

Home care: Advantages and disadvantages for patients

Handout

Home care definition:

Home care means helping patients who need support in their daily lives in their own home. The main goal is to let them stay in their own homes, so that they can profit from staying in a familiar place.

Types of home care:

Care by relatives

- Mostly family members who feel obliged to provide care
- Often no other option for care → Nursing homes are expensive and difficult to obtain
- Usually smaller tasks like doing laundry or cleaning. But also bodycare like washing or helping in the shower

Nursing service

- Care service comes to patient's home
- Different possibilities: only in the morning, three times a day...
- Individual forms like only helping with hygiene tasks or additional support at lunchtime.
- Most widely used alongside the care by relatives

24h care

- a carer who lives in the same house as the patient
- The working hours act has to be observed → breaks and maximum of 48h work per week
- A good addition for the care of relatives
- The carer's tasks have to be defined precisely

Advantages

- The patient can stay in his own and familiar environment
- Relatives can see the person in need of care regularly
- Patients are more self-confident at home in terms of coping with everyday life
- It often costs less than a place in a care home
- homecare at home is perceived by patients as more personal and individual than in a nursing home

Disadvantages

- home care is characterised by surprises → Some circumstances at home harbour a greater risk than in a care home. For example: if the patient falls at lunchtime and the carer only arrives in the evening
- carers at home cannot immediately call on medical staff such as doctors
- the flat or house must be adapted to the person in need of care: e.g. stair lifts or care beds
- Sometimes you miss out on socialising with people of the same age
- there is often a lack of staff for home care
- caring at home can also be an additional burden for relatives

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