

The main topic of this thesis is assistance in supported living for people with mental retardation. The theoretical part of this essay defines these concepts in the context of the new trends in the care for people with mental retardation. Then we focus on persona! assistant himself; we describe his personality, demands on his professional skills and his approach towards the clients. Then there are introduced some psychological aspects of assistance. We pay attention on motives for this helping profession, on burn-out syndrom and ethical aspects of assistant' s work.

The aim of the practical part is to explore the current situation in assistance in Czech republic. The goal of my investigation was to find out using mainly qualitative research methods, who is the typical assistant in supported living, why did he choose his profession and how does he experience his work. The results pointed out, that there is a large specific group of young women working in this profession as well the lack of other age groups of assistants and the lack male assistants. The most frequented motives for assistance are the possibility of using the skills obtained by previous education and experience, the meaningfulness of this work and the wish to provide high quality service for mentally handicaped people. Among the least important motives were the wage they get for their work as well as the possibility of building of carrier. In the resaearch also appeared that assistants are offen unsatisfied with the organisation of the service provider and with their work conditions. These results can serve as a feed-back for organisations as well as inspiration for assistants themselves.