



HÖGSKOLAN I BORÅS

VETENSKAP FÖR PROFESSION

Ethical challenges for family carers and users in times of resource restraints– a Swedish perspective

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The overall challenging situation

- Lack of resources – available money and competence does not cover the need of care
- The introduction of new technological solution to provide care despite lack of resources
- ...at the same time increased emphasis on autonomy and self-determination for users and family carers – requiring more individual and potentially more resource demanding solutions



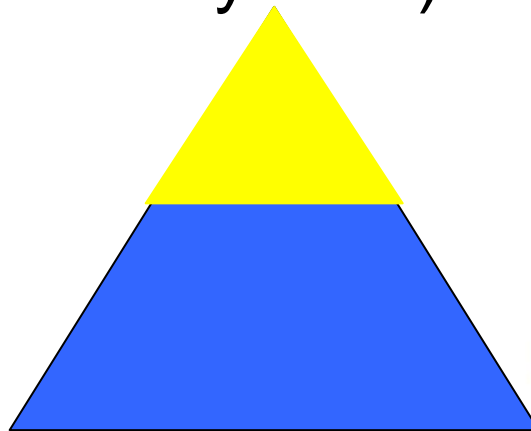
Lack of resources

- Demographic changes – ageing population
 - Increased need for care
 - Decreased tax basis
- Medico-technical development
- Swedish estimates of a resource gap in 2035 in the vicinity of 20 billion € for the whole welfare sector (health-care, social care, elderly care etc.)



Lack of resources

- Finding the proper level of publicly funded care:
 - Greater efficiency
 - Rationing – focusing on a basic package of care
 - Self-financing
 - Self-care (or family care)



Lack of resources

- Greater efficiency
 - Increased technology development and use
 - Surveillance and self-monitoring
 - Robots
 - More advanced medical care in the home
 - Ethical opportunities



Lack of resources

- Greater efficiency
 - Ethical challenges
 - Increased responsibility for users/ family carers in handling and responding to technology
 - Privacy issues
 - Equality issues



Lack of resources

- Prioritisation / rationing
 - Swedish ethical platform
 - Human dignity principle
 - Needs and solidarity principle
 - Cost-effectiveness principle
 - Ration what is related to smaller needs and what is less cost-effective
 - How to satisfy "rationed" needs?:
 - Family care / self-care
 - Self-financing



Lack of resources

- Prioritisation / rationing – ethical challenges
 - Groups with less ability for self-care / self-financing?
 - Increased inequality



Increased user / family carer influence over care

- Seen in Swedish legislation
- Trend towards person /user centred care
- Shared decision-making
- Ethical challenges:
 - From need to demand?
 - Lack of decisional competence?
 - Increased risk for users?
 - Responsibility
 - Increased differences / increased inequality



Conclusions

- We see several trends within the field of care that will have an impact on the situation for users and family carers and implying a number of ethical challenges
- We need to start address these challenges and allow them to influence decisions about the development of care
- Requires ethical analysis where different ethical aspects are balanced against each other – not ethical "back-bone reactions"

