

# COUNCIL OF EUROPE

## COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

### RESOLUTION (77) 37

#### ON HOME HELP SERVICES

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 2 December 1977  
at the 279th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity among its members for the purpose, among other things, of facilitating their social progress ;

Bearing in mind the provisions of Articles 16 and 17 of the European Social Charter concerning the right of the family to social, legal and economic protection and the right of mothers and children to social and economic protection, as well as Article 13, paragraph 3, concerning assistance in case of personal or family want ;

Having regard to Resolution (70) 16 on social and medico-social policy for old age and Resolution (74) 31 on health care and social work for old people living at home ;

Having studied the report on home help services prepared by the Study Group of the 1974 Programme of Co-ordinated Social Research Fellowships ;

Considering that it is appropriate to take all suitable measures not only to increase the material well-being of individuals but also to improve their quality of life ;

Believing that home help services contribute to the achievement of this objective by providing families and individuals in difficulty with material help and support in their homes,

Recommends that governments of member states :

#### *Definition*

1. Foster and develop home help services, that is services having a social nature and purpose, the aim of which is to provide families, or persons on their own, who are sick or in difficulty, with the help of a properly supervised, adequately trained person in the home in order to ensure the smooth functioning of the household ;
2. Take account of the important role which home help services play in enabling single persons or couples who are old, sick or handicapped to stay in their homes, in avoiding or shortening institutional care for one or more members of a family in the event of illness or temporary difficulty or in assisting either of the parents in carrying out their family and educational tasks when they are confronted with particularly acute problems ;

*Role and place  
of home help services*

3. Consider that home help services contribute to health care and social welfare as a whole and that consequently they :
  - a. recognise that :
    - i. their operational staff should be placed under the proper supervision of organisational staff ;
    - ii. their conditions of employment and remuneration should be adequate, and consistent with the social nature of their work and the aptitudes which it requires ;
    - iii. a code of good practice defining their rights and duties with regard both to the service and to users should be established ;
  - b. encourage collaboration of their staff with all persons dealing with the same case (social workers, doctors, trained nurses, etc.), and facilitate their co-operation with social services of a collective nature (out-patient care, residential care, meals on wheels, etc.) ;
  - c. guarantee the quality and effectiveness of services by seeing to :
    - i. the establishment of training programmes for the organisational staff, and
    - ii. the maintenance of an appropriate ratio between organisational and operational staff ;

*Training of  
personnel*

4. Ensure that operational staff receive at least the following training :
  - a. basic theoretical and practical training including subjects such as :
    - training in ordinary domestic tasks, nutrition cooking, dietetics, budget management and consumer education ;
    - health education, hygiene, simple care of children and sick and old people ;
    - training in family and human relationships ;
    - elements of health and social organisation ;
    - professional ethics ;which, when it is not part of the general educational system, should be subject to recognised standards ;
  - b. regular in-service training ;
5. Offer refresher and advanced training facilities in order to enable staff to obtain career advancement ;

*Organisation  
and financing*

6. Establish a planning system with a view to progressively achieving the following objectives :
  - a. the provision of a sufficient number of services to answer the needs of the population as a whole, in both urban and rural areas, and
  - b. the structuring of these services in order to ensure the necessary co-ordination, integration and communication at all levels ;
7. Ensure effectiveness of home help services by basing their financial arrangements on laws and regulations, at national or regional level, which not only provide for the responsible bodies to have sufficient funds at their disposal, but also provide for the necessary flexibility in deciding how the services should be rendered ;
8. Ensure that existing services are available to everyone on the understanding that the financial assessment of the beneficiary's contribution should take into account his means and commitments ;

9. Provide adequate information on the existence, role and functioning of home help services to the population as a whole and primarily to those who are most likely to be in need of them ;

*Research*

10. Periodically carry out or have carried out studies for such purposes as :
  - a. appraising the quality of services rendered ;
  - b. assessing the nature and size of the population's needs and their evolution ;
  - c. determining the cost/benefit ratio of the utilisation of home help services vis-à-vis the recourse to other services ;
  - d. evaluating training programmes with a view to possible adjustments.