

Providing Health Services to a Pediatric Patient

ABSTRACT

The presented thesis focuses on the legal aspects of providing health services to pediatric patients in the Czech Republic. The central attention is on the minor child as a vulnerable person, entitled to special legal protection and an appropriately tailored approach from health service providers. The work gradually defines the basic concepts related to the legal status of minors, their parents, and other individuals who may represent the child in healthcare matters. Key topics primarily include issues related to treatment decisions, including the matter of informed consent and situations where care is provided without consent. Attention is also given to judicial interventions, such as in cases of conflict between the views of parents and the child, or when health protection is necessary. Another section of the work addresses the rights of pediatric patients during hospitalization, including the right to continuous presence of a guardian, the right to visits and contact with the outside world, the right to information, and the possibilities for their limitation in specific situations. The final chapter focuses on the procedures in cases of suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child (the so-called CAN syndrome). It emphasizes the necessity of interdisciplinary cooperation among health service providers, child protection agencies, and criminal justice authorities. The thesis thoroughly examines the obligation to report suspicions of potential abuse or neglect to the relevant institutions, the extent to which otherwise protected patient privacy can be breached, and the legal tools for the immediate protection of the child—from reporting cases to child protection agencies to court rulings. The aim of the work is to contribute to the analysis and thus improve the protection and respect for the rights of pediatric patients within the Czech healthcare system. It highlights the crucial role of healthcare professionals, who, in addition to safeguarding the physical and mental health of children, also bear the responsibility for upholding the rights of minors. In conclusion, the author formulates recommendations for health service providers and other relevant entities.

Key words: child, patient, provision of health care services