

Agrinio, 10th April 2019

Protocol Number: 280

**Feedback on the rights of people  
with disabilities who are ageing**

As an organisation the "PANAGIA ELEOUSA" Workshop, has been operating since 1990 in Greece, in the cities of Messolonghi and Agrinio, providing certified, quality, comprehensive lifelong learning, training, care services, social rehabilitation and assisted living to people with intellectual and associated disabilities over 15 years and lifelong.

**Our target group, are people with intellectual disabilities, autism and severe disabilities (Down syndrome, disabilities of sensory organs, and speech, kinetic disabilities, mild mental disorders, etc.), who are the only group of people with disabilities that cannot claim their rights in life without assistance and they also have the particularity that aging occurs more heavily for them due to the nature of their disability and their associated problems. However, in Greece there is no relevant legislation and policy concerning in particular older people with disabilities, so the legislative framework for People with Disabilities is applied in general in this case.**

Therefore, the provision of care to old people with intellectual disabilities in care facilities for elderly - in addition to the operation of the Assisted Living Facilities/Boarding Houses that provide great quality services to people with intellectual disabilities lacking parental care - becomes indispensable and it is their inalienable right and also a major issue of long-term and specialized care.

Living in care facilities for elderly functioning with all modern European standards, staffed with health professionals, trained carers, psychologists, social workers and other specialties receiving individual and group programs is an imperative need.

For this reason, the Workshop "PANAGIA ELEOUSA" recommends concerning the access to and investment in care facilities for elderly people with disabilities:

- Designing of structures and care services for the elderly people with disabilities, implemented through the already existing certified facilities for people with disabilities which have long experience.  
- Ensuring the sustainability and continuous funding of certified structures providing long-term care as a prerequisite to ensure that all people with disabilities, including the elderly, can live with dignity and enjoy quality of life.

- Specialized training for staff who provide long-term care in order to support various disabilities, especially intellectual disabilities.

It is universally accepted that the psychosocial interventions help to successfully manage the problems arising from personality changes and behavioral disorders. A dynamic model of social care for elderly people with intellectual disabilities, as designed by our organization, "PANAGIA ELEOUSA", proves to be successful because it ensures quality of care and quality of life.

At the Workshop "PANAGIA ELEOUSA" we have a person-centered orientation and in this way we specialize our care according to the needs of our service users and at the same time we ensure that there is graduated autonomy. Quality of Life at "PANAGIA ELEOUSA" means that each person receives individualized services based on their needs and accordingly they have the freedom of choice and initiative based on his / her abilities.

Therefore, new perspectives for the development of structures and services for the elderly people with intellectual disabilities should be opened.  
It is time to invest in the Third Age of people with disabilities and in their accessibility either to facilities, to international and European networks, to goods or services, and to all the ways and forms that each citizen is entitled to and must enjoy.

We are at your disposal to cooperate on the design of these new services and on the exchange of know-how having a 30-year experience of successful operation as an organization "PANAGIA ELEOUSA" working with people with disabilities. We wish and believe that the UN Committee on the rights of old people with disabilities will understand and assess the necessity of fulfilling our suggestions on the rights of elderly people with disabilities.

Kind regards

The Chief Executive Officer

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