

Psychosomatic aspects

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Psychological Determinants of Attitudes Towards Euthanasia A Comparative Study of Nurses vs. Female Non-Medical Professionals

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The moral, legal and psychological aspects of the legality of euthanasia are subject to debates and studies of various communities. Diagnosing attitudes towards euthanasia should involve not only determining the proportion between its supporters and opponents, but also describing the mechanisms behind the development of particular views. The aim of the present study was to determine the psychological determinants of liberal and conservative attitudes, particularly fear of death and dying, self-esteem and mood. The methods used in the study included the GŁ"Ä™bocka and Gawor Attitudes Towards Euthanasia Inventory, Ochsmann Fear of Death and Dying Inventory (FVTS), Dymkowski Self-description Scale, Adamczyk and GŁ"Ä™bocka Negative Mood Inventory, and Methods for investigating the unconscious fear of death by Łukaszewski. The study involved 49 female nurses and 43 female non-medical professionals. The results demonstrated that attitudes towards euthanasia as well as fear of death and dying did not differentiate the study groups. Although fear of dying weakened the magnitude of conservative views, it also reinforced the need for informational and psychological support from physicians and nurses. High self-esteem was a predictor of conservative attitudes, while negative mood predicted liberal attitudes. Conservative attitudes were connected to hidden fear of death and high self-esteem, while liberal attitudes were linked to conscious fear and a rational vision of oneself, the world and the future. Conservative attitudes seem to have an emotional character, whereas liberal ones seem to be of a rational nature.