

Differences in social inclusion and access to services noticed among the elderly – particularly pressing are the problems of the elderly in the region Pomurje – two extensive analysis about the causes of social exclusion and the needs of the elderly for home care were conducted

The need of the elderly for home care is growing rapidly

The Union of Associations of Pensioners of Slovenia (ZDUS) with its Pomurje Provincial association of Pensioners Murska Sobota took one year to conduct two extensive researches. The results confirmed the assumptions. What are the solutions?

1230 elderly people in the region Pomurje took part in a study on the causes of social exclusion. In regard to the material situation, two of three receive a monthly income that is lower than 600 EUR, moreover every second person cannot cover their living costs in full. A more detailed analysis of the data showed that people living on a farm in a village are least capable of covering their living costs. There are also big differences between those elderly living in houses in the city (74 % of these can cover their own living costs) and those living in a village (only 53 %). The economic situation of the elderly are a big factor in their integration into programmes of active and healthy ageing. In the process of the research, they found out that possibilities for the inclusion of those groups need to be explored, that are most vulnerable (single and widowed persons, females, those older than 75 and those living in villages). In addition to the economic situation, health is also very important; those interviewed cite disease as by far the most frequent barrier in inclusion into programs of healthy and active ageing, even though these are the programs that have a positive effect on certain diseases or the feeling of those included. Social networks have a significant impact on the integration into programs of active ageing but the connection is (only) medium strong. A lot of socialising with

grandchildren was identified or at least weekly care and socializing with neighbours, which means that relations with neighbours are key parts of social networks of elderly in Pomurje, next to family members. Family members are also the greatest support for the elderly in case of health problems.

But what if the elderly person does not have any relatives and the help of neighbours is too far away or the elderly person does not want it?

They focused on these questions in the research on the needs according to different types of home care in which they interviewed 1944 elderly people in Pomurje. What kind of help is needed and where can we reduce differences in health for those elderly who are not in nursing homes or any other form of institutional care?

In Slovenia we have social care at home, so various forms of organized practical aid, with the help of which the need for institutional care is replaced for the claimant. The average price for an hour of home care in the region Pomurje is slightly higher than the Slovenian average - 5.96 EUR (Slovenian average is 5.07 EUR); the price ranges between 4.1 and 7.2 EUR. According to the Institute for social protection in the Republic of Slovenia, there were only 1.5 % people over the age of 65 in Pomurje that received home care, which places Pomurje amongst the regions with the worst inclusion into programs for home care. So do the elderly not need it? Do relatives or neighbours help them with everything? Do they decline help because of financial burdens of ignorance? Where are the reasons for such a low inclusion into programs of home care in the region Pomurje? 16 % of persons in Pomurje over the age of 65 years said that they require home care. The need for home care grows with age and with absence of health.

16 % of people expressed the need for occasional help with cleaning the apartment, more women than men (18 % women and 13 % men).

The same percentage of respondents stated the need for help with occasional shopping. This need increases with age and turns into regular help. It is similar with the need for help with occasional gardening. 17 % of all surveyed stressed the need. 8 % of all respondents occasionally need help with personal care, and 13 % with health care. These needs increase with age as well. In the indication of capabilities of covering the basic costs of living with their own income, 19 % of the respondents indicated that they sometimes cannot cover these costs. The percentage increases with age. 8 % of respondents can often not cover their monthly costs of living. Who helps them with these costs? In more than three quarters receive help from children and grandchildren but there are 10 % of those that receive no help. That is alarming. Relatives help 8 % of respondents, the rest receive help by others. The role of children and grandchildren increases with the age of the respondents and the percentage of those that receive no help declines. A relatively high proportion of elderly people (39%) could not pay for home care; only one third of respondents could. 27 % of respondents could partially pay for home care. The share of women (43%) that could not pay for home care is greater than the share of men (32%). With increasing age the share of those that could afford home care decreases and falls from 34 % to 26 % in the years from 85 to 94.



16 % of elderly people in the region Pomurje require home care but only 1.5 % of them receive it at the moment.

In order to reduce social exclusion and answer the need for home care for the elderly in Pomurje, certain activities are needed because children and grandchildren will not be able to provide all the help needed much longer. First, the adoption of relevant legislation is needed, afterwards creation of jobs that will enable this. It is our goal to ensure everyone a high quality life in old age, with appropriate home care, so that elderly can participate in various activities, because that keeps them healthy, both physically and mentally, and they thus contribute to healthy ageing of the society. This way of life also helps reduce inequalities in health of those people and groups that are most at risk (widowed, women, elderly over the age of 75, those living in large houses in villages by themselves).

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