

## Concern for worthy old age

### Abstract

Social changes permanently occurring in modern world have been inevitably reflected in the decreased role of the family with regard to care for their elderly relatives. Notwithstanding the fact that the elderly do take more and more efforts to live on their own and independently of their children, there is always some point when the assistance of others becomes indispensable.

If the caring role of the family is disrupted to such an extent that the elderly person cannot count on any assistance from the family or has no relatives, then care in institutional settings can be a solution.

Nowadays, we can see the excessively growing number of applications for places in residential nursing homes.

A residential nursing home is a place that should provide the elderly with accommodation services, protection, physical rehabilitation, as well as social and mental activity recuperation. Moreover, elderly residents of institutional care homes should have the opportunity to cherish the human rights and basic freedoms, such as: respect for their dignity, privacy, beliefs and needs.

In our country there has not been active social policy with regard to the elderly yet that would entail comprehensive satisfaction of needs. One can have the impression that the role and place of the elderly is distinctly diminished.

We shall hope that the words cited from the Report of the Royal Commission on Long-Term Care, ordered and published in 1999 by the government of the United Kingdom, become significant also for the Polish circumstances:

*(...) The moral test of Government is how that Government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in the shadows of life – the sick, the needy, and the handicapped (...).*

**Key words:** *nursing home, social isolation, group psychotherapy, individual therapy*