

This diploma thesis examines the scope of activity of social workers in Czech hospitals and the role that hospitals play in relation to social services.

The main goal of this thesis is to describe and provide research on the main responsibilities of social workers in hospitals. The research was carried out in the Olomouc region (north-east of the Czech Republic), which has eight hospitals. The methodology used in the theoretical part of this project provides secondary analyses of all available literature and resources. In the practical part of the project, the methodology of an interview was used to gather information from selected hospital staff (doctors and nurses) and some patients.

Currently, hospitals in the Olomouc region are not obliged to follow the regulations laid down in law 108/2006 Sb., because they do not provide social beds or capacities. The range of social workers' competencies is described in general public notice No. 424/2004 Sb., regulating the activities of social workers, specialists and other healthcare employees. Under current legislation in the Czech Republic, social work can be carried out two types of social workers in hospitals. The nature of the work is determined by a social worker's qualifications. The research showed that any increase in the numbers of such social workers would be welcomed by all questioned hospitals. Hospital staff were also convinced of the value of social work in their hospitals. Currently, due to time pressure, social workers provide their services to a limited number of patients selected by nurses and doctors. The fundamental activity of social workers is communication and close interaction with patients, their families and hospital staff.

This thesis could provide a useful tool for developing an optimal job description defining the competencies of social workers in hospitals, and help in the education of hospital staff in the field of social work.