

BOOK REVIEW

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Daniela Șoitu and Aniela Matei (coordinators), *Îngrijirea de lungă durată: practici, măsuri, politici* [*Long-term care: practice, procedures, policies*], Publishing House: „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University from Iași, 2020

Printed by the Publishing House „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University from Iași in 2020, the volume *Long-term care: practice, procedures, policies* is coordinated by two specialists and eloquent observers of the social and medical services predominantly offered to older people as well as the social policies focused on the scientific research dedicated to third and four ages. Daniela Șoitu, PhD university professor together with Aniela Matei, researcher, have completed a comprehensive depiction of different approaches to aging and the associated concept of long-term care from the European area as well as from Romania.

The volume emerged after a series of intensive research within the project *Continuous monitoring methodology of the quality of care in the institutions providing long-term care services* included in the Plan for research and development of the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice for the period 2018-2020.

With a number of 200 pages, in an A4 format, the paper has eight chapters signed by different authors, professors and experts in sociology, social work, economy and business administration, researchers from the area of social and medical services. In the introduction of this volume professor Daniela Șoitu is bringing forward a series of questions regarding not only the aging process but especially the adjacent field of interest which requires imperative concentration, namely the long-term care.

In fact the author states the need for integrated approaches of social and medical services „by looking for solutions based on needs, by emphasizing the preventive actions” (p. 10).

In the introduction we also identify a brief description of all eight chapters. The first chapter contains a delimitation of the conceptual frameworks of long-

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term care, namely that of socio-medical care related to old age, with the inherent costs, as well as a second integrative-participatory-prospective conceptual framework, highlighted by the coordinators of the volume through a series of considerations such as health status in connection with social determinants, individual responsibility as well as the permanence of long-term care.

The second chapter, signed by a plethora of professors from „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University from Iași, brings to the fore the indicators of long-term care systems in Romania as well as in Europe. Analyses of the aging process and the state of health, the challenges of such care reflected in the structure of public spending, the risk of poverty and the degree of accessibility of long-term care services are widely presented. The chapter is completed by charts, records and calculations from statistical sources of national and European databases such as the National Institute of Statistics and Eurostat.

The third chapter signed by researcher Aniela Matei is a presentation of the research methodology focused on social policies. The analysis followed two main components of the long-term care system, namely the human, financial and material resources necessary for the development of this type of care, as well as the adequate preparation of the health system for the provision of such services.

The next two chapters are devoted to the comparative analysis of the measures adopted by the public policies in the field of long-term care in Austria, Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Great Britain and Portugal, respectively of the good practices adopted for the development of this type of care. The fifth chapter introduces also Italy and Slovenia into the analysis, exemplifying through various measures, actions or programs different solutions to the challenges of aging.

The sixth chapter brings to the forefront various projects developed in Europe with the aim of preparing the health systems for the provision of long-term social and medical services to the elderly. A group of professors from „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University from Iași conducted a *desk research* and identified a number of 19 programs developed in the period 2010-2019 that were designed for different approaches to care offered to elder people. Relevant experiences and skills in caring for the elderly have been confirmed by six programs in Germany, four in the UK and three in Austria, in addition to those from Finland, Romania, Italy, Slovenia and Portugal.

Chapter seven emphasizes the importance of human, financial, and material resources essential for the long-term care and its development. The need to cover this „new social risk, different from the types of social risk defined by international regulations on social protection” (p. 150) is highlighted.

The last chapter is dedicated to the preparation of health systems for the provision of long-term care services to elderly as well as to the development of this type of care. An important aspect is the planning of such services for all societies experiencing an accelerated aging process and the identification of key components: prevention and the development of a national long-term care system. The first component includes measures such as the establishment of a regular health assessment program, the creation of specific long-term care insurance and

the development of services to support active, healthy, optimal aging as well as maintaining functional abilities well into old age. The second component contains the recognition of the various working mechanisms of this type of care, the elaboration of new normative acts in the matter, the provision of financing and the monitoring of the elderly people who benefit from long-term care services.

The volume contains a lot of valuable and current information with statistical data obtained from official sources. It is a useful tool not only for specialists but also for PhD students, master and bachelor students, by revealing research methods, types of methodologies and concrete study methods. The presentation of the volume in A4 format makes the handling less easy but the theme fonts allow a fluid reading.

The practicality of this work in the field of long-term care on a publishing market that has significant information gaps regarding the analysis of the aging process should also be mentioned. Students and practitioners alike have now a practical tool for the exploration of senescence as well as for the investigation of the complex forms of social, psychological and medical services.

If, since the introduction, we have identified a number of questions that have led to relevant analyses, the book encourages new examinations of our own existence and aging: How much do we think about our own aging? Are we ready for this threshold? What will long-term care services look like at the time of our retirement?

Generations live longer and this phenomenon should no longer disturb us but should lead us to act as a society, by rapidly adopting appropriate public policies on sustainable social and medical services for long-term care (Șoitu, 2021a; Șoitu, 2021b).

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