

## DETERMINATION OF FACTORS OF ATTRACTION THE CUSTOMERS IN THE MARKET OF MEDICAL SERVICES

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**Kew words:** medical services, the place of consumption of medical services, consumer preferences, services, medical organization, satisfaction customers.

According to researches, the consumers in the process of choosing the place of consumption of medical services pay attention to qualitative medical aid (62,7%) and a high level of service (43,3%). The medical organizations should form a service policy and base on the consumer preferences. For this purpose it is necessary to take into account a complex of factors which form the process of purchasing and consumption of medical service by the consumer.

The market of medical services is rather a specific field of activity. These particular services can be ascribed to services of passive demand, as it is a rare thing that a consumer thinks of purchasing them until the problem relating to the person's health arises.

When a person is in the state of emergency, he will hardly estimate the level of service, the business reputation or the prices of certain medical institutions. However, if it is not an urgent need of diagnostics, survey work, medical treatment the consumer will rather analyze the local market of medical services and then he will take into account a number of factors weighing all costs and benefits, and only after that will make the appropriate decision in favor of this or that organization.

The marketing research of the paid medical services in Krasnodar region [1, p. 74-80] made it possible to define the most significant criteria for selection of medical institution. The purposes of this research were segregation of key criteria for the consumers' estimation of the quality of the given medical services in the market and defining the level of satisfaction in existing capacity and quality level of the paid medical services. The amount of respondents is more than 400 persons.

The results of this research demonstrate that the most significant factors when the citizens go to the private medical institutions are: better quality of medical aid (62, 7%) and a high level of the service (43, 3%). Such a factor as an opportunity to get the similar service for free was praised only by 24 % of the respondents. At the same time in this research there are no specifications of to what extent much this service is unique and sought-for by the

consumer as there is a high probability that the part of these services might relate to the industry of aesthetic surgery which is generally paid and unnecessary.

As a determinative factor proved to be the high level of service (43%), the respondents should give the definition of "a high level of service" from their point of view. As a result it turned out, that in representations of potential consumers of medical service; the service means the all spectrum of the services which are not connected to the medicine directly, but influence on the consumers' decision. To such service consumers related absence of turns, speed of service, attentiveness of the staff, appearance and design of apartments, an opportunity of solving problems by the phone, convenient arrangement of apartments and etc.

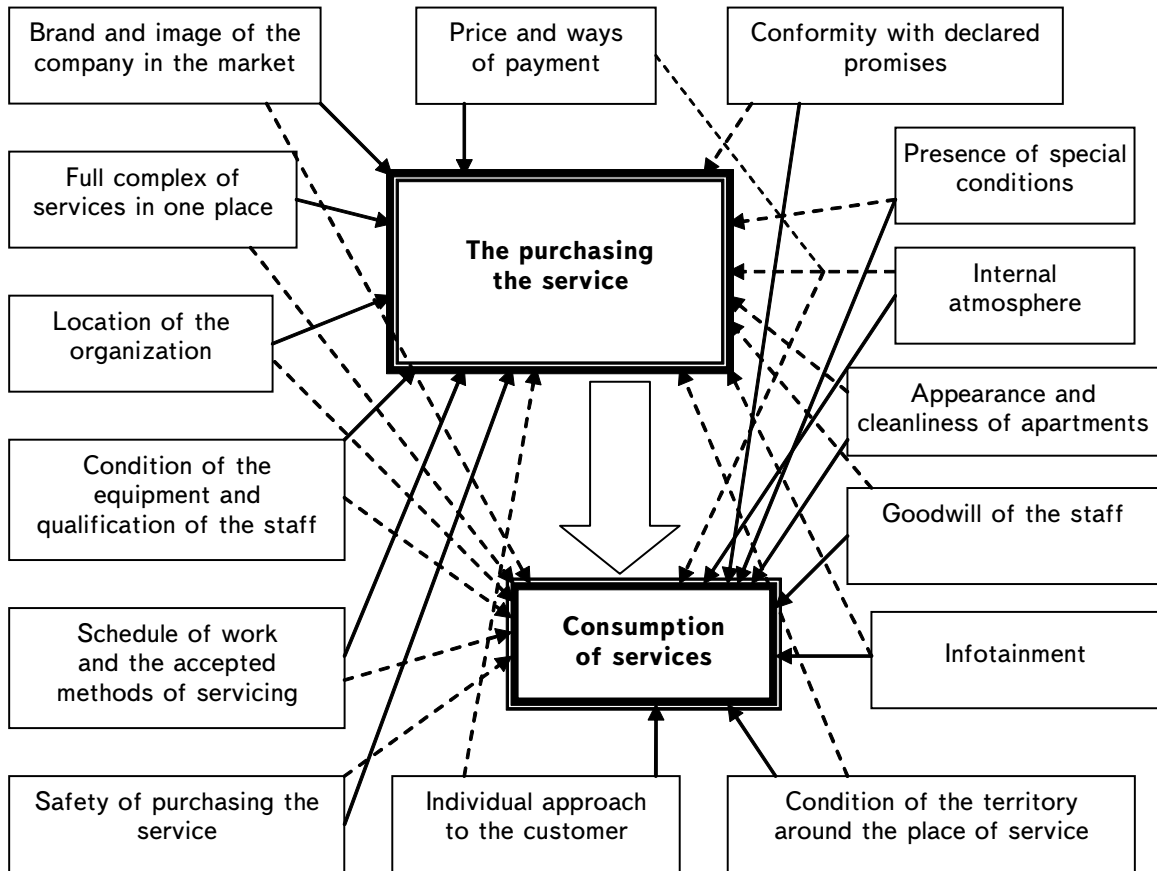
The author carried out this research of the market of medical services with the purpose to define the attitude of consumers to service in the market of medical services and to reveal the major factors which influence on the choice of the medical organization. And this research allowed defining the major factors of service which will raise value of medical institution in the representation of the consumer. At the same time it was noticed, that choosing the specific organization, the consumer is based on his own intuition, taking the best variant from his own preferences, or, chooses the most well-known company in the market, supposing that it has the appropriate quality of services and a level of service. The given conclusions of the consumer do not always correspond to the reality, and as a result it leads to his dissatisfaction and to a negative attitude to the similar organizations.

