

Nurses Attitudes knowledge and experience in the care of hospitalized
Handcuffed Prisoners. [From research to policy making](#)

[Dr. Nurith Wagner R.N., PhD](#)

Mrs. Michal Peiser R.N, MA.

.Dr. Dorit Rubinstein R.N., PhD

Background: The requirement to care for hospitalized prisoners who are often handcuffed, arouse complex moral and ethical dilemmas. It is especially difficult for the nursing staff in close and intimate contact with patients. The Israeli Nurses' Ethical Code declares that nurses are obligated to provide quality care without any discrimination and to uphold human rights. However, the values of respect, dignity, autonomy and privacy are not upheld when caring for restrained prisoners. The declared purpose of handcuffs for the prisoner patient during treatment is to prevent escape and protect the staff and others from possible harm.

Goals: To explore nurses' experiences with hospitalized prisoners; their knowledge of relevant protocols and policies; their attitudes toward restraining prisoner patients.

Method: A convenience sample of Israeli registered nurses working in general hospital wards. (N = 359). The sample was recruited from a post-graduate specialty course. Data collected by a self administrated, closed and structured anonymous questionnaire.

Data analysis by descriptive statistics; processed by SPSS software.

Outcomes: Nurses who treated handcuffed prisoners (n = 162) during the previous year are significantly more knowledgeable $t= 3.28$ ($P <.001$) and believe that handcuffs adversely impact upon the quality of care $t=-2.91$ ($P <.05$) compared to nurses with no experience in treating a handcuffed prisoner (n = 183) during the last past year.

Research impact: the Ministry of Justice convened all related actors to rethink / rewrite policies, taking both security needs as well as human dignity needs into account.

Mrs. Michal Peiser R.N, MA. Emergency Department Soroka medical Center
peiserm@bgu.ac.il

Dr. Nurith Wagner R.N., PhD Head of the Israeli Nursing Ethics Bureau
nwagner@012.net.il

Dr. Dorit Rubinstein R.N., PhD. ZEFAT ACADEMIC COLLEGE. [lectuer](#)
dorub@hotmail.com

Keywords: Knowledge, Attitudes, Handcuffed prisoners, Policies Guiding Care
Human Rights