

Training Session Plan

Mind Your Step

Human rights and human wrongs in health worker practice



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The International Federation of Health and Human Rights Organisations (IFHHRO)

IFHHRO forms a unique network of active organisations committed to the protection and promotion of health related human rights. Members and observers are human rights groups which address health-related rights violations, medical associations involved in human rights work, and organisations that have been created specifically to mobilize health workers for human rights protection.

For more information visit our website: www.ifhhro.org

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Learning Objectives

- To introduce health workers to human rights issues that they may encounter in their work place.
- To learn different forms of action that can be used to tackle human rights issues.



Target Group

Health workers and student health workers



Duration

60 minutes



Materials

- Slips of paper with the numbers 1 to 6 written on them
- Containers (or small plastic bag) for the slips of paper
- Board game counters in different colours or shapes
Tip: buttons / sweets / paperclips with a piece of coloured paper



Training Aids

1. Rules of the Game
2. Mind your Step - Game cards



Session Plan

During the game health workers are confronted with human rights issues that occur in different health institutions. They have to take decisions leading to a new situation in which another decision needs to be taken. By playing the game health workers will become familiar with different human rights issues and realise that they play an important role in protecting the right of their patients. How far their role reaches depends on multiple factors including their personal values and beliefs, position, connections and abilities.

*The session works best in combination with introductory sessions about human rights in relation to health and other sessions about the role of health workers. A great starter is *Keeping all the Balls in the Air*. These sessions are available in the online IFHHRO Training Manual 'Human Rights for Health Workers' at www.ifhhro-training-manual.org*

Preparation

Prepare one container with slips of paper numbered 1 to 6 for each group. Photocopy Training Aids 1 and 2 for each group.

Step 1 Introduction (5 minutes)

Explain briefly that health workers in everyday practice come into contact with human rights issues, even though they may not be aware of it. The game they are about to play follows different story lines. Everyone starts as a health worker in a busy city hospital and will be faced with a number of decisions. The story will end either positively or negatively depending on what decisions are taken. The choice is theirs.

Divide the participants into groups of 3 or 4 persons (can also work with 5). Explain briefly the rules of the game. Hand out a container with the slips of paper with numbers, the rules of the game, board game counters and a set of game cards to each group.

Step 2 Play round (40 minutes, depending on group size)

Continue playing till most groups have completed at least 4 story lines.

Step 3 Discussion (10 minutes)

Ask the participants if they liked playing the game. Mention that all stories in the game are based on true situations.

End the session with a brief discussion using the following questions:

- What difficult decisions did you encounter?
- Where you sometimes surprised by the consequences of your decision?
- What factors influenced your decision?
- What different types of actions did you encounter?
- Do you think health workers are in a position to take action? Why or why not?
- What are there factors that influence the outcome of your action?

Step 4 Conclusion (5 minutes)

Conclude the session with the following remarks:

- Health workers encounter health related human rights issues in their daily work
- Health workers inevitable play a role in relation to the health related human rights of patients
- How far this role of health workers reaches and action develops will differ for each individual health worker depending on different factors including situation, position, connections, abilities, time and financial resources

Tip for trainers:

A useful handout at the end of this session is the table '**Possibilities for Action**', page 32-33 from *Steps for Change – A human rights action guide for health workers*. Available online (from April 15 2012) at www.ifhhro.org in several languages.

Training Aid 1 – Rules of the Game

Preparation

Each group receives a container with 6 numbered slips of paper, a copy of the rules of the game, a set of cards and board game counters.

Place the cards on the table with the numbers face up. The START card and cards 1 till 6 form the top row and the remaining cards can be placed underneath.

Start of the game

All participants select a counter and place it on the start card. They all pretend that they are qualified health workers in a busy city hospital.

First round

- The youngest person in the group starts by picking a slip of paper from the container.
- Turn the card with the corresponding number and read out the situation and different options.
- Decide which option to pick and place the counter on the card with the number mentioned behind that option.

All the other players repeat the above steps till everyone has started.

Following rounds

After all players have started, the first player continues and turns the card on which his/her counter is placed repeating the steps as in round one. The game continues until an end card is reached (cards 29-34).

If a player reaches an end card then they return to the container to draw a new start card as long as there are numbers left in the container.

End of the game

The game ends when all players have reached an end card at least once or when the container is empty.

Good luck!

Training Aid 2 – Game Cards

Print the following pages double sided and cut a set of cards for each group. It is recommended to use thicker paper (120 or 160 g/m²), if available.



