

Dear Colleagues,

*You are currently reading the first issue of the peer-reviewed online scientific journal Health & Caring which focuses on publishing papers in areas relevant to non-medical health care disciplines, including intersections with other related disciplines (medicine, sociology, social work, bioethics). The journal publishes articles in Czech, Slovak and English.*

*Although we are in the perhaps diminishing phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, its impact on the health care system and especially on health care personnel will be an important topic for reflection for a few coming years. Here are some selected themes from the pandemic era that are also addressed at a general level by the research findings in the articles in this issue.*

*The stress and traumatic experience of the various pandemic waves led us to questions about care of souls of health personnel in the event of similar crises in the future. Logically, the unexpected and unpredictable situation of the beginning of the pandemic primarily focused on care for a sick patient. Retrospectively, however, the mental health of those deployed to the "front line" will also need to be reflected. Cases of post-traumatic stress disorder in health professionals with a need for therapeutic treatment are already being observed. Prevention from experiencing a stressful situation as traumatic and from burnout syndrome is a current key issue for the healthcare staff formation.*

*A traumatic event may be characterized by limitations in the form of rationed nursing care defined as the failure to provide or the omission of some necessary nursing activities due to lack of resources. Nurses are forced to limit, minimize, or omit certain nursing activities while the risk of negative patient outcomes increases. The moral distress stemming from this experience needs to be addressed retrospectively.*

*The stressful contexts during the pandemic were numerous. During the pandemic, health care staff also encountered aggression from patients and even from their relatives. The aggressiveness displayed was caused, among other things, by the necessary coronavirus preventive measures in hospitals related to isolation of patients and ban on visits. Identifying nurses' attitudes towards patient aggression, together with the meanings the nurse attaches to demonstrated aggression, are important contexts for managing emotionally escalated communication.*

*Good relationships at workplaces are an important prevention measure of burnout syndrome. In hospitals, nurses' satisfaction in their profession is determined primarily by their relationships*

*with other nurses but also with other staff, including the setting of the adaptation process and the person of the trainer, the mentor. Principally, it is the development of mentoring with experience of challenging practice during a pandemic that is an important moment for finding other forms of transferring experience at the workplace.*

*This brings us to the final topic. An important area in the lives of health professionals, who continually educate themselves, was the stress resulting from the demands and requirements of studies during the pandemic. An integral part of the research on the effects of the pandemic on the health professionals-students' lives is certainly the analysis of the impact of the measures on the learning atmosphere, which was accompanied by alternative ways of teaching, practice and knowledge verification. Psychological accompaniment of students is also an important milestone in thinking about ways of educating future health professionals who may encounter various unexpected situations.*

*The journal issue also deals with these topics at a more general level although not always in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.*

*Karel Sládek*