Legal Policy of Protection COVID-19 Patients in Hospitals

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1. Introduction

The Covid-19 outbreak began in Wuhan, China. In China, the number of cases climbed rapidly, reaching a high between late January and early February 2020, when it reached 121,000 claims and continued to expand significantly. Since President Joko Widodo revealed the first confirmed case of Covid-19 in Indonesia, the number of patients has continued to grow. The DKI Jakarta area is also recognized as the transmission site for Covid-19. The patient population continues to rise significantly; on March 11, 2020, the patient population is classified as a global pandemic.1

Covid-19 has been confirmed in 247,968,227 cases worldwide as of November 4, 2021, with 5,020,204 deaths (CFR 2.0 percent) in 204 Infected Countries and 151 Community Transmission Countries. According to the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, 4,246,802 persons have been proven positive for COVID-19, and 143,500 deaths (CFR: 3.4 percent) have been reported as a result of the disease.1

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However, 4,091,938 patients have recovered from the condition. Covid-19 has spread to Indonesia.\(^2\)

According to Indonesian Ministry of Health records, the number of reported Covid-19 victims reached 1,566,995 on April 11, 2021, with a death toll of 42,530. According to Pokja statistics handling Covid-19 cases as of July 25, 2021, a total of 3,166,505 patients were confirmed, 2,509,318 patients were recovered, 573,908 cases were recovered, and 83,279 patients died.\(^3\)

The number of confirmed cases in Indonesia has not decreased due to a number of factors, including widespread non-compliance with government-established health protocols, dishonesty on the part of patients affected by Covid-19 toward health workers who care for these patients, which can result in health workers being involved, as was the case at Dr. Kariadi Hospital in Semarang, where Covid-19 caused as many as 46 health workers to be involved due to the false actions of one infected patient. In Indonesia, the rules governing health are governed by the Republic of Indonesia’s Law No. 44 of 2009 on Hospitals (Hospital Law) and the Republic of Indonesia’s Law No. 29 of 2004 on the Practice of Medicine (Law on Medical Practice).\(^4\)

Indonesia is one of the countries that have been infected with the coronavirus. As a result, coronavirus patients are beginning to emerge in Indonesia; because this coronavirus is relatively new and there is still much research being conducted on how to overcome and deal with it, it is felt that patient protection and the capacity or readiness of hospitals to deal with patients exposed to a coronavirus should be discussed or studied. Hospitals are defined in the General Provisions of the Hospital Law as health care establishments that provide comprehensive personal hygiene services, including inpatient, outpatient, and emergency care.\(^5\)

According to Article 5 of the Hospital Law, the following are some of the hospital’s functions, providing medical services and health rehabilitation in accordance with hospital service standards, addressing medical needs, maintaining and improving personal health through comprehensive secondary and tertiary health services, coordinating human resource education and training to enhance the ability to provide health services; and adhering to the health

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\(^3\) Vitalii M. Pidhaietskyi and others, ‘Infectious Complications of Hip Arthroplasty: Causes and Results of Treatment’, *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 5.3 (2021), 313–20 [https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v5n3.1520](https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v5n3.1520)

\(^4\) Gunawan Widja and others, ‘Understanding COVID-19 Vaccination Program among Indonesian Public’, *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 5.3 (2021), 212–23 [https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v5n3.1429](https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v5n3.1429)

sector's scientific ethics in order to improve health services, conduct research, and development in the field.6

The family of one of the Covid-19 patients in Tasikmalaya Regency filed a complaint with Tasikmalaya City Police alleging that the hospital violated consumer rights. Patients who tested negative for Covid-19 then sequestered themselves. The family was still unsure about the initial examination results, and the patient was retaken to the hospital; upon arrival, the patient was promptly placed in an IGD isolation room; after several days, the isolated patient tested positive for Covid-19 and died. Meanwhile, patients are defined in the Hospital Law as anyone who consults his or her health concerns in order to acquire necessary health care, either directly or indirectly.7

Due to the fact that coronavirus is a relatively new disease, it is deemed necessary to give legal protection for all patients, even though hospitals have provided excellent services to the community in the modern era. These medical procedures do not completely eliminate the danger of error or neglect. Health workers’ errors or omissions in the performance of their professional tasks can be lethal for the patient’s body and soul, which is obviously highly detrimental to the patient.8 This study aim to analysis the legal protection for Covid-19 patients in hospitals and elements affect patients’ legal safety in hospitals.

