

Awareness of consumer protection ACT and constraints among medical professionals in Kanpur city

CHHAVI VERMA, REKHA DAYAL AND POONAM SINGH

See end of the paper for authors' affiliations

Correspondence to:

CHHAVI VERMA

Department of Family
Resource Management,
Faculty of Home Science,
C.S.A. University of
Agriculture & Technology,
KANPUR (U.P.) INDIA
chhavi.vrm10@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to find out the awareness and constraints of doctors regarding implementation of Consumer Protection Act. Purposive sampling design was used for selection of respondents. Maximum (65.22%) respondents belonged to 30-45 yrs of age group. Less than 46 per cent respondents were MS/MD and 26-28 per cent respondents belonged to income group of Rs. 30,000/- to 50,000/-. About 96 per cent respondents were punctual about working hours and more than 93 per cent were friendly with their patients and gave full effort to their treatments. Less than 85 per cent respondent were aware of compensation claim for loss/damage in consumer forum. Therefore, it is concluded that majority of medical professionals had face constraints "sometimes" regarding negligence on the part of a patient for taking medicine and not developing confidence among patients.

KEY WORDS : Consumer protection Act, Medical professionals, Awareness

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Indian doctors are held in highest esteem all over the world. It is perhaps, one privileged class among all the professionals in the country which ranks first in the list of so-called "brain drain" scenario. The consumer protection Act has been amended w.e.f. 19 June 1993. The newly enacted CPA provided a civilized outset of the health. However, it has also generated intense controversy in health care field. It is necessary to understand the COPRA first to realize its implication for the consumers as well as the medical professionals.

RESEARCH METHODS

In the present study, descriptive research design with survey method was used for collection of data. Purposive sampling design was used for selection of locality, wards and respondents. Pre-coded questionnaire was developed for data collection and data were collected through personal interview cum questionnaire method. For statistical analysis, percentage and weighted mean was calculated.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings obtained from the present study/ investigation are presented in Table 1-3.

Awareness of CPA:

It was found that 95.65 per cent respondents were

punctual about working hours and 93.47 per cent respondents were friendly with their patients and giving full support to their treatments.

About 74 per cent respondents never handle the cases without sufficient experience and 76.08 per cent respondents never take fees in advance for a safe side to avoid fraud cases. About 63.04 per cent respondents were not satisfied from CPA for doctors where as 58 per cent did not face any problem regarding this act.

Table 2 Indicates that 84.78 per cent respondents were aware of compensation claims for loss/damage in national consumer forum for above 20 lakhs where less than 76.08 per cent respondents were aware about complain (redressal forum) for compensation of damage under district forum claim for less than 5 lakhs. 69.56 per cent respondents were aware that a person or a group of a people seeking for similar relief can file different complain. Only 54.34 per cent respondents were not aware about year of establishment of CPA in 1993. Singh and Singh (1970) also reported that in India, consumers does not have the correct information about adequate law and yet even more legislative measures can not protect the consumer. Only a well developed consumer awareness may act as an effective counter against exploitation and unfair trade practices.