intensive care units.

Aim A review of literature will be presented regarding knowledge and attitudes of healthcare providers, relatives and patients regarding patients' rights in intensive care units and especially the principle of autonomy in decision making process.

Methods For this review CINAHL, Pubmed and Medline were searched under the keywords 'patient rights', 'critically ill' and 'autonomy', 'decision-making'.