WHO REPORT “Exploring Patient Engagement in Reducing Health Care Related Safety Risks”

Starting with the ancient Hippocratic oath physicians have promised to keep the sick from harm and injustice.

Patient safety is the prevention of errors and adverse effects to patients associated with health care (WHO Europe).

Patient empowerment could be defined as the process by which patients gain more control over their health and health care, capacity that enables patients to participate, or be involved.

Patient rights recognition and codification has arisen from the patient emancipation movement in the 1960s.

Quality of care is “doing the right thing, at the right time, in the right way, for the right person, and having the best possible results” (Institute of Medicine).

This report aims to explore the relation between patients’ rights, patient empowerment and participation, and patient safety, based on six background studies. Using available evidence, recommendations are made with respect to what could be strengthened, what could be added and what could be needed in order to enhance patient safety through the implementation of patients’ rights, and through patient empowerment and participation.