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KNOWLEDGE OF ATTITUDE TOWARD EXPERIENCE AND SATISFACTION WITH ELECTROCONVULSIVE THERAPY IN A SAMPLE OF IRANIAN PATIENTS

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Despite the wide consensus over the safety and efficacy of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT), it still faces unfavorable attitudes of patients and families. Little is known about how the experience with ECT affects the patients' and their families' attitude toward it. This study examined a sample of Iranian patients and their families regarding their experience with ECT and compared their knowledge and attitude toward ECT before and after this experience and their satisfaction with it. We surveyed 22 patients with major depressive disorder about to undergo ECT and 1 family member of each patient for their knowledge and attitude toward ECT and then surveyed them again after the trial of ECT to compare those variables while assessing their experience and satisfaction with ECT. Patients were rated using the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale and Mini-Mental Status Examination before and after the treatment. Before ECT, family members had a more favorable attitude toward ECT than patients, but after ECT, the patients' attitude changed more positively. Both patients and their families had a poor knowledge of ECT before the ECT trial, but their total knowledge increased afterward, although not in the areas of indications and therapeutic effects. The majority of patients and their families found ECT to be beneficial and were satisfied with it. There was a high rate of perceived coercion to consent to ECT. Attention should be paid toward educating patients and their families about the ECT as well as informing them about their freedom of choice and right to refuse.