

ABSTRACT

Palliative care is an approach focused on improving or maintaining quality of life for patients and their families who suffer from terminal illness in an advanced stage. Hospices are most commonly associated with palliative care, where hospitalized patients are expected to live less than six months. The aim of this work is to introduce the issue of palliative care and the nutritional approach in hospices from a nutritional therapist's perspective.

The theoretical part is focused on the general issues of palliative care and its division. It presents the needs and life values of patients and their families, introduces the issue of nutrition and hydration in the terminal phase of the disease, possible interventions and symptoms that affect food intake.

The main objective of the empirical part of the research, which was conducted in the form of semi-structured interviews, is to find out among the patients at the Hospic u Dobrého Pastýře in Čerčany their favorite food and dishes. The sub-objectives were to find out the preferred consistency, quantity and texture of food, identification of situations and symptoms affecting patient's food intake in hospices and to find out through a questionnaire survey in inpatient hospices in the Czech Republic the importance of a nutritional therapist. Based on the research, it was found that the most popular dishes are soups and sauces, the largest number of patients preferred mashed potatoes as side dish. Research also points to the importance of how dishes were prepared. The results of the research will be applied in the catering service of the hospice and taken into account in the preparation of the menus for patients.

Following the questionnaire survey in inpatient hospices in the Czech Republic half of the facilities have its own catering and in only two hospices nutritional therapist is employed part-time, but communicates with patients in only one of them. Results from the questionnaire survey in hospices in the Czech Republic show deficiencies in the provision of nutritional care in hospices and this issue needs to be further addressed.

Keywords: catering, hospice, nutrition, nutritional care, nutritional therapist, palliative care

