

## PRAWNE I EPIDEMIOLOGICZNE ASPEKTY ZOBOWIĄZANIA DO LECZENIA OSÓB UZALEŻNIONYCH OD ALKOHOLU W POLSCE

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### LEGAL AND EPIDEMIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF OBLIGATION TO ALCOHOL DEPENDENCE TREATMENT IN POLAND

**ABSTRACT** – The issue of obligation to treatment in alcohol dependence is still the subject of heated discussion among lawyers and therapists. The study was aimed not only at a closer observation of the current debate, but also at exploration of specialists' opinions. An analysis of some epidemiological data obtained from the Ministry of Justice indicates a systematic increase in the number of persons obligated to treatment, as well as a longer and longer delay in carrying out these judicial decisions. Out of 457 questionnaires sent to professionals dealing with the issue of obligation to treatment in their practice 218 were returned from outpatient alcohol treatment facilities, and 49 from inpatient units (the global response rate was 58%). The findings suggest a lack of a consistent attitude toward the obligation to treatment formula in this group of respondents. Although a majority of professionals assessed obligated patients' behavior and motivation level as inferior to these of voluntary patients, nevertheless most respondents were aware of benefits of obligation to treatment. Besides, a small majority (56%) of respondents believed that the institution of obligation to treatment should be maintained, for the good of the patient and protection of his family (the two arguments were given most often). A lack of alternatives and better solutions was also frequently emphasized. It is difficult to draw a clear-cut conclusion in the light of these data. Discrepancies in the professionals' attitudes toward maintenance of obligation to treatment may be explained on the one hand, by their reluctance to further changes in the situation of the national health service transformation, and on the other hand – by their different experiences concerning the obligation to treatment formula. Thus, it remains an open question whether the alcohol dependent should be given the freedom of choice or pushed to treatment.

**Key words:** obligation to treatment, alcohol, specialists' opinions

### WSTĘP

*Ustawa o wychowaniu w trzeźwości i przeciwdziałaniu alkoholizmowi (26 października 1982) stała się od początku swego istnienia tematem żywo dyskutowanym w różnych kręgach, zarówno tych, związanych z praktyką leczniczą w zakresie uzależnień, jak i innych, patrzących na problematykę z perspektywy prawno-etycznej.*