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The factors which showed up as a result of the research can be presented as the scheme (pic. 1). And one of them influence more (we

concrete organization. When in one clinic work only professors and they use the modern equipment, the consumers will trust to this clinic and



Pic. Complex of the factors of choosing the place of purchasing and consumption of medical service by the consumer, where

Direct influence —————>  
 Indirect influence - - - - ->

call it direct influence), others influence less (we call it indirect influence), but both of them can influence on the final decision of the consumer. And it is also necessary to take into account, that in the process of choosing the medical institution, which gives the services, the consumer bases more on the external information. However, in the stage of consumption of services, the consumer can change his mind that further will influence on his attitude to all medical organization.

Let us consider the content of the marked out factors:

**Condition of the equipment and qualification of the staff** - it's the most important factor, which influences on the potential consumers, as it defines in the representations of the consumer that level of the service which the consumer can expect when he goes to the

then other factors will play less essential role in making decision by the consumer, and doctor's knowledge and his experience can only raise the perception of the service. In the process of consumption of service the consumer can change his attitude to organization, if, for example, he notices inefficient using of new equipment. That is why the consumer's attitude to organization on stage of choosing it and in the process of consumption it can be different.

**Price of the service and ways of payment** is the second factor, to which the consumers pay considerable attention. However, this factor is not always conclusive as when the consumer purchases medical service he is very often ready to pay more than he thought, but he at the same time gets more from this service. So, in the process of choosing the medical organization the consumer is ready to pay money

for speed of giving the service, if the time factor is more important for him. The ways of payment also attract or push aside the consumers. So, in the case of giving the credit it is possible to attract more consumers than by means of front money, or by giving a differentiated choice of services in the prices it's possible to influence in increasing of satisfaction of the consumer by this service in the organization as the consumer will have opportunity to refuse from some unessential, in his opinion, points.

**Brand and strong image** nowadays is sufficiently essential factor in the market of the service. Purchasing the services of well-known brands, the consumers get assurance of the quality of services, of the level of service and reduce some kinds of the risk. Image is steady representation of the consumers about merits and demerits of the organization, about quality of its goods and services, about its managers. Each organization tries to create the most attractive image in potential customers' opinion. For this purpose the organizations take part in public life, carry out various actions, showing in that way that they work for the benefit of all society. Accordingly, consumers, having taken the services of concrete firm, feel co participant to something big and important, rather than their own interests.

