

Regulation on patient rights in Turkish legal system

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Attention to patient's rights is very new in Turkey. The first organization for the protection of patient's rights (Organization of Patients' and Patients' Relatives' Rights) was established in 1997.

Patient rights issue is one of the issues which is very actual in recent time. In the last few years in Turkey the subject of patient rights has become an increasingly common topic of discussion. There is a widespread agreement about the need to strengthen and protect the rights of patients in their interactions with health professionals as well as to help patients take a more active role in health care, informing patients about their rights when accessing health services. Arising from these discussions, it has become clear that existing ethical sanctions are inadequate and need to be replaced with legal sanctions.

The most important regulation in Turkey on patient rights is the patients' rights regulation, which became valid in 1998. But it is just a regulation not a code.

Although the statute of deontology, issued in 1960, which concerned the principles involved in the relation between the physician and the patient, did not specifically mention patient rights, it did address some issues relating to patient rights.

5 years after entering into force of this regulation of patients' rights, the Ministry of Health has adopted on 15 October 2003, a decree on the practical application of patients' rights. The Ministry of Health has established a department for patients' right in Ministry of Health to secure these rights.

Biography

Hakan Hakeri is a *professor of criminal and medical law*. He has studied law at the University of Istanbul, before receiving his Ph.D. in criminal law at the University of Köln (Germany) in 1996. Throughout his study he has received multiple scholarships, including one for The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) in the United States and Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Germany. During his study he has worked as a research assistant at the University of Dicle, where he has worked as a professor after completing his Ph.D., until 2005. He currently works at the University of Istanbul Medeniyet as Dean of Law School.

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