2. Research Method

The methods of inquiry utilized in juridical-normative research include conceptual and statutory approaches. The data used are secondary sources gleaned from library research. The gathered data is evaluated and presented in a descriptive manner in its native language. This is sometimes referred to as the library approach, as it involves the study of books, legislation, and other pertinent materials. Normative juridical is a method or procedure for resolving research problems through the examination of secondary sources. Thus, this research takes a normative juridical method in examining the legal protection of Covid-19 patients in hospitals.9

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6 Natalia S. Lukyanenko and others, ‘“Clinical Masks” of Congenital Malformations of Urinary System in Children of Early Age’, International Journal of Health Sciences, 5.3 (2021), 244–51 https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v5n3.1458
The data is gathered and analyzed through the use of a literature search (library research). It is done by examining the regulations, records, or publications that contain the issues being investigated, as well as the doctrine or observations of legal professionals.\textsuperscript{10} This secondary data collection aims to establish a theoretical and legal foundation for conducting information analysis on research findings. The data collection method used in this study is a study or library research. The term "literature research" refers to study that is undertaken utilizing published materials, such as books, records, or summaries of prior research findings. Secondary data is retrieved or collected from existing sources by researchers.\textsuperscript{11}

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Legal Protection of Covid-19 Patients in Hospitals

Presidential Decree (KEPPRES) No. 11 of 2020 on the Determination of Public Health Emergency Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) broadly regulates two things: first, Covid19 is recognized as a disease that disrupts public health, and second, this trait entails accountability and action in accordance with the law’s provisions. The government establishes PSBB policy by a decree of Community Emergency Conditions and thereafter through Government Regulations. Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 21 of 2020 on Large-Scale Social Restrictions to Accelerate the Handling of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) was established in the hierarchy of laws and regulations based on the standards stipulated in Article 60 of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 6 of 2018 concerning Health Quarantine (Health Quarantine Law).\textsuperscript{12}

According to Article 93 of the Health Quarantine Law, "Anyone who violates the Health Quarantine and obstructs its performance in order to produce a Public Health Emergency is penalised by a maximum of one year in prison and a maximum fine of Rp 100,000,000. Human rights, equity, benefits, protection, respect for rights and obligations, justice, gender, and non-discriminatory and religious principles all guide health development. Health development seeks to raise everyone’s knowledge, willpower, and capacity to live a healthy lifestyle in order to achieve the best possible level of public health as an investment in the

\textsuperscript{10} Devi Triasari, ‘Right to Sanitation : Case Study of Indonesia’, \textit{Journal of Human Rights, Culture and Legal System}, 1.3 (2021), 147–63 \url{https://doi.org/10.53955/jhcls.v1i3.20}


\textsuperscript{12} Vladimir A. Sergeev and others, ‘Clinical-Functional and Morphological Parameters of Purulonecrotic Foci Healing in Diabetic Foot Syndrome Using Programmable Sanitation Technologies’, \textit{International Journal of Health Sciences}, 5.3 (2021), 260–75 \url{https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v5n3.1495}
development of socially and economically valuable human resources. Everyone has a right to health care, which contributes to health development.\textsuperscript{13}

According to Article 1 of the Minister of Health’s Regulation No. 4 of 2018, a patient is defined as someone who interacts with a hospital about his or her health in order to acquire necessary health care. To see patients who have been infected with the coronavirus, it is necessary to first understand the patient’s medical condition. According to Article 31 of the Hospital Law, patients have the following obligations, each patient owes the hospital for the services received, additional rules related patient obligations are governed by ministerial regulations. In terms of human rights, patients’ rights have advanced significantly, owing to the pressure exerted on hospitals by the Patients Bill of Rights to ensure that patients’ rights are recognized in court.\textsuperscript{14}

