

## **Abstract**

A Mobile Infirmary (from the Czech term “Mobilní ošetřovna”) is a vehicle with an interior space, which in outreach work conditions provides an environment with hygienic standards suited for interventions such as individual counseling, medical treatment or testing for infectious diseases. It represents a relatively unique extension of addictology harm reduction services in the Czech Republic, which has not yet been described in local scientific literature.

This thesis aims to describe the characteristics of outreach work done by the Mobile Infirmary, on the basis of a case study of the Outreach Program Drop In, o.p.s., with emphasis on its comparison with regular outreach work. The research questions concern the starting points for Mobile Infirmary’s operation, its actual workflow and the ways in which it differs from that of regular outreach work, and what new professional requirements it presents.

The research sample of this qualitative case study consisted of nine outreach workers, chosen by deliberate sampling. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect the data. This data, together with documents related to the operation of the Infirmary, were analyzed through the clustering method.

The findings show that the starting points of the service stem from the reality of the target group’s worsening health conditions. The main differences are based in the professional requirements, the static and mobile nature of the service and in the comfort procured by the Infirmary’s environment. Clients approach the current site of the Infirmary to be taken care of. Care of individual clients is deepened by the provided comfort and privacy. Mobility offers a flexible response to changes in the drug scene, but its fundamental limit is its dependence on political decisions. The overall conclusion is that the nature of the Mobile Infirmary combines some characteristic features of ordinary outreach work and those of work in drop-in centers.

The output of this research can serve as a source of information about the professional practice of the Outreach Program Drop In, o.p.s., as well as an inspiration for further outreach programs that consider expanding the scope of the care they provide.

**Keywords:** the Mobile Infirmary – harm reduction – outreach program – Drop In, o.p.s. – people who inject drugs