

# HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY IN CZECH REPUBLIC: NEW TRENDS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

E. Topinková

Department of Geriatrics/Gerontology, Institute of Postgraduate Medicine, Prague, Czech Republic

## SUMMARY

Old people over 65 are now the most rapidly growing segment of the population and represent 13 % of all Czech inhabitants. Because of the high prevalence of morbidity and disability among the elderly they are the most important consumers of health care services, both extramural and intramural. They consume about 1/3 of the total expenditures on the health care, 40-50 % of the general practitioner's time, 40 % of prescribed drugs, and over 30 % of all hospital days. An important additional consequence of population aging are the increasing needs and costs of long-term care. During the past 30 years, health services for the elderly have been developed and geriatric and chronic care medicine have become an integral part of the contemporary medical enterprise. The past few years of political and economical transformation have brought about significant changes in health and social care and they are having a great impact on the provision of services. In light of the demographic projections and steadily increasing costs of health care, what are the contemporary changes and what should be the future development of health care services for the elderly?

*Key words:* elderly, health services, geriatrics, long-term care, home care, health care policy, demography

Address for correspondence: E. Topinková, Department of Geriatrics/Gerontology, Institute of Postgraduate Medicine,  
U staré školy 1, 110 00 Prague 1, Czech Republic