Reviewer's report

Title: Ethics in paramedic services: A communicative challenge in patient interaction

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Reviewer: Evert van Leeuwen

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The manuscript contains a case report with analysis in emergency medicine. Emergency medicine often encounters situations in which patients are panicking, exhausted or otherwise confused. The main moral question in these cases is how far healthcare workers, in this case, paramedics, are allowed to go in persuading that treatment is necessary.

The case at hand happened at an airport and contains most elements of stress, hurry and the need to go as usual in daily life. As such the case is a good example of the need of persuasive rhetorics to convince the patient that she should undergo treatment. Within the analysis the communicative strategy is described as almost brutal in referring to the consequences of the family of the patient. However it can also be argued that such a reference is a necessary element of the deliberation pro and against continuing the journey or having medical examination. The later, positive response of the patient on that compelling argument confirms that at the time she was not able to oversee all the relevant aspects of the case at hand.

Comments:

1. explain shortly why the communicative strategy of the paramedics can be called ‘brutal’ or rude. Of course persuasive reasoning does not necessarily have to become brutal.

2. Pay attention to the emergency elements in the case: the need of instant support without a known history of complaints, the time span in which quick decision-making is necessary because of the timeschedule of the plane, etc. What kind of impact have these factors on the communication between paramedics and patients?

3. Pay some attention to the moral tension between professional autonomy and the autonomy of the patient. Professional autonomy also includes knowledge of the dangers of having a cardiac patient in the air, the health and safety of the other people on the plane, the possibilities to take care during the flight.

4. Use of language is ok, but could be a bit more concise in avoiding repetitive sentences.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field
Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests