

# **Elderly patients should receive all forms of medical treatment: a philosophical argument.**

## **Abstract**

The use of old age as a criterion for rationing in medicine seems initially appealing. This is because many of the criteria currently being used for deciding the distribution of funds depend on subjective judgements. Age, however, is objective and therefore negates the need for value judgements. It has been suggested that justice and fairness require that limited resources be directed at young patients, who have not had a chance to live their lives, rather than at elderly patients who have already lived most of theirs. It is the purpose of this article to bring forth evidence that elderly patients should be accorded medical treatment on equal basis as younger patients and that policies which deny elderly people treatment on the sole grounds of age, are both unfair and discriminatory and should therefore be resisted.