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AGEING-ETHICAL ISSUES AND STIGMA

N. Tataru¹, A. Dicker²

¹Psychiatry, Forensic Psychiatry Hospital Stei, Oradea, ²Geriatric Psychiatry, Psychiatry Hospital Nucet, Stei, Romania

During the twentieth century, many behavioural and biological theories of aging have been advanced that ageing is a multidimensional phenomenon. Ageing is a progressive decline in function and performance, which accompanies advancing years. Cicero noticed *that the old people preserved their intellects if they maintained their interests*.

To the social, economical and medical problems that old age arises to the society, one may add the continue increase of old people proportion in the general population. The ageing of population is becoming a reality in developed and in less developed countries too. We talk about a conceptual definition of normal ageing and also about successful and morbid ageing. Normal ageing is an ageing process without any clinical somatic or mental disorder and a morbid ageing is characterized by a process presenting clinical disorders which affects the somatic and mental health, the successful ageing being an ageing process in a favourable environmental conditions to promote individual development. We can consider not only the presence/absence of a disorder but also its impact in someone's life. The functioning capacity loss could be considered as a marker of the presence of a clinical disorder.

Stigma remains a major obstacle to ensuring access to good care for elderly with mental disorders, these patients suffers of a double jeopardy (old age and mental disorders). Both stigma and discrimination against these old persons depend on the type of mental disorder and we have to protect them against discrimination and improve their quality of life.