

Abstract

Original Article

The Role of Citizenship, Culture and Voluntary Community Organisations towards Patient Empowerment in England and Greece

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Abstract

Background: Comparison of the development or evolution of patient empowerment across different health systems, can illuminate similarities and differences, providing evidence for improvement and reform.

Aims: To compare the historical evolution of citizenship, culture and voluntary community organisations that may have shaped expectations and meanings of patient empowerment in England and Greece.

Methodology: A critical review of relevant historical, research and policy literature in English and Greek language.

Results: Diverse social and historical factors have affected citizenship, being strong and expanded in England and weaker with strong social determinants in Greece. Powerful intermediary bodies, with long tradition of voluntary health action, have been developed in England; whilst in Greece an absence of strong intermediary and generic health related organisations resulted in a more recent history of voluntary action and increasing actions on patients' rights.

Conclusion: Patient empowerment expectations and meanings as shaped by citizenship, culture and voluntary community organisations have been developed and expressed differently in these countries. These may have affected the development of patient empowerment systems, structures and services.

Keywords: patient empowerment; patient involvement, patient rights; England; Greece; citizenship, culture, voluntary community organisations