

STRESZCZENIE W JEZYKU ANGIELSKIM – ABSTRACT

CZESTOCHOWA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT

Ph. D. dissertation

**CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGEMENT BASED ON
NON-PUBLIC HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS**

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ABSTRACT

The problem domain of customer service management has been a subject of interest of enterprises operating on the market for years. Growing competition, as well as dynamically changing economic conditions force enterprises to make more and more efforts to compete for the customer. The knowledge of customer's preferences, their needs and expectations allows to build a competitive advantage and win the market. Having satisfied customers becomes a bargaining power and is a measure of success for numerous organisations.

Effective customer service management in non-public health care institutions – called in Polish NZOZ – requires from the management of a clinic a thorough diagnosis of the needs and expectations of health services' recipients. Patients are slowly becoming customers and their satisfaction shall constitute one of the most important elements of the rendered services. Understanding the needs of patients has become particularly important in recent years, especially in the face of the constant transformation of the health care system. Diagnosing patients' opinions is of key importance as a perfect source of information. Subjective patients' opinions that concern perception of the health care system, health care functioning provide information about the quality of services rendered by health care centres and reflect the degree of meeting a customer's needs and expectations. Patients assess health centres primarily through the prism of effectiveness and security of the treatment process and its results in particular. Their opinions are influenced by the whole patient service at the health care centre – beginning with registration, surgery, and finishing with the visit to the doctor – and this does not apply only to the medical side of the visit.

The aforementioned considerations have become an incentive that justifies the need to take interest in the issue of customer service management in non-public health care institutions. With respect to the need for a holistic analysis of the factors that affect the satisfaction of patients making use of services provided by health care centres an attempt was made to formulate the main goals and research hypotheses. Therefore, it was assumed that the main research goal of the present dissertation is an analysis and assessment of the service process offered to patients of non-public health care institutions. It was assumed that a detailed analysis of patient's needs – not only from the medical perspective – is a key element of managing patient service in NZOZ. The main adopted goal was to assess the current level of services rendered for patients provided by non-public health care institutions.

The implementation of the main objective as well as detailed objectives of the work required in-depth literature studies with the use of domestic and foreign sources, including

impact publications, legal acts and scientific articles. In the dissertation its Author conducted a critical analysis of the current theoretical achievements of the subject matter. Multidimensional statistical analysis methods were applied. Data that came from the survey questionnaire was analysed primarily using descriptive measures. The questionnaire included three qualitative questions, two that specified the frequency of visits, 26 evaluation questions on the Likert scale concerning particular aspects of services rendered by NZOZ. The evaluation questions were divided into four groups that regarded evaluation of the work of nurses, doctors, health care centre organisation and communication with the patient of the health care centre. A metrics is included at the end of the elaboration. Further analyses also made use of statistical tests (mainly the U-Mann-Whitney test) and correlation measures – (mainly the Gamma coefficient). The calculations were conducted with the use of Excel spreadsheet and Statistica 13.1 package, which allowed to determine the function approximation for 3D simulations. The survey data were acquired in 2017.

The structure of the doctoral dissertation and its substantive content were subjected to achieving the adopted goals and verifying the proposed hypotheses. The construction of the thesis includes five chapters, an introduction and conclusions. The structure of the thesis comprises two parts. The first part comprises the first three chapters covering the theoretical basis of the discussed problem domain based on the literature studies. Chapter four and five constitute the research part of the dissertation and comprise empirical research that verify the proposed research hypotheses.

In the first chapter the Author focuses on the nature of customer service management. The theoretical considerations included in this part of the thesis concerns the discussion of the concept and nature of public management and management in health care based on the approaches presented in the literature on the subject. The further part of the chapter discusses the issues related to customer service. It emphasises the importance of customers' satisfaction with the service and hence, their loyalty towards the brand, company, product or service. The first chapter finishes with the reflections on the importance of customer service quality in contemporary reality.

In the second chapter the Author refers to the characteristics of health services in non-public health care institutions. A definition of services and the nature of managing a service-providing organisation is presented. The Author makes an attempt to present non-public health care institutions as organisations providing professional services of a specific nature. Particular importance of health services is stressed, particularly in their ethical

dimension . This chapter also presents the functions of a health care managers functions and outlines their competences.

In the third chapter the Autor focuses on the issues related to the specificity of non-public health care institutions operating in the Polish health care system. The issues discussed in this chapter concerned the analysis of the legal basis of NZOZ activity, organisational structure and the principles of health care centres operations. The organisation and the process of patient service is discussed and the importance of external and internal customers of non-public health care institutions is emphasised. Further considerations included in chapter three indicate the significance of the service quality in the health sector and present selected systems of quality management, such as accreditation or ISO standards.

The fourth chapter outlines international and domestic research that concerns assessment of health care functioning. Its growing popularity is stressed and the selected ones are presented in detail. The consequence of theoretical considerations constituted an empirical study, the analysis and result of which are included in this chapter. In the further part of chapter four the Author concentrates on interpretation of acquired data. Empirical work was conducted based on data that came from quantitative and qualitative research on patient satisfaction level with reference to services rendered by non-public health care institutions. The data was acquired by means of a survey directed at patients, beneficiaries of services rendered by selected NZOZ. The research was conducted on a large research sample that comprised patients of NZOZ located in Częstochowa and its surroundings. Health care centres were selected in a proportional and spatial terms, taking into account their specialised and general profile of activity. Also, a qualitative method of collecting information was also applied based on individual interviews conducted among the managerial staff of selected health care centres.

In the fifth chapter of the dissertation the Author conducts a SWOT analysis concerning non-public health care institutions. Main attention is paid to weaknesses and strengths of the studied health care centres and opportunities and threats in their surrounding are identified. Next, a selection of a leading strategy for NZOZ is proposed, indicating the barriers that hinder implementation of such a strategy and methods for improving services for patients of NZOZ are featured. At the end of the fifth chapter a proposal of a strategy of rendering services for customers of health care institutions is presented along with an original diagram.

The conclusion of the doctoral thesis includes a summary of the conducted theoretical and empirical studies and conclusions drawn from verified research hypotheses. Conclusions

formulated in the thesis were used to prepare recommendations for improving customer service management in health care institutions. Incentives for future research in the scope of customer service are indicated as well.

The present doctoral thesis is an attempt to understand the nature of customer service management on the example of non-public health care institutions. It was created as a combination of theoretical and practical knowledge in the analysed scope. Practical application of conclusions drawn in the thesis may have a positive effect on improving the functioning of NZOZ, which will translate into a bigger interest of patients in medical services offered by these institutions and will contribute to an increase in their competitiveness in the medical services market. In a wider perspective, the results of the conducted research may constitute a starting point for further considerations on health care system functioning and management.

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