This is already occurring and expanding throughout Europe and the United States. As indicated previously, health maintenance in Indonesia has sought to provide acceptable health services that meet health care requirements, as defined by the Republic of Indonesia’s Law No. 36 of 2009 on Health. As the necessity for patient rights protection grows, it is thought necessary to legislate the obligation of health personnel to respect patients’ rights in one of the Health Law’s articles. Article 32 of the Hospital Law establishes the following rights for patients, obtain information about the hospital’s regulations and legislation; obtain information about the patient’s rights and obligations; obtain humane, fair, honest, and non-discriminatory service; obtain high-quality health services in accordance with professional standards and operational procedures; obtain effective and efficient services so that patients avoid physical and material losses; make a complaint about the quality of care received, and obtain information about medical diagnosis and treatment, the aims of medical measures, alternative treatment options, potential risks and problems, the prognosis of treatment options, and the expected cost of treatment.\textsuperscript{15}

Patients’ rights, which are human rights, should not be compromised. Others must uphold these rights on a daily basis. Although it incorporates critical societal dimensions of human rights, it is the human being. On the basis of the aforementioned patient rights, it is clear that the patient has the right to privacy and confidentiality regarding the sickness suffered, including medical data. There are advantages and disadvantages to the transparency of patient data when

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\item Vitalii Y. Bocheliuk and others, ‘Psychological Features of Post-COVID Syndrome Course’, \textit{International Journal of Health Sciences}, 5.3 (2021), 276–85 \url{https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v5n3.1503}
\item Pidhaietskyi and others.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
implementing Covid-19 outbreak countermeasures and prevention. It has become a source of contention for policymakers and the general public.\textsuperscript{16}

Those who advocate for revealing patient data with Covid-19 elaborated on how such activities could aid in anticipating transmission in an orderly manner. However, there are many who oppose this initiative on the grounds that it has the potential to result in discrimination and unilateral persecution of patients, their families, and closest friends by the community. Patients impacted by Covid-19 and treated in hospitals are entitled to have their health and rights protected by the hospital under the Republic of Indonesia’s Consumer Protection Law No. 8 of 1999. (Consumer Protection Law).\textsuperscript{17}

Consumers, as defined in Article 1 number (2) of the Consumer Protection Act, are anyone who uses goods and services accessible in society for their own advantage, the benefit of their families, others, or other living creatures that are not intended to be exchanged. According to this definition, consumers refer to the final consumer. Legal protection in law is a type of service that law enforcement officials or security forces must provide to victims in order to instill a sense of security, both physical and mental, and to protect them from threats, disturbances, terror, and violence perpetrated by any party during the investigation, prosecution, and examination at court hearings. The rule of law must be based on long-term interests, not just short-term ones. Community empowerment is a consensus approach to economic growth that integrates social ideals.\textsuperscript{18}

In creating legal protection principles in Indonesia, Pancasila as a state ideology and philosophy serves as a foundation. In the West, the concept of legal protection for individuals is derived from the concepts of \textit{rechtstaat} and \textit{rule of law}. Using a Western frame of reference and Pancasila as a foundation, the premise of legal protection in Indonesia is the acknowledgment and preservation of human dignity and Pancasila-derived dignity. According to Mukti, A. Fadjar stated, Legal protection is a condensed definition of protection, in this case limited to protection by law. The judge’s protection is also related to rights and obligations. In this scenario, the man owns that as a legal subject in his interactions with other humans and their environment\textsuperscript{19}.

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\item[16] Stanislav Husariev and others, ‘Legal Provision for Medical Aid and Medical Service in Ukraine’, \textit{International Journal of Health Sciences}, 5.3 (2021), 321–30 \url{https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v5n3.1529}
\item[17] Mendila P. Arungpadang and others, ‘Correlation between Levels of LGR-5 (Leucine Rich Repeat Containing Protein Coupled Receptor 5) with Clinical Aspects and Colorectal Carcinoma Stage’, \textit{International Journal of Health Sciences}, 5.3 (2021), 331–43 \url{https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v5n3.1541}
\end{itemize}
According to the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia’s Regulation 1171/MENKES/PER/VI/2011 on hospital information systems, patient safety is a system in which hospitals make patient care more comfortable, which includes risk assessment, identification, and management of patient risk factors, reporting and analysis of incidents, developing skills from incidents, and follow-up and implementation of solutions to minimize the emergency. Indonesia has a plethora of rules and regulations governing health and hospitals. Article 32 letter I of the Hospital Law is also regulated in Article 57 paragraph (1) of the Republic of Indonesia’s Law No. 36 of 2009 concerning Health (Health Law) and Article 17 letter h number 2 of the Republic of Indonesia’s Law No. 14 of 2008 concerning the Openness of Public Data (KIP Law), which establishes that everyone has the right to the secret of their health condition that has been submitted for the maintenance of health services.20

