

EXPRESSION OF CONCERN

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Expression of concerns: Evaluating the importance of nurse competencies (doi: 10.17816/socm634585)

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An article by L.I. Kaspruk entitled “Evaluating the Importance of Nurse Competencies” has been published in the *Sociology of Medicine* journal (doi: 10.17816/socm634585).

This article is an appeal from the Editorial Board of the journal to the readership, expressing concern about the impact that may result from the publication of the above article. The concern arises from the lack of information in the article about the ethical review of the research protocol involving human participants and the approval of the protocol by an ethics committee. Furthermore, the participants in the study were not randomly selected respondents but rather representatives of the professional medical community.

Unfortunately, the authors were unable to provide the ethics committee’s approval of the research protocol or the conclusion that the study did not require ethical review. The Editorial Board of the *Sociology of Medicine* journal considers this practice of conducting studies and presenting their results unacceptable. However, the article was accepted for publication due to the high significance of the presented data.

Henceforth, the Editorial Board will not accept for publication the results of original research that violates the principles of biomedical ethics.

Keywords: social; Delphi; cluster; discriminant; mathematical model; nursing; healthcare; professional; regional; expression of concern.

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ВЫРАЖЕНИЕ ОБЕСПОКОЕННОСТИ

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Выражение беспокойности: Исследование значимости профессиональных качеств сестринского медицинского персонала (doi: 10.17816/socm634585)

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АННОТАЦИЯ

В журнале «Социология медицины» была опубликована статья Л.И. Каспрук «Исследование значимости профессиональных качеств сестринского медицинского персонала» (doi: 10.17816/socm634585).

Настоящая статья представляет собой обращение редакции журнала к читательской аудитории и выражает беспокойность эффектом, который может возникнуть в результате публикации вышеупомянутой статьи.

Обеспокоенность вызвана отсутствием в тексте статьи информации о проведении этической экспертизы протокола исследования, которое предполагало участие людей, и об одобрении этого протокола каким-либо этическим комитетом. В том числе обеспокоенность обусловлена тем, что участниками исследования были не случайные респонденты, а представители профессионального сообщества медицинских работников.

К сожалению, авторы не смогли предоставить заключение этического комитета об одобрении протокола исследования или заключение этического комитета о том, что исследование не нуждается в этической экспертизе. Редакция журнала «Социология медицины» считает такую практику проведения исследований и представления их результатов недопустимой, однако ввиду высокой значимости представленных в статье данных допустила её к публикации.

В дальнейшем редакция не будет принимать к публикации результаты оригинальных исследований, выполненных с нарушением принципов биомедицинской этики.

Ключевые слова: социологический; Делфи; кластерный; дискриминантный; математическая модель; сестринское дело; медицинский; специалист; региональный; выражение беспокойности.

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An article by L.I. Kaspruk entitled *Evaluating the Importance of Nurse Competencies* has been published in the *Sociology of Medicine* journal (doi: 10.17816/socm634585).

This article is an appeal from the Editorial Board of the Journal to the readership, expressing concern about the impact that may result from the publication of the above article.

The concern arises from the lack of information about the ethical review of the research protocol involving human participants and its approval by an ethics committee. Furthermore, the participants in the study were not randomly selected respondents but rather representatives of the professional medical community.

The practice of observational research in Russia is not subject to legal regulation, with some exceptions that are not relevant to the discussed article. However, the 2016 International Ethical Guidelines for Health-Related Research Involving Humans,¹ published by the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences (CIOMS) explicitly state that ethics committee approval is mandatory for research involving human participants, including their materials and data (see Guideline 12: “The protocol for every study using collected data must be submitted to a research ethics committee...”¹). Additionally, two associations of medical editors—the ICMJE² and the WAME³—have included this requirement in their guidelines. This approach aligns with the 2013⁴ and 2024⁵ Declarations of Helsinki, which establish guidelines for research involving human participants and their identifiable materials and data. The declarations require researchers to obtain ethics committee approval.

As stated in Article 3 of Federal Law No. 152-FZ *On Personal Data*, dated July 27, 2006,⁶ the identity of anonymized data can be verified using supplementary information. In other words, the presented study was subject to the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki because anonymized data is inherently identifiable. Moreover, it is no longer possible to determine whether the anonymization process was performed properly. The ethics committee

is responsible for investigating this issue and determining the adequacy of the planned actions. The committee assesses whether the data anonymization requirement has been met and evaluates the various conditions that scientists must comply with when planning and conducting research involving human participants, materials, and/or data. (For more information, see the Declaration of Helsinki and the CIOMS guidelines¹).

Unfortunately, the authors were unable to provide ethics committee approval of the research protocol or the conclusion that the study did not require ethical review. Therefore, the study violated generally accepted ethical standards for biomedical research involving human participants, their materials, or data.

The Editorial Board of the *Sociology of Medicine* journal considers this practice of conducting and publishing studies unacceptable. However, the article was accepted for publication due to the high significance of the presented data.

The Editorial Board recommends that the authors submit a request to the ethics committee for a retrospective review of the study protocol. The committee may then confirm that the study was designed and conducted according to the current ethical standards for research involving human participants and their data. The Editorial Board hopes to receive confirmation from the authors that they have obtained such a conclusion, including the ethics committee's affiliation, the protocol number, and the date the conclusion was signed. Once received, comments and updates on the previous article will be published at a later date.

Henceforth, the Editorial Board will not accept for publication the results of original research that violates the principles of biomedical ethics.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Disclosure of interests. N.V. Prisyazhnaya—deputy editor-in-chief; E.I. Khabirova—executive editor.

¹ International Ethical Guidelines for Health-Related Research Involving Humans. Geneva: Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences (CIOMS); 2016. pp. 137. ISBN: 978-929036094-0 Available at: <https://cioms.ch/publications/product/russian-translation-2016-international-ethical-guidelines-health-related-research-involving-humans/> Assessed on April 11, 2025.

² Protection of Research Participants; [about one page]. In: International Committee of Medical Journal Editors [Internet]. Available at: <https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/protection-of-research-participants.html> Assessed on April 11, 2025.

³ Recommendations on Publication Ethics Policies for Medical Journals. In: WAME. [Internet]. Available at: <https://www.wame.org/recommendations-on-publication-ethics-policies-for-medical-journals> Assessed on April 11, 2025.

⁴ WMA Declaration of Helsinki—Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Participants. 2016. Available at: <https://www.wma.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/DoH-Oct2013.pdf> Assessed on April 11, 2025.

⁵ WMA Declaration of Helsinki—Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects. 2024. Available at: <https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki/> Assessed on April 11, 2025.

⁶ Federal Law *On Personal Data*, No. 152-FZ, dated July 27, 2006. Available at: https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_61801/ Assessed on April 11, 2025.

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