4



Your patient is a young woman who asks for information about contraceptives. You tell her that she needs to come with her husband and you find out she is not married yet. The law prohibits you to provide information about contraceptives to unmarried couples.

- A. You say sorry and send her away because you do not want to lose your job.
→ go to 4
- B. You ignore the law and provide her the information.
→ go to 10
- C. It is not the first time that you are confronted with this situation, you send her away but you make a note about her visit in your special notebook.
→ go to 16

10



Later that day you are doing the last check up of a pregnant HIV positive woman that arrived at the hospital for delivery. It is hospital policy that all HIV positive women receive a C-section and are sterilized at the same time.

- A. You only tell her about the C-section and direct her to the operation theatre.
→ go to 34
- B. Inform the woman about the hospital policy and perform both C-section and sterilisation. You realise that this cannot continue and think about how to change the situation.
→ go to 16
- C. Inform the woman about the hospital policy, she disagrees with the sterilisation so you promise to only do the C-section. There is a strong possibility that you will lose your job.
→ go to 25

16



You have dinner with a good friend who is working at an NGO. You express your concerns about the practices in the institution. Your friend says that she knows the Minister of Health is visiting soon for a consultation meeting and her NGO is asked to do a presentation.

- A. You decide to make an appointment with the Minister.
→ go to 19
- B. You decide to speak to a representative of the NGO to share your information.
→ go to 28
- C. The chance that the Minister will share your concerns is so minimal that you decide to do your own research.
→ go to 26

6



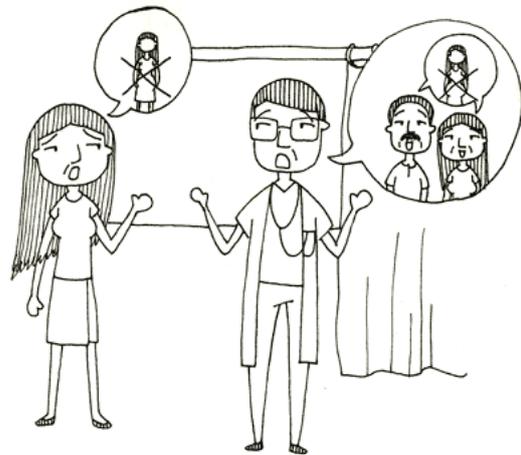
You meet your next patient in the waiting room and hear your colleagues discussing the health status of a patient. The patient they are discussing is also there and looks annoyed. All people in the waiting room can follow the conversation.

- A. Confront your colleagues with their behaviour.
→ go to 12
- B. You join them and express your concerns because you just had a similar case.
→ go to 34
- C. Report this to the hospital management
→ go to 18

10



4



6.

16



26



You do an internet search and make an inventory of existing policies and guidelines of both national and international professional associations. You discover that hardly any attention is paid to the issue and decide to contact them.

- A. You share your findings with an NGO and agree to stand witness in court.
→ go to 33
- B. You contact influential health workers to join forces and put pressure to get the issue on the agenda of the professional associations.
→ go to 31
- C. You decide to start a petition to collect signatures to convince the national medical association to take a clear position.
→ go to 29

28



When you visit the NGO it becomes clear that the practices in your institution are not in line with the international human rights treaties your government has ratified. The NGO is preparing a case against the government.

- A. You share your experiences and agree that you are willing to share your documentation and are willing to act as a witness.
→ go to 33
- B. You hear a lot of useful information and ask the NGO to provide an awareness raising training about human rights to your colleagues at the hospital.
→ go to 27
- C. You share your experiences and offer the NGO to contact medical professional associations to check out what they know and think about the issue.
→ go to 26

5



You hear about a job vacancy working as a health worker in a local prison. The job is for just one day a week and the rest of the time you can continue with your regular hospital work.

- A. You decide you could do with a change of scene and agree to take the job.
→ go to 11
- B. You decide that you do not need any more excitement in your life and continue to work full time in the hospital.
→ go to 4

11



You arrive at the prison on your first day. The guard at the entrance tells you that some nasty things are going on in this prison and that you better watch out. You head to the prison director to introduce yourself.

- A. You confront the prison director with what the guard at the entrance told you.
→ go to 23
- B. You do not pay attention to what the guard told you. It is your first day and after meeting the prison director you start your work.
→ go to 17
- C. You keep the warning of the guard in mind and decide to keep your eyes and ears open. You start your work after meeting the director.
→ go to 17

28

26

11

5



23



The prison director tells you that the prison world is run differently to the world outside. He expresses his hope that you will meet the required standards: no information about behaviour of staff or medical reports with health information that can be interpreted in a way that could be negative for the institution.