Article 58 of the 2014 Health Personnel Law expressly states that medical personnel are required to distribute health services in person in accordance with Professional Standards, Professional Service Standards, Standards of Operational Procedures, as well as professional ethics and the health needs of Health Service Recipients; obtaining approval from the Recipient of Health Services or his family for the action to be given; and protecting the confidentiality of health information. Parties who disclose self-evidence or medical records of patients in a public space may be forced to make amends for their losses.21

Patients and families affected by Covid-19 may pursue additional legal remedies through criminal actions. Criminal law can be defined as the law that regulates the actions that are prohibited by law, as well as the criminal punishments that can be inflicted on the culprit. Law enforcement authorities anticipate that anyone who disseminates data that causes injury, as well as the negligence of medical workers, such as doctors who do not maintain confidential patient information, will be charged with a criminal violation. According to Article 55 of the Republic of Indonesia’s Law No. 14 of 2008 on Public Information Disclosure (KIP Law), “Any person who intentionally makes public information that is false or misleading and causes harm to others faces a maximum sentence of one year in prison and a maximum fine of Rp5,000,000.00 (five million rupiahs).” Legal protection is defined in terms of civil, criminal, administrative, or defense of other rights. With legal protection for patients’ rights, they shared the responsibility of leaders in health care institutions such as hospitals and medical

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workers such as doctors, nurses, and midwives to respect and maintain the confidentiality of patients' medical information.22

Health initiatives are coordinated to ensure that individuals and communities achieve the maximum possible level of health. Health services are delivered responsibly, safely, consistently, and without discrimination. Concerns about Patient Protection in Health Services include the following, everyone has the right to accept or reject some or all of the relief measures that will be offered to him after receiving and comprehending information about the act in its entirety; and the right to accept or reject the foregoing does not apply to sufferers of diseases that are easily transmissible to the wider community; the state of an unconscious person; or severe mental disorders.23

3.2. Factors Affecting The Legal Protection of Patients in Hospitals

Legal protection for COVID-19 sufferers can be accomplished in three ways. The first is through civil legal activities. Losses sustained by COVID-19 patients and their families as a result of medical secret leaks resulting in material and immaterial losses related to medical services and health services may be sued civilly and sought through a lawsuit against the law, specifically Article 1365 of the Civil Code, which states: "Any act against the law that results in a loss to another requires the person who caused the loss to compensate for it."24

Employers or medical workers working in Government Hospitals, as well as third parties that disclose patients' identities or medical records in public settings, can be sued for compensation under Article 1365 of the Civil Code. Whether or not negligence or intentional activity results in material or immaterial losses will be determined later in light of the consequences of the medical records breach for several days. Based on formal evidence such as situations demonstrating the claimed negligence of someone's conduct or policies that create injury, such as stigma, news through print media, web media, and community legislation, among others. In civil court, additional evidence in the form of physical evidence such as voice recordings, pictures, online newspaper stories, and others accompanied by a single witness is sufficient.25

Second, Efforts in Criminal Law. Criminal Law Efforts are visible in the legislation and regulations, most notably in the Medical Practice Law. Along with controlling administrative law issues, this Law on Medical Practice also governs a

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slew of criminal sanctions against doctors who commit errors while practicing medicine. Articles 75 to 80 contain criminal sanctions, but those directly related to the medical profession are contained in Article 79 letter c of the Law on Medical Practice, which reads as follows: "Convicted of a maximum imprisonment of one year or a maximum fine of Rp.50,000,000.00, each doctor or dentist willfully violates the obligations set forth in Article 51 letters a, b, c, and d." Article 51 of the Medical Practice Law contains provisions against the obligations that must be met by a doctor or dentist when carrying out medical practice; failure to comply with these obligations results in criminal sanctions as specified in Article 79 of the Medical Practice Law, which carries a maximum sentence of one year in prison or a maximum fine of Rp.50,000,000.00. Additionally, Article 55 of the KIP Law regulates the criminal formulation, which states that "Any person who intentionally makes public information that is false or misleading and causes harm to others is punishable by a maximum of one year in prison and/or a maximum fine of Rp 5,000,000".26

