

## **Nurses' knowledge & attitudes concerning the option to participate in Healthcare Ethics Committee (HEC)**

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### **Abstract**

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**Background** - This survey exploring the nurses' knowledge and attitudes concerning the option to participate as a Healthcare Ethics Committee member. Healthcare Ethics Committee (HEC) has been established in many countries around the world to provide ethics consultation services to clinical professionals working in hospitals. The debate around the professional profile and the number of participants, the function, capacity and duties of those committees is ongoing. Yet the nursing role in this committee is new and not sufficiently clarified.

**The survey aims** - Assessing the nurses' perception, knowledge and attitudes towards nurse role in ethics committee. Examine if nurse interest to participate officially as a member in ethic committee.

**Method** – Sixty seven participants from five different hospitals in Israel. Self-administered questionnaire sent by e-mail contained five socio-demographic questions and ten questions related to knowledge and attitude. The explanations of the importance of nurses' participation in Ethics Committee were identified.

**Results** – Nurses' opinions are important (21%), they are a part of multidisciplinary team (24%), representing the nursing profession (24%), and possess plenty and diverse information (15%).

**Conclusions** - Development and implementation of Healthcare Ethics Committee in every hospital, is a challenge for health care professionals. Nurses are willing to participate as formal members in the Ethical Committees. At the same time, they point out the lack of knowledge regarding their role in these committees.

**Recommendations** - Nurses believe that planned training in ethics will help them to overcome these barriers. Therefore, the nursing challenge in Israel is to change the article regarding composition of the Ethics Committee in the Patient Rights Act, by assuring the nursing profession representatives.

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Paper presentation

