

## **Abstract**

This master's thesis deals with the process of seeking and initiating treatment for eating disorders. The aim is to explore the facilitators and barriers reflected by patients and their mothers in the process of initiating treatment. The theoretical part presents selected aspects of eating disorders, the treatment system, previous findings in the area of treatment seeking and initiation, and finally summarizes the research to date. The empirical part of the thesis describes the qualitative research conducted in the form of semi-structured interviews with five patients and their mothers. The output is a schematic representation of the treatment pathway with time data and a chronological ordering of important factors. Thematic analysis identified a number of barriers and facilitators on the part of both groups of respondents. The major barriers according to the patients were denial of the disease, lack of motivation, negative attitudes towards treatment and comorbid illness. In contrast, facilitators included negative aspects of the disease, influence of loved ones, positive experience with professionals and awareness. Mothers on the barrier side reflected non-recognition of the disease, daughter's resistance, negative experience with health care and comorbid disease. Their own care, daughter's cooperation, positive experience with professionals and the influence of social environment had facilitating effect. This research represents one of the first important steps in understanding the experience of patients and their parents in the Czech setting; the outcomes may prompt more targeted efforts to minimize barriers and support facilitators of treatment initiation.

## **Keywords**

Eating disorders; Treatment seeking; Treatment initiation; Facilitators; Barriers