

Assessing the effectiveness of patients' complaint mechanisms within healthcare facilities to improve risk management and healthcare systems: a comparative case studies protocol

Audrey Ferron Parayre*¹⁻², Anne Laude³ and Catherine Régis¹



¹ Faculty of Law and Canada Research Chair on Collaborative Culture in Health Law and Policy, University of Montreal (QC); ² Research Centre of the Centre hospitalier universitaire de Québec and Canada Research Chair in Implementation of Shared Decision Making in Primary Care (QC); ³ Institut Droit et Santé, Faculté de droit, Université Paris Descartes (FR).

*audrey.ferron.parayre@umontreal.ca



Objective

To explore whether patients' complaint mechanisms are adequate tools to appraise the adaptation of legal frameworks for the analysis of complaints and improvement of healthcare systems.

Background

- France and Quebec present similar patients' complaint mechanisms within their healthcare systems ('health ombudsmen');
- These health ombudsmen, as part of the overall policy for managing health risks, can be useful tools to appraise these risks;
- However, neither in France nor in Quebec, these health ombudsmen have been the subject of in-depth empirical and legal evaluations.

Expected outcomes

- This comparative, multidisciplinary and mixed-methods study will be the first providing an in-depth, systematic evaluation of health ombudsmen effectiveness.
- The intersection of France-Quebec data will provide a more complete understanding of factors that influence the effectiveness of health ombudsmen mechanisms, and will inform new means of improvement for management of health complaints.

Methods

Two case studies will be undertaken, one in France and one in Quebec, using mixed-methods.

The research project will be conducted by a multidisciplinary team (law, economics, and public health).

Legal analysis

- Objective:** To assess the legal frameworks of health ombudsmen in France and Quebec;
- A systematic review of legislations, regulations, case law and legal literature will be conducted for both jurisdictions.

Statistical analysis

- Objective:** To compile and analyse statistical data on health ombudsmen in France and Quebec over a one-year period (2013);
- Exploratory statistical analysis will be performed on the database including:
 - compilation of publicly available data from local and regional health ombudsmen (e.g. official websites and annual reports);
 - answers to a survey among health ombudsmen in France (n=662) and Quebec (n=125).

Qualitative analysis

- Objectives:** To compare the strengths and weaknesses of health ombudsmen in France and Quebec in terms of their effectiveness to bring forward both individual and organizational changes;
- To develop solutions for improving patients' participation in healthcare systems, and streamlining the operation and governance of healthcare systems.

Design

- Interviews and focus groups, based on Michie et al. 'Behavior Change Wheel' (2011).

Participants

- Interviews will be conducted with healthcare managers, health ombudsmen and policy makers;
- Focus groups will be conducted with patients and healthcare professionals that have been involved in a complaint mechanism during the year 2013.

Sample size

- Convenience samples:
 - about 8 interviews for each stakeholders in France and in Quebec;
 - about 8 focus groups of 8-10 participants for both patients and healthcare professionals, in France and in Quebec.

Data collection

- Interviews and focus groups will be conducted by trained graduate students and their performance will be monitored halfway through recruitment;
- With participants' approval, interviews and focus groups will be recorded.

Planned analysis

- The records will be transcribed using NVivo;
- The transcripts will be analyzed to highlight participants' salient beliefs, based on the Grounded Theory Model.
- All three analyses (legal, statistical and qualitative) will ultimately be triangulated to issue improvement guidelines.



KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION CANADA
APPLICATIONS DES CONNAISSANCES CANADA

