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The National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) and the Department for Protection within the Office of the Ombudsman, carried out regular visit to the PHI Gerontology Institute “13ti Noemvri”, Skopje – the Department “Mother Teresa” in Zlokukani on **04.11.2015**. The visit was conducted jointly with members of the team of the National Preventive Mechanism of Austria (within the Twinning project for support of the Ombudsman Institution). This visit was organized in cooperation with the Association of nurses, technicians and midwives of the Republic of Macedonia.

During the visit, NPM has been guided by the Code of Ethics for care of elderly persons that require treatment as a person and respect of their human rights, prohibit discrimination, prescribes adequate nutrition, clean water, housing, clothing and health care. The Code of Ethics emphasizes the use of appropriate types of institutional and non-institutional care. Furthermore, elderly persons shall be protected from any form of physical or psychological abuse, and have a right to know the truth if they are capable to rationalize and to express their feelings.

The Public Health Institution Gerontology Institute “13ti Noemvri” is a specialized health care institution in the field of geriatric and palliative medicine and the only one of its kind in the country. This Institution monitors and evaluates the situation, reports and envisages the future health needs and functional disabilities of the elderly persons inside and outside the institution. The department Mother Teresa - Zlokukjani provides housing, food and accommodation, provides care and support to persons who need assisted living care, health care, organizes cultural and entertainment activities and provides social care services as well as other services according to the needs and requirements of users.

The Department “Mother Teresa” is located in Zlokukjani and has an accommodation capacity of 111 beds. The Female Ward has capacity of 27 beds (1 single room and 13 double rooms), while the Male Ward has 26 beds, in fact, 13 double rooms and dormitory with a total capacity of 18 beds (four rooms with three beds and three double rooms).

Ombudsman - National Preventive Mechanism met and had discussions with several employees that were at work at the time of the visit, and had spoken with several residents of the institution. NPM was informed that they appreciate the work of the social worker and

who works either individually or in groups with the patients and their families. During the individual treatment the social worker makes the initial contact with the person, jointly with the nurses and the other employees, establishes the link with the family of the person and the Center for Social Work, if the person is transferred there upon a decision of the Center.

Having spoken with the residents, NPM was informed that they are satisfied with the treatment by the staff, stating that the care they receive is sufficient for them and they are respected as persons. However, NPM has noted that due to lack of staff, part of the healthier residents provide care to those with serious health condition. Some of them said that the living conditions are good, but some of them were not satisfied. The same was noted regarding the food they receive, part of them were satisfied and part of them were not satisfied. Several persons said the amount of food they receive is not enough.

In terms of health care, it was found that the residents' right to health care is fully exercised in the Institution, provided by a coordinated system of from various specialties. There is one primary care physician who visits all of them once a week, and if necessary, they are taken to the family doctor or to a doctor of the required specialty, accordingly. Those in need of physical therapy are taken in the Cabinet for physical therapy in the PHI "13ti Noemvri", upon an order of the doctor of physical therapy and they stay there for as long as the doctor has ordered to.

The living conditions in the Institution are not satisfying. The facility was meant for an interim use, which being 50 years old according to officials, has never been renovated. The toilets and showers are old, and not adapted to the needs of this category of persons.

It was concluded that the residents are engaged in occupational therapy, according to their needs and interests. Some users have made handcrafts (knitted sweaters, blouses, scarves, socks, gloves, etc.) as well as woven rugs. Also, part of the residents is making various pasta or pastries. The engagement of the residents depends on their interest, but according to the staff the number of participants in the occupational therapy is low compared to the total number of residents. The Institution respects the religious practices of the residents and has a special premise where they can freely exercise their religion.

NPM issued a special report for the stated conditions including recommendations to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and the Director of the Institution in order to overcome the identified weaknesses and eliminate the risks.