

Abstract

This thesis is focused on the research of adult day care centers. Its aim is to answer the question how the day care centers define the care from the point of view of different stakeholders; how are the centers specific to other social services and what are the possible problems and obstacles.

Theoretical part describes the current situation of elderly care and deals with topics such as the demographic development of the Czech Republic, the media image of the elderly, new trends in the area of care, active aging, social services etc. Empirical research deals with two day care centers from the points of view of different stakeholders. The research, which results in two case studies and their comparisons, is carried out using qualitative methods – semi-structured interviews, analysis of documents and survey.

Data analysis shows that the main function of day care centers is „relief service“ for families who provide care to the frail seniors. The distinctive feature of day care centers is emphasizing differences with other social services for elderly, especially the residential ones. This is why the great emphasis is placed on individual care in a small environment and on intergenerational encounters.

The analysis also shows the day care centers as a female environment. Women prevail among caregivers – both informal and formal – and also among clients. The active aging influences the program of day care centers. According to caregivers clients can be developed by activities or at least their aging process can be slowed down. Another interesting moment of care in day care centers is the tension between "professionalism" and "caring nature". While families of clients expect primarily a professional attitude in day care centers, formal caregivers themselves emphasize "inborn" skills and abilities.

The research highlights: (i) financial support of day care centers provided by the state is not sufficient, (ii) the program and activities are focused on women, (iii) a bedroom, i.e. a place to relax, is missing in one of the day care centers.

Key words: Elder care, aging care, adult daycare center, seniors, ageing, social care, social work, social services