

S70-01

FORENSIC PSYCHIATRY IN THE ELDERLY-ETHICAL ISSUES

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We discuss about psychiatric and psychological expertise exams and about the assessment of competence in the elderly and ethical aspect of care and research in elderly demented or not demented people and about involuntary commitment of incompetent patients.

We also refer to the complications and difficulties when trying to apply the civil commitments compulsive hospital admission measure, foreseen in the law for mental health, when the dementia diagnostic falls within this age group. Historically, involuntary commitment of incompetent patients took in the consideration the best interest of the patient, but also the well-being of the family and the potential risk for others.

After a short review of legislation and of conditions of hospitalization concerning involuntary commitment of the mentally ill people during our history before and after 1989, we'll analyze the activity on involuntary commitment in a Forensic Psychiatry Hospital in district Bihor, in last five years from a 30 years experience working in the field. Standards and practice in our country regarding the involuntary commitment have been changed more that three times after the second War and has been improved in 2002, when there appeared the new Mental Health Law, emphasizing protection of patients' rights. There are legal and ethical limits to involuntary hospitalisation, because involuntary treatment and hospitalisation restricts a person's liberty. There should be a lot of things to do to improve the quality standards: improvement of elementary care needs, improvement of their quality of life.