Care allowance as an Example of Innovation

Kateřina Kubalčíková

Innovation and Employment in Social Services: new opportunities for growth?

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Social services in the Czech Republic

The social services system in the Czech Republic is regulated

- by Act No. 108/2006 Coll. on Social Services
- by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Decree No. 505/2006 Coll. implementing some provisions of the Social Services Act

Social services provide support and assistance to persons in adverse social situations in a form that preserves their human dignity, respects individual human needs, while at the same time bolstering the ability for the social inclusion of every individual in his or her natural social environment.
The users participation in decision-making process

- **At the local level**
  - Pertaining to the scope, types and accessibility of social services in their municipality or locality

- **At the provider/social service level**
  - Provision of social service is based on a contractual principle
  - The scope of support and assistance is based on the individual needs of the persons
  - The implementation (the course) of the service is adequately planned with respect to the personal goals and needs of the user and is based above all on his/her abilities

- **At the personal level**
  - A care allowance is intended to strengthen the competencies of people, so they every individual can elect the most effective manner of having his or her needs provided for
What is a Care allowance

A care allowance is intended to people dependent on the assistance of another person due to their age or state of health and/or the circle of close persons.

A care allowance is graduated according to the degree of dependence.

This is a care allowance rather than a full reimbursement of the cost of care either in the form of care provided by formal social service providers or care given by close persons.

A care allowance allows for the arrangement of care in natural environment it helps to cover the costs incurred by the people close to the recipient of the care.

The sharing of care duties between the informal care givers and registered social services is perceived as the optimal model.

Social investigation/assessment (social worker - Labour Office) as well as health assessment (examining doctor - Medical Assessment Service´s are the parts of care allowance administration.)
What is the status of carers - family members or other close person

- The care allowance is not be included as part of the carer’s income for the purposes of benefit systems or for tax purposes
- The care allowance shall also be paid in partial concurrence with a parent allowance
- In the case of the chief carer, the period of care usually counts towards the supplementary period for the pension security purposes
- The chief carer is a so-called “state policyholder” in the public health insurance area
- Carers are in no way restricted in their employment
- The income situation of the entitled person (or persons in the household) is not subject to means testing for this benefit
Selected research results related to care allowance provision

- An Approach of Social Service Workers to Clients in a selected Asylums Homes for the Homeless People (2008)
- An Approach of Social Service Workers to Clients in a selected Community Care service (2009-10)
- The Municipality Representatives Analysis in the context of Social Services provision in the local study (2011)
- Different views of social workers and Medical Assessment Service’s doctors on the role of social workers within the process of Care Allowance administration (2012)

Research team
Prof. L. Musil, dr. J. Havlíková, mgr. O. Hubíková, dr. K. Kubalíková
Research projects methodology

- In accordance with the projects purpose the data are usually obtained by combining qualitative research methods.

- The qualitative research can be considered as optimal if we are concerned with themes such as understanding service user and social behaviour, representing service users' voices, organizational culture and change management or understanding and evaluating complex policy initiatives.

- Especially we use a case study method

   It can be regarded as the most effective when we are not in control of the course of events and focus on the phenomenon within the framework of its context.
Asylums Homes for the Homeless People

- The service is provided for a temporary period
- Growing share of users 65+ years old
- They are not dependent on the assistance of another person due to their adverse state of health
- The care allowance shall not be granted to these users
- The provision of in-residence services like Senior citizen’s homes is usually regulated in relation to the care allowance grant.
- The offer of social housing as well as follow up forms of support and assistance to the elderly homeless persons
- The users awareness of possible support and assistance is limited
- The number of service staff, specially the social workers, is limited
Community Care Service

- The sharing of care duties between the informal care givers and registered social services is preferred by the elderly users.
- The participation of the family or other people close to the care recipient is appreciated by the front-line care workers.
- The number of service staff, specially the social workers, is insufficient.
- There is limitation of the registered social service to negotiate the arrangement of care provision with the informal care givers.
The Municipality Representatives

• A rather limited awareness concerning the social service system as well as the offer of another form of support or assistance

• A rather limited awareness concerning the care allowance
  - the condition of the benefit provision
  - the condition of administration
  - the condition of informal care givers participation
The Care Allowance administration process

The cooperation between the main actors of the process, i.e. social workers and Medical Assessment Services doctors is often hampered by mutual misunderstanding based on the different views of social work and medicine what the reduced self-sufficiency is.

The Care Allowance meaning within social service provision is ambiguous for social workers and medical doctors as well as their point of view on the informal care givers participation.
Care Allowance
Innovation and Employment in Social Services

A Care allowance is intended to strengthen the competencies of the social services users who are persons dependent on the assistance of another person.

Therefore, the role of social work should be strengthened:
Within the formal social services providers/organization (to improve the combination of formal and informal care provision)
At the local level (to improve the users awareness of the support and assistance possibilities)
Thank you for your attention

PhDr. Kateřina Kubalčíková Ph.D.

Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs
&
Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University Brno
Department of Social Policy and Social Work