Thirdly, Efforts in Administrative Law. Efforts can be made to obtain protection by reporting to the Indonesian Medical Council (KKI), as the aim of the Indonesian Medical Council is to safeguard community recipients of health services from doctors and dentists, in accordance with the terms of the Law on Medical Practice. Additionally, it is taken by filing a complaint with the Disciplinary Honorary Assembly if COVID-19 patients, anyone who knows them, or their interests are injured by doctors or dentists doing medical practices. The complaint is made in writing to the Chairman of the Disciplinary Honorary Assembly and must include the complainant's name, the doctor's name and address, the date of the action, and the cause for the complaint. If proven, the physician will get a warning sentence until his or her registration certificate or license to practice is revoked.27

Patients will have legal protection if health workers perform their duties in accordance with the underlying principles of health care, namely the principle of timeliness; the principle of legality; the principle of proportionality; the principle of honesty; and the principle of freedom to choose action. These principles can fit the people’s desires to defend their rights and obligations. Maintaining a paternalistic connection between medical and non-medical employees is inappropriate. Paternalistic characteristics are expressed in terms such as "the


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doctor knows best, whatever you believe is right” or “I've given up on the doctor; wherever the doctor leads us, it's the best course of action.”

Everyone has the right and obligation to receive optimal health care from health workers, the existence of health care duties confers legal protection on patients as consumers of health services. According to the explanation, the elements affecting patient legal protection are the existence of laws and rules governing patient legal protection, which oblige health workers to perform their obligations or offer health services in accordance with existing laws and regulations. Several countries continue to be affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Countries around the world undertake a variety of infection prevention and control measures. However, it turns out that a lot of countries have now overcome the outbreak and resumed normalcy.

They were able to contain the spread of viral infections, resulting in a decrease in the number of infected cases. These countries include the following. New Zealand’s strategy is to immediately adopt a national lockdown in an effort to restrict movement and interaction in order to break the chain of illness dissemination. Additionally, the government is doing intensive mass screenings to track sick individuals in attempt to halt transmission. Singapore’s plan is to enforce tight health regulations, checks, and contact tracing, as well as to launch a mass immunization program for all citizens. Singapore had a lockdown policy, but due to improved infection management, Singapore has since removed the regulation.

China, despite the fact that it was the first country to record a case of Covid-19 infection, has managed to contain the virus's spread. Countries around the world have used a variety of strategies and initiatives to combat Covid-19 infection. To ensure Indonesia’s maximum success in dealing with Covid-19, all sectors of society must take an active role in adhering to health rules and norms enforced by the government. When people are participating in outdoor activities, it is critical to always wear a mask, maintain a safe distance, and wash your hands thoroughly, especially before touching your face. Additionally, comprehensive Covid-19 vaccination is a real measure that Indonesia can take to successfully fight this pandemic.

4. Conclusion

Based on the analysis and various discussions above, the conclusions that can be taken are as follows, Legal protection of Covid-19 patients in the hospital is carried out with three civil, criminal, and administrative efforts. Civil Law Efforts

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use lawsuits against the law based on Article 1365 of the Civil Code. Illegal Law efforts through the judicial process using the legal basis contained in the Law on Medical Practice, articles containing criminal sanctions contained in Articles 75 to Article 80, but which are directly related to the medical profession contained in Article 79 letter c of the Law on Medical Practice, other criminal law foundations are also included in Article 55 of the KIP Law. The administration's legal efforts can report to the Indonesian Medical Council (KKI) and the Honorary Assembly of Indonesian Medical Discipline (MKDKI) if COVID-19 patients or anyone who knows or their interests are harmed by the actions of doctors in carrying out medical practices. Factors that affect the legal protection of patients are the existence of laws and regulations governing the legal security of patients. They require health workers to carry out their duties or, when providing health services, are required to follow applicable laws and regulations.

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