

# What is the Evidence of Practice and Education Related to Serious Illness Communication in Arab Countries? A Literature Review

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## ABSTRACT

Communication between physicians and patients is an essential component of clinical practice. The available literature on practice and education related to serious illness communication (SIC) in Arab countries is summarized in this review article. A comprehensive search of various medical databases was conducted for pertinent literature concerning SIC practices and education in Arab countries. These databases consist of Scopus, Google Scholar, and PubMed. The final assessment consisted of a total of 88 articles. By enhancing patient experience and outcomes, serious illness communication leads to high-quality care. In Arab countries, the experiences and preferences of patients and their families are significantly influenced by cultural, religious, and social factors. Regardless of the obstacles that arise from cultural and healthcare practice disparities, there is an improvement in comprehension of the fundamental nature of effective SIC in enhancing patient outcomes and increasing the quality of care. Due to various factors, there is a scarcity of research on SIC in Arab countries. One potential explanation is that palliative care services are typically either underdeveloped or poorly integrated into the healthcare system, which results in a lack of attention to this field in terms of research and practice. Thus, studies are impeded by cultural sensitivities and superstitions, which prohibit open communication about the process of dying. Additionally, the scarcity of resources and specialized training additionally contributes to the absence of palliative care initiatives. Consequently, these obstacles have established a highly restrictive environment in which there are insufficient studies, publications, and awareness regarding the effective communication of severe illness in Arab countries. Innovative strategies, education, and research are essential to bridge the divide between healthcare practices and culture in the context of SIC. By promoting interdisciplinary collaboration, technology integration, continuous quality improvement, cultural competency, and communication skills training, healthcare institutions and caretakers can improve the quality of life for seriously ill patients and their families and enhance SIC practices.

**Keywords:** Serious illness communication, Palliative care communication, End-of-life communication, Arab countries, Middle East

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