- A. You say sorry and promise it will not happen again.
→ go to 22
- B. You say sorry and leave, thinking about a way to work around it.
→ go to 16
- C. You decide this job is not for you and quit.
→ go to START

17



You are waiting for your next patient. A guard comes in, roughly pushing a handcuffed prisoner. He asks you to check if the prisoner is fit enough to be brought back to his cell and stays standing behind the chair of the prisoner.

- A. You ask the guard to remove the handcuffs but he says it is not allowed according to strict regulations. Tell him you will discuss these regulations with the director.
→ go to 23
- B. You examine the prisoner and complete the medical report in a neutral way.
→ go to 32
- C. You examine the prisoner and complete the medical report in a detailed way and add an extra note detailing the lack of privacy during the examination.
→ go to 23

18



Your superior listens to your story but tells you that there is nothing in his power to change the situation.

- A. You have flagged up the issue with the management, you have a lot more to do so you return to work.
→ go to 30
- B. You decide to use the information you collected to write an article about the issues you have encountered.
→ go to 29
- C. You make a deal with the manager. You will turn a blind eye this time but all staff members have to follow a health and human rights training.
→ go to 27

22



Later that day you see the person you treated this morning. He is doing a bit better but is being roughly handled and threatened by one of the staff members. You suspect that it is not the first time he has done this.

- A. Confront the staff member, telling him to treat the person with more respect.
→ go to 12
- B. Tell him that he won't get away with it this time and you will report it to your superior.
→ go to 18
- C. You decide not to pick up the fight at this moment but will document and monitor his behaviour over the coming weeks.
→ go to 16

17

23

22

18



12



You talk with your colleague about how he treats patients and find out that he is not aware of the consequences of his behaviour.

- A. Your colleague is sorry for what he has done and promises to change his behaviour. You tell him that you need to report him to your superior.
→ go to 18
- B. You decide that the two of you will join efforts to prepare a brochure about the issue to distribute among both staff and patients of the hospital.
→ go to 31
- C. You inform the colleague about the training on health and human rights that will take place next week.
→ go to 27

27



An NGO organises a training on the relation between health and human rights and the role health workers can play in upholding human rights.

- A. Inspired by the training you decide to write an article about the daily practice in the institution.
→ go to 29
- B. You feel empowered enough to join the working group that develops hospital guidelines.
→ go to 31
- C. The training was an eye-opener and you are full of ideas but undertaking action costs time and you decide to devote your time to your patients.
→ go to 10

15



At the Emergency Department they are very busy and you end up taking the man to surgery yourself. On the way there he tells you that he has no documents and no health insurance. It is hospital policy that you cannot treat patients without health insurance or documents.

- A. Continue with the surgery regardless, this man is going to die.
→ go to 25
- B. You tell the patient you cannot treat him unless he can find a way to pay for it.
→ go to 32
- C. You tell the patient you cannot operate but decide to think about a plan for action.
→ go to 16

13



Your colleague explains that there is a lack of qualified staff. Some patients always complain and examine them again and again is time consuming. Also, if patients cause too much trouble they are tied up or isolated.

- A. You decided to talk with your superior.
→ go to 18
- B. You realise that you can't solve the staff shortage but decide to examine the patient properly after working hours.
→ go to 30
- C. You decide to contact the Ministry of Health about minimum staff requirements.
→ go to 19

27



12

13

15

2



You receive an email from your friend about a job vacancy in a rural Nigerian Hospital for one year.

- A. Decide you need a change of scenery and take the job.
→ go to 8
- B. You are happy working where you are currently and decide to continue with your normal clinic hours.
→ go to 10

3



You are walking to clinic when a man urgently calls for you down the corridor.

- A. You do not have time to stop and talk to people. It will make you late for clinic.
→ go to 10
- B. You decide to stop and talk to the man.
→ go to 9

1



You have just started working at a Mental Health Unit. One of your patients is a teenager who is tied to his chair. When you try to talk to him you find out that he does not speak the local language.

- A. You ask a colleague why he is tied to his chair.
→ go to 13
- B. You arrange for an interpreter to talk to him.
→ go to 7
- C. The boy is sitting quietly so you decide to carry on with your work.
→ go to 14

24



The result of your inventory shows that a lot of people have problems with the attitude of the health workers or cannot pay for the fees.

- A. You arrange for a training for all hospital staff.
→ go to 27
- B. You arrange for a radio interview to start a public debate about the issue.
→ go to 21
- C. You decide that structural changes are needed and you will contact the Ministry of Health.
→ go to 19

3

2

24

1



8



You arrive at the hospital in rural Nigeria. You find that it is located in a very poor district. Many of the patients are turned away because they cannot afford to pay. After a couple of weeks you find out that a lot of people don't come at all.

