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Where is the girl in all the decision making?

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It is shocking to read about a 14-year-old girl going through an abortion in a hostile environment and getting a Cu-T inserted without her consent. The girl unfortunately had to go through repeated insults from each person she was in contact with. I believe the researcher should have approached the issue differently in ways that I am listing below:

The researcher should have got more reliable facts from the hospital authorities. A lot of the information placed before us is based on casual talk with the nursing staff. It is surprising to see that no effort was made by the researcher to talk with the doctors in the hospital to ascertain the reasons for inserting a Cu-T without the girl's consent. Since the researcher had been allowed to collect data on issues of informed consent in that hospital, there should have been direct contact with the hospital authorities once such serious issues were observed.

The researcher should have informed the ethics committee instead of individual ethics committee members to get guidance on what should be done in this case. Views of individual members do not represent the collective vision of the committee. This is obvious in the way the ethics committee members suggested solutions. The researcher should have asked for an emergency ethics committee meeting to discuss the issue, which is often permitted by the chair.

The researcher should have got the consent of the girl before raising the issue with the outside world. I would have preferred it if the researcher had registered a protest with the hospital authorities. The concern should have been more for the girl who was going through the suffering than for trying to correct the system. Leaving the girl without counselling and support is not acceptable at all.

The researcher should have discussed the incident with a voluntary organisation that deals with similar issues to understand the intricacies of the problem. Some organisations are experienced in working on issues associated with MTPs among teenage girls. The researcher should have kept in touch with such groups for advice.

The last statement of the case study is the most shocking---that hardly anyone knows what happened to the girl. Each person in this story played a questionable role: nurses inserting a Cu-T without consent to avoid further pregnancy; researchers informing ethics committee members and then stepping back; an ethics committee member who registered a complaint with the police without knowing much about the girl. Everyone tried to play a hypocritical social role as "protectors".

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