

Abstract

This diploma thesis deals with feasibility of advance directives in the practice of emergency medical services. It explores how two emergency medical services deal with rising public interest in this topic – The Emergency medical service of Central Bohemia Region and of Vysočina Region in Czech Republic. The goal of the thesis is to detect under what circumstances can the EMS (emergency medical services) play a functional role in the practice of patients end-of-life decisions and in situations containing advance directives. Another goal is to make a set of recommendations for the organizations which could potentially help with dealing with advance directives in pre-hospital care. The empirical part of the study is constructed using a case study approach, it analyses organizational tools, documentation, and internal legislation. It is also made using semi structured interviews with the employees of both organizations. All acquired information is then divided under several categories that are profitable for the case study. The analysis of preparedness for dealing with patients with advance directives and identification of touchpoints – where certain approaches and opinions collide are considered a contribution of this thesis and were identified based on acquired information. Important factors that affect the feasibility of advance directives in the practice of EMS are knowledge of emergency medical technicians and doctors about advance directives, trust of the employees towards their organization and their relationship to it, tools for dealing with advance directives among the organization and experience. Based on all the information, following recommendations were made – opening the dialog of advance directives with other organizations in the region, education about advance directives in the organization, proper tools, building a trustworthy relationship with employees and supervision. These recommendations are applicable to the organizations collaborating on this study and could potentially better the preparedness of EMS and therefore better feasibility of advance directives in pre-hospital care.