**Full complex of services in one place.** This factor takes in account trends of nowadays, namely a chronic shortage of time among majority of people. Owing to that, most of potential consumers of medical service prefer to overpay for the service in exchange of maximum quantity of advantages which will lower spending for additional moving, for additional expectations, for services payment in various places and etc. So the consumer would rather choose the clinic, where there are possibility to pass the full examination, to get the competent consultation of experts and if it's necessary to pass the course of rehabilitation. At the same time, passing the examination, consultation and treatment with one expert, the consumer in the process of consumption of service can treat to his opinion more confidentially, and in that way, develop devotion to that organization.

**Location of the organization** for sphere of services is essential factor. As a rule, consumers as alternatives consider the most suc-

cessfully located firms. Especially it is important, when service becomes urgent or it is used frequently. So, if the consumer had a toothache, he'd sooner choose the clinic that he can reach faster if he does not have devotion to other concrete medical organization. Or, when the customer is passing course of treatment it will be not always convenient for him to visit the clinic in a place which is difficult of access.

**Schedule of work and the accepted methods of servicing.** A lot of medical organizations give their services in inconvenient time for a visitor that is why the consumers choose those clinics where reception lasts longer period, or at the fixed time, which is the most favorable to the consumer. Using the standard procedure of making an appointment with the doctor or receiving reference information, the customers should stand in line, even small one, to wait time of a technical break and dinner, and then can be turned out, that the necessary information that the consumer needs is possible to get in complete different room. In this case, even if this organization has high quality experts, the consumer will hardly want to take services of that medical organization.

**Safety of purchasing the service** can be considered from different sides. On the one hand it's a guarantee of that after and in the process of consumption of service the consumer will not suffer damage of health or image. For example, when the consumer is treated for specific illness, he should be sure in confidentiality of information. On the other hand, the consumer wants to get the guarantee of safety his material values, to be exact, secure parking, cloakroom and services in keeping custody of values and etc. And, what component is more important it's difficult to define, therefore, medical institutions try to reduce any risk for the clients and their properties.

**Individual approach to the customer** gives an opportunity to satisfy the consumer's needs in full measure, taking in account his financial possibilities, his needs and wishes. Not all of the consumers can directly tell their problem by virtue of the personal characteristics and specific features. For some clients it is necessary to send invitation for repeated visiting the organization. Others prefer their own communication style. All these peculiarities should be taken in account. And every special client should

have suitable member of organization, and the illustrative example of it is used in the market of cosmetology service.

**Appearance and cleanliness of apartments** .As services are intangible and it's very difficult to estimate the quality that is why the clients look for any evidence of that level of service that will be more acceptable. That is why, the first impression of organization is made of those things that the consumer sees, entering the organization. And the further the consumer moves forward to the organization, then he gets more experience and forms more detailed opinion about it.

In some cases for positive attitude of the consumers, the great role plays **internal atmosphere** of organization, namely, using sounds, scents, and presents of aquarium, fountain and some other things, promoting an atmosphere and it helps the potential consumers to relax and feel comfortable. Many commercial firms keep to such concept. In order to lower the negative influence of emotional state of the consumers to the process of service, a special atmosphere is created – furniture, pictures, design of walls and ceiling, music, special scents, the clothes of staff help to attract the consumers' attention and to increase their loyalty to the organization.

In the process of giving the service, the consumer can get unusual wishes, which are not suitable to this process. For example, the consumer is required special food, which is appropriate for his illness and prescribed by the doctors, or it is required special conditions of transference by virtue of his helplessness (disability).The organizations, that value their consumers, try to give **special conditions** and to win the consumers' confidence and satisfy them. It is possible to reveal specific services by analyzing complaints and offers of clients and analyzing activity of rivals. However, if there are too many such demands the organization should revise the standard process of service. In the service there are also special stimulate conditions such as guarantees, discounts, gifts, and the presence of a children's room. All of that form the positive attitude to medical organization.

The great role in service plays **the staff**. As much as it's visible the presence of sympathy and interest in the client's problems as much the consumer's attitude to cooperation, the way employees of the organization look like - all

this creates the certain mood at the consumer and make him to get the service.

