

Useful knowledge exchange during ‘Elderly Persons and Deprivation of Liberty’ seminar

Can elderly persons be deprived of their liberty and what are the human rights standards that apply here? The ‘Elderly Persons and Deprivation of Liberty’ seminar that was held on 27 January 2015 focused on these questions. Supervisors and employees from various sectors - healthcare and detention - exchanged knowledge and experience on the use (or observed use) of deprivation of liberty of elderly persons. This exchange is important in order to ensure the human rights of elderly persons whose liberty is restricted. The reason for holding the seminar was the 25th anniversary of the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) of the Council of Europe.

CPT member Anton van Kalmthout explained how deprivation of liberty is used in practice and what the CPT's role in this is. The CPT has developed detailed standards for various forms of deprivation of liberty, but there are no standards for deprivation of liberty in care and nursing homes yet. After that, Noor Roeleveld from the Custodial Institutions Agency provided insight into the situations employees providing healthcare in detention centres are faced with. Marike Abel from the Healthcare Inspectorate provided an overview of the figures and manner of restriction of liberty in elderly care. The lecturers' stories gave rise to many questions and discussions. Discussions were held partly on the basis of various arguments. During the concluding drinks party, people enthusiastically exchanged thoughts and ideas.