- A. You decide you couldn't face working in a system like this. You decide to return home.
→ go to **START**
- B. Decide that the system is what it is and your role is to treat patients. You go to see your next patient, a man in his 30s.
→ go to **9**
- C. Decide that there must be something you can do to deal with this. You go to talk to the hospital manager before starting work.
→ go to **20**

9



The man describes terrible abdominal pain and after a quick examination you decide he has appendicitis and needs an urgent appendicectomy.

- A. Treat without further hesitation, this man is going to die.
→ go to **15**
- B. Tell him that you cannot treat him because he cannot pay for the treatment. Give him the address of an organisation that might be able to help.
→ go to **32**

14



While you are with the boy you hear a colleague talking to a woman diagnosed with schizophrenia. The woman complains about abdominal pain and from their conversation it becomes clear that it is not the first time she complains about this. Your colleague tells the woman that it is "all in her head".

- A. It is not your patient so you do not interfere.
→ go to **32**
- B. You decide to talk with your colleague later.
→ go to **12**
- C. You ask your colleague immediately if he is sure because you already thought the woman had serious pain.
→ go to **13**

7



The interpreter arrives and it becomes clear that the teenager was hitting his head against the wall because he wants to see his mother.

- A. You tell the boy that you will arrange for his mum to come and free the boy.
→ go to **14**
- B. You tell him that his mother is only allowed to visit him if he stops hitting his head against the wall.
→ go to **34**
- C. You arrange for his mother to come and decide to keep your eyes and ears open for this kind of treatment.
→ go to **22**

9.

8



7

14



20



The hospital manager sympathises with you but says that there is nothing in his power to change the way things are.

- A. You feel happy that you have at least tried to make a change and decide to go and see your next patient, a man in his 30s.
→ go to 9
- B. You think that more can be done and make arrangements to appear on a radio show to raise awareness for this situation.
→ go to 21
- C. You decide to do an inventory to find out why people often arrive too late at the hospital.
→ go to 24

21



The radio interview is heard by a local politician who makes a lot of money through taking a cut of the hospital fees. He isn't happy with you and you start to receive death threats through your letterbox.

- A. Decide that the situation is out of your hands and the best thing you can do is to treat patients. Your first patient in clinic the next day is a man in his 30s.
→ go to 9
- B. Tell yourself that you aren't going to give in and decide to contact the Ministry of Health to ask for his support.
→ go to 19
- C. You have heard about a local NGO that work in this area. You try and make contact with them.
→ go to 28

25



Your actions have been discovered by the disciplinary board. You are called in front of them to explain yourself.

- A. Lie and state that the patient was threatening to harm you.
→ go to 34
- B. State what you did was the right thing and lose your job.
→ go to 29
- C. Apologise for your actions and state that you thought you were acting within the set guidelines. You promise it won't happen again.
→ go to 30

19



You send email after email, letter after letter but there is no response from the Ministry.

- A. Unhappy with the system and unhappy with the government you decide you can no longer continue to work here.
→ go to START
- B. You do not want to give up and decide to check what medical professional associations recommend in these situations.
→ go to 26
- C. You decide that something must be done and you continue trying. You contact a local NGO for help.
→ go to 28

21

20

19

25





30



You have not changed anything. Patients rights continue to be violated and you continue to face the same problems.

FAILED

While your colleagues are still in the game you have a second chance to start again. Otherwise grab your chance to uphold human rights while treating patients in real life.

32



You find out a couple of weeks later that the patient in question has died.

FAILED

While your colleagues are still in the game you have a second chance to start again. Otherwise grab your chance to uphold human rights while treating patients in real life.

34



Do you realise what consequences this has for your patients? Would you like to be in their place?

FAILED

While your colleagues are still in the game you have a second chance to start again. Otherwise grab your chance to uphold human rights while treating patients in real life.

33



The court process is underway and you have a lot of support for your case. The results look promising and guidelines protecting human rights will be developed soon.

WELL DONE

We hope you continue your good work in upholding human rights while treating patients in the future!

32

30

33

34



29



A lot of media attention has been caused by your action. Pressure is put on the policy makers and reforms looks likely.

WELL DONE

We hope you continue your good work in upholding human rights while treating patients in the future!

31



You address the issue with other colleagues who agree that this is a major problem. Together you are empowered to take action.

WELL DONE

We hope you continue your good work in upholding human rights while treating patients in the future!

31



29

Start

