

## Thanatology as a Study Subject in University Education of Students of Caring Professions

### Abstract

The paper deals with various aspects of university education of students of accompanying professions, especially the social, social-pedagogical and medical issues in the area of thanatology. The authors hold the view that thanatology should be taught within the education of workers of caring professions as a separate subject thus becoming an integral part of the curriculum. Education in the area of accompanying the dying has already been included in a number of accredited bachelor study programs, which is evidenced by a content analysis made by the paper authors within research.<sup>1</sup> The contents of the identified subjects and the applied educational approaches are very different, though.

In follow-up fieldwork research,<sup>2</sup> conducted among workers of hospices and medical institutions specialized in accompanying patients in the terminal stage of their life paths, the authors analyzed the educational needs of workers engaged in direct care of clients and identified the areas felt by the workers as having the highest rate of shortfalls. The experience of workers from practice are complemented and compared with opinions of students from selected study fields of

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<sup>1</sup> Soňa Vávrová and Renata Polepilová, Výzkumné šetření o vzdělávání studentů pomáhajících profesí v oblasti thanatologie [Research on the education of students of caring professions in the field of thanatology]. *Sociální práce*. Brno: Asociace vzdělavatelů v sociální práci, 2010, roč. 10, č. 2, pp. 71–80. ISSN 1213–6204.

<sup>2</sup> Soňa Vávrová and Renata Polepilová, *Identifikace vzdělávacích potřeb pracovníků pomáhajících profesí v oblasti doprovázení umírajících* [Identification of educational needs of workers in caring professions in the area of accompanying the dying]. Research within the project IGA/59/FHS/10/A.