**Infotainment** influences the consumer on all stages of making the decision. But it's different in different stages and the consumer's appraisal of it is also different. In order the consumer makes the decision to go to that organization, it's necessary to approach the information to him. Incorrect or inexact information can misinform or even make the consumer angry; consequently, it should be full, up-to-date and reliable. So, in the process of consumption of service, comments from those, who give the service, are more valuable than the information from the printed source. For example, consultation of the cosmetician about a condition the client's skin and about possible ways of solving the subsequent problems with the help of up-to-date means and ways can cause the positive attitude to the process of consumption.

**Conformity with declared promises** for many companies that give services nowadays isn't an important factor because there is not enough staff motivation for qualitative execution of their direct duties. But the consumers pay a great attention to this. Information, which was given from somebody can do harm the image or on the contrary, can strongly influence in choosing the organization. So, if a medical organization promises fast and full examination, but the consumer should pass the standard making an appointment with the doctors, he should wait for reception of the doctor, that will prescribe the appointment card to examinations, and then the consumer gets the treatment in traditional way, the organization shows the appropriate attitude to its clients.

**Condition of the territory around the place of service**, including architectural design, parking, local railway, lawn, flower-beds and etc., create an additional impression of visiting that medical organization. If the consumer doesn't have an opportunity to come to the entrance of the place of service because of big snowdrifts, then the all impression can be spoiled. So, the commercial clinics, those give services to the clients, strictly see to the cleanness of the territory and to the appearance of buildings.

Of course not all factors equally influence on all the consumers in choosing an organization of service. But, it's important for any firm, which gives its service that the consumer draws

attention to its product. That is why, the organization should try that the consumer notices that very product, moreover it's very important for many producers that the consumer not only knows about existence of that organization, but he considers the product as alternatives. That is why, it's necessary to take into account the influence of all the factors and to place the priority according the conception and mission of every concrete organization.

It's necessary to base on theory of two facts by Frederic Herzberg in order to define service constituents of all service process of medical institutions[2,p.371-372]. He marked out the group of factors showing motivating and demonstrating influence on human behavior and producing the feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. As a result of Herzberg's research it was ascertained that the process of getting satisfaction and the process of growing dissatisfaction from the point of view of influence of factors are two different processes, that is elimination of factors, producing the growth of dissatisfaction does not always lead the growth of satisfaction and, on the contrary, in weakening influence of the factors, promoting the growth of satisfaction doesn't always lead the growth of dissatisfaction.

The interrelation between "satisfaction and lack of satisfaction" is generally influenced by the factors which are connected with the nature of the need. These are internal factors, which have a strong motivating influence on human behavior, which can lead to complete satisfaction of the need. Motivating factors are considered as an independent group of needs. If these needs are met, a person is satisfied. For example, if a consumer wanted to cure the tooth and visiting stomatological clinic on this matter was painless and pleasant, he/she would feel satisfaction by solving this problem.

The interrelation between "dissatisfaction and lack of dissatisfaction" is determined by

influence of factors, which are connected with the environment, where a person exists. These are external factors, non-availability of which produces feeling of dissatisfaction. But the presence of these feelings doesn't always produce the state of satisfaction. It means that these factors don't play the motivating role, they produce normal living conditions. Herzberg called them hygienic factors. So, the building image, cleanness and other things do not increase the importance of organization in the consumers' opinion until they have the need which can be met by mean of certain services.

On the basis of this concept Herzberg drew the conclusion that the first consideration should be given to the factors which produce dissatisfaction and do everything in order to get rid of this feeling.

On the result of consumption of service the consumer draws the final conclusions which help him/her to make the decision about the following mutual relations between the consumer and the organization.

In the eyes of the consumers the medical institution will seem more preferably in case when it creates and offers the best value possible for the clients. Consequently, such a medical organization has more chances to be chosen by the consumer if it takes the correct approach to formation of mutual relation with targeted consumers. In the process of creation the value of medical institution and its services it is necessary to take into account wishes of consumers and to form a service policy in consideration of the marked out factors determining behavior of consumers in the market of medical services.

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<sup>1</sup> *Aleksunin V.A., Mit'kov S.A.* Marketing researches of the market of paid medical services of Krasnodar territory // Marketing in Russia and abroad. 2005. № 5 (49).

<sup>2</sup> *Richi S., Martin P.* Management of motivation: the Manual for high schools. M., 2004.