

# CONSENT TO VOLUNTARY ANTIPSYCHOTIC DRUG TREATMENT—IS IT FREE AND INFORMED?

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## Background

Antipsychotic medications are the cornerstone treatment for people with psychotic disorders. Per legal and ethical standards, physicians must secure individuals' free and informed consent before administering treatment. This principle is based on three key elements: consent, understanding, and non-control.

## Objective



To investigate the dynamics of consent in the context of antipsychotic drug therapy, with particular emphasis on the essential attributes that constitute free and informed consent.

## Methodology



- Participants: 20 Israeli participants : 10 women and 10 men, with an average age of 27.89 years; recipients of antipsychotic drug treatment in the last three years; not part of forced treatment.
- Method: a semi-structured interview was used. Data analysis employed grounded theory methodology through constant comparison, with meaning units extracted and organized into categories and higher-order themes.

## Key Findings



### Theme 1: Lack of Information Regarding Treatment

- Failure to provide information at all
- Describing positive effects as certain
- Little or no explanation of side effects
- Missing information about alternatives

### Theme 2: Experience of Lack of Free Choice

- Experience of lack of choice
- Conditioning rehabilitation services on medication consent
- Providing treatment without obtaining consent

"They didn't tell me about the side effects; they only told me about how it could benefit me... "

"All he told me was that I was taking antipsychotics; that was more or less the end of it"

"In the psychiatric rehabilitation services, they say, you need to meet with a psychiatrist, you need to show that you are taking medication."

"I have no choice here... you understand that it would be shorter to sign a consent and then be freed than to insist with them"

## Conclusions



- Most participants received inadequate information about treatment risks and side effects
- Rehabilitation services were inappropriately conditioned on medication compliance
- Patients experienced a lack of free choice in treatment decisions.
- There is an urgent need to improve informed consent practices, train therapeutic staff on consent requirements, and ensure rehabilitation services promote rather than compromise patient autonomy.

Add your sources here, if there are any.