

## **Abstract**

### **Perceptions of Comatose patients' families about ICU**

Background and aim: Specific challenges exist related to the perceptions of comatose patients' families in intensive care units, which identifying them can improve cooperation of families with staff and provide better care for patients. The main objective of this study was to determine the perceptions of comatose patients' families about ICU.

Methods: This study was conducted through qualitative design using content analysis approach and semi-structured interviews. 17 comatose patients' families participated in this study (5 wife, 9 parents and 3 siblings), purposive sampling continued until data saturation. After obtaining informed consent, interviews were recorded at the place agreed upon families, transcribed verbatim and concurrent analyzed an inductive content analysis method at the same time. Validity and rigor of data were considered through acceptability, confirmability, credibility and transferability.

Results: The findings of this study in relation to perceptions of comatose patients' families about ICU were developed to 870 original codes, 10 subcategories and 4 main themes, include: "shock and disbelief", "endeavor and adaption", "fatigue and erosion "and" hope and support ". Participants in this study more emphasized on their own perceptions of guilt, fear of the unfamiliar environment and equipment, lack of awareness and information seeking, heavy responsibility of caring, physical and emotional erosion and impact of support, empathy, and recourse and pray in this regard.

Conclusion: The findings of this study revealed the importance of support, empathy and giving information about the patient's condition, equipment and environment to families by personnel as well as support from other family members' empathy, recourse and pray on perceptions of comatose patients' families about ICU.

#### **Keywords:**

Qualitative research, Coma, Perception, Family