

Forgotten patients – ill management of elderly patients in foster care system

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INTRODUCTION AND GOAL Since 2014, a new palliative care system is being introduced in Croatian health care system. Through its implementation it was noticed that one group of patients is continuously standing out for the lack of proper care. Those patients were the elderly and sick patients in foster care households. It has been noted that these patients often end up in emergency rooms for various conditions all due to inadequacy of care provided. After the hospital treatment they are most commonly sent back to their foster families. In this paper our goal will be to try to understand how it is possible and allowed for patients to fall through the cracks of our health and social care system.

METHODS As a method an unstructured interview was used. Interviews with stakeholders led to reconstruction of the processes and critical points in patient management.

RESULTS Specific circumstances in which the problem occurs were determined and key elements of care recognized. General stance towards this group of patients shows significant signs of inequality in health care. Results show that the problem is systemic and mainly stems from the lack of regulation and understanding in relations between stakeholders.

CONCLUSION The problem is significant and has a major impact on patient wellbeing as well as having a great effect on day-to-day work of health institutions. Due to complexity of the situation and high number of stakeholders involved we can conclude that more attention should be given, and more resources diverted to the concept of integrated care.