

Ethical dilemma and economic aspects of overtreating terminally ill patients in current society

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to outline problems of over-treating terminally ill patients in the final stage of their illness in current society in context of ethics, bioethics and economic factors. Based on medical, ethical and economic texts, we will try to analyse if current ethical principles, law standards and economic level of development of current society ensures enough such a medical care to each and every individual in line with human dignity. Do the health workers who treat terminally ill patients realize their power as well as powerlessness when it comes to fighting life and death? What makes them to start and continue such therapy that does not bring any benefit to the patient and what is the purpose to this? Is it possible to die with dignity? Can death be more meaningful in comparison to life? The first part of this thesis will focus on the theoretical point of view of these problems.

The second part of this thesis will try to analyse the problems with the help of sociological research among the general population, but as well as among health workers who stand in front of ethical and economical challenges in each and every day. Such challenges can lead to overtreatment. Is there awareness about overtreatment among medical society? Is economical pressure to keep their jobs one of the factors of over-treatment? The foundation of the research will be based on the theoretical part of this thesis, primarily on the four principals of bioethics introduced by Tom L. Beauchamp and James F. Childress, but as well as on other international and local sources inclusive of Jaromir Matějek publications.