

SUMMARY

The ageing of the world's population is an inevitable and irreversible process which heralds an unprecedented, wide and deep system transformation in all vital areas of social life. According to international experts' prognoses the process of ageing will bring an increase, in the next 10-20 years, of people aged 60 and over to 1-1.5 bil. in the world (6.2-7.3 mil. in Poland).

Especially meaningful is the twice faster growth of the number of people characterised as „aged elderly” than the growth of the number of people in overall elderly people population. From the beginning of the 90's the number of people aged 80 and over has tripled worldwide, while the number of overall old people increased two-fold (according to UN demographic expertise).

The intention of the authors of this work is to show the directions of actions necessary in health care of elderly people biased by the demographic situation, ageing trends of Poland's, Europe's and World's population. Moreover the authors wish to direct attention to the need of individualization of actions in the health-care programme for people of old age and the sub-population of elderly people.

In some measure reaching out to demographic trends, which translate to an increase in health-care needs of old people, it is necessary, as pointed out by a number of geriatrics and gerontology specialists, to see from one perspective the need to increase financial funding for health protection and social care, and from the other to introduce conceptions of complex geriatrics care propagandized by various bodies. Such an approach will in consequence lower the costs of care, guarantee high quality of service, increase the sense of safety and improve the quality of social life.

The specifics of human resources (doctors, nurses, specialist personnel), material resources (medical equipment, drugs/medicaments), the specifics of utilization process (medical procedures) and results (health related effects) prejudice the fact that we can speak of complex geriatric care.

In this book a general gerontology knowledge was presented, as well as more detailed knowledge relating to the specifics of seniors' development processes and promotion of health as well as its protection. Current needs and problems in the field of health protection and social care of elderly people were pointed out in the book.

The book is directed towards people undertaking screening and scientific research, as well as those interested gerontology problems. The latter group comprises foremost of doctors, nurses, psychologists and students of medical courses, biology and pedagogy. It would be worth for social workers and elderly people carers, who want to supplement their knowledge in the field of gerontology to delve into the book, in order to influence the development and health of the people under their care in a more conscious and efficient manner, creating for them a desired pro-social and pro-health basis.