

R.E. Offerhaus (1979). Wat is erger: ten onrechte opnemen of niet opnemen. *Tijdschrift voor Psychiatrie*, 21, 654-660.

Summary op p. 668.

SUMMARY

The dilemma in hospitalisation: risking too many intakes or a calamity at home.

In this article a discussion is held about the question: is unjustified hospitalisation in a psychiatric center a greater wrong compared with a failure to hospitalise a person in need of clinical psychiatric care. This seemingly absurd dilemma finds its origin in the present inability of community psychiatric services to judge adequately the need for clinical treatment. The author argues that firstly the instrumental facilities for a sound and safe decision process have to be created. Secondly in his opinion now and in the future the old adagium 'in dubio abstinae' should be kept, meaning no hospitalisation unless clear and unambiguous indications are presented. In his view hospitalisation, especially when compulsory, is a very severe intervention and should be strongly argued.