

Ethics of care for vulnerable elderly

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The elderly are treated for too long in the final phase of life. In recent years, various doctors, geriatricians, and professors have sounded the alarm about caring for vulnerable elderly people.

Theo Boer, Maarten Verkerk and Dirk-Jan Bakker have written the book *Unnecessary Health Care – Ethics of Care for Fragile Elderly* (2013, Reed Business, Amsterdam).

In this book, the authors show, on the basis of more than twenty-five cases, that over-treatment in most cases leads to increasing and / or extending the suffering of the vulnerable elderly. On the basis of the principles of Beauchamp and Childress, they provide a framework for determining in advance whether there may be over-treatment. A number of dilemmas are also discussed in this book and the authors show how they can be dealt with. Application of these principles leads to an improvement in the quality of care.

