

REVIEW

BY ASSOC. PROF. GALIA KRUMOVA TSOLOVA, MD, PHD

Member of the Scientific Jury in the procedure for defending the dissertation on the topic:

**THE NEED FOR A MARKETING CULTURE
AS A MANAGEMENT FUNCTION IN HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT**

for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty
"Social Medicine and Health Management"

with doctoral candidate **Dr. ANTON PETKOV PETKOV**

On the basis of order №RD-67/05.02.2021 of the Director of NCPHA and by decision of the Scientific Jury (Protocol №1/09.02.2021) I was elected a member of the Scientific Jury according to the specified procedure and preparation of a review.

The review was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB) and the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions in National Center of Public Health and Analyses (NCPHA).

1. General Overview of the procedure and PhD candidate

Having regard to the procedure, I was provided with a set of materials on paper and electronic media, which includes the required documents, as follows: dissertation; abstract; copies of scientific publications; list of publications and participation in scientific forums; other documents.

Dr. Anton Petkov Petkov was enrolled as a doctoral student on a self-study basis by Order of the Director of NCPHA №RD-57 as of 03.02.12020 under a doctoral program: "Social Medicine and Health Management". The doctoral student has the required number of points, according to Annex 1. Minimum national requirements for scientific and teaching activities.

At the Scientific meeting of the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Directorate, and based on a decision of the Scientific Council, the doctoral student was expelled with the right to defense, according to Order № RD-61/05.02.2021 of the Director of NCPHA.

The set of documents meets the requirements. The submitted documents prove the legality and completeness of the conducted training and the procedure for its administration.

2. Autobiographical details of the candidate

Anton Petkov Petkov was born on September 15, 1961. In 1987 he graduated in medicine at the Higher Medical Institute in Sofia. In 1993 he acquired the specialty "Internal Medicine", in 1997 - "Cardiology", in 2000 - "Health Management" at UNWE - Institute for Postgraduate Qualification, HSMA, Sofia.

From January 1988 to December 1988 he worked as a resident doctor at the Regional Hospital, Blagoevgrad, and in the period 1988-1999 - as a research associate at the Transport Medical Institute (TMI), Sofia. From 1999 to 2001 he worked in the polyclinic SOMAT, TMI, Sofia as a chief physician, and then as a manager in MSC "SOMAT" AD - Sofia. From 2001 to 2009 he was appointed manager, cardiologist at the Medical Center "Medelek" Ltd. - Sofia. From 2009 to the present he is the executive director of the University Hospital "St. Ivan Rilski" EAD - Sofia. Over the years he has improved his qualification and has conducted training courses in: echocardiography, abdominal ultrasound, 24-hour monitoring of blood pressure, 24-hour ECG monitoring.

3. Relevance of the development

The dissertation of Dr. Anton Petkov focuses on an extremely important issue. The applications of health marketing are constantly increasing in line with the growing expectations and criticality of consumers in terms of service, their purchasing power and their choices, as well as the rivalry between hospitals in perceiving their preferences. This determines the relevance of the dissertation in view of the constantly reforming national health system of Bulgaria and the need for a new management style and implementation of professional health management.

Dr. Petkov competently considers a number of priority issues of modern health marketing, emphasizing two of them: socio-ethical marketing as a new direction in the theory and practice of marketing and the role of marketing culture for effective organizational change in health care.

The author emphasizes that the adequate high marketing culture of the management and medical staff is a prerequisite for a successful organizational change on a larger scale in the interest of effective reform of the national health system. Health marketing can be used to regulate the level of demand, improve the image of services offered, attract resources and people, motivate and engage staff, make better use of available resources, and develop new services and programs.

All this emphasizes once again the relevance of the presented dissertation.

4. Essential dissertation characteristics

The dissertation is formed in accordance with the requirements of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB). The text is clear, well structured and there is an adequate balance between the different sections.

The development is presented on 114 pages and includes all the necessary elements: introduction, literature review, research methodology, discussion of the results, conclusions, recommendations. The bibliography includes 121 literary sources, of which 40 in Cyrillic and 81 in Latin. The work is illustrated with 16 tables, 16 figures, 2 annexes (Questionnaire "Need for marketing in hospital management" and Questionnaire for the patients' opinion).

Literature review

The literature review is presented on 55 pages and shows the current trends on the problems related to healthcare marketing. The essence and the role of marketing as a management process and the application of marketing approaches in healthcare are presented. Emphasis is placed on the growing need for a new marketing culture in the management process of the hospital. The problems related to public relations are discussed in detail - public relations; the market and consumer behavior; marketing and medical quality as approaches to quality management of medical care. Particular attention is paid to socio-ethical marketing as a new direction in the theory and practice of marketing and the role of marketing culture for effective organizational change in health care in the process of health reform.

The analysis made in the review shows the excellent awareness of the dissertation about the researched problem. Dr. Petkov is able to work with scientific literature, to discuss different opinions, to make generalizations, for which his practical experience is essential.

Qualitative and well-structured literature review is the basis for the formulation of the goal: "Based on a specific literary and empirical analysis of the level of marketing culture and awareness of management and medical staff to justify the growing need for more effective use of marketing as a factor of effective management in the hospital in the interest of improving the quality of hospital activity in modern market conditions. " The tasks are 5 in number and result from the set goal.

Research methodology

The object, subject and scope of the study are presented correctly. The following main methods are used for collecting and processing the information: documentary - analysis of available official documentation; sociological - conducting a direct individual anonymous survey. Alternative, variational, non-parametric, correlation and graphical analysis are used

for the purposes of the analysis. On this basis, theoretical summaries, conclusions and recommendations are made, which have cognitive and reference value.

Results, conclusions and recommendations, contributions

To achieve this goal, two questionnaires were developed. The results of the survey on the need for marketing in the management of the hospital show that there are a number of important and unresolved issues related to the marketing culture of medical staff in the hospital: lack of information; insufficient use of systematic competitive analysis in the process of hospital management; inaccurate and incomplete idea of marketing; underestimation of the target contingents (patients) to which the future hospital activity should be directed for communications, advertising and provision of health services; insufficient use of the means for informing the public about the offered health services, etc.

The anonymous survey of hospitalized patients shows insufficient information regarding the conditions, types and quality of medical care in the hospital, which affects their adequate perception of the hospital environment. The sources of information are primarily close and familiar, less often from brochures, meetings with doctors from the hospital, information from the GP, incidental, irregular or missing targeted communication advertising and information activities.

All these results emphasize the need to increase the marketing culture of the management team and hospital staff for the needs of hospital management.

The formulated *conclusions* are a logical consequence of the set goal and tasks, the analysis of the results. 9 *recommendations* were made, synthesized from the personal experience of the dissertation and the current state of this important medical and social problem, aimed mainly at the management team of the hospital.

The dissertation contains significant contributions in theoretical-methodological and practical-applied aspect, which I support. It should be noted that in a methodological aspect for the first time in Bulgaria health marketing is analyzed outside the traditional economic vision of this concept, which includes specific to health social, cultural and ethical aspects; the insufficient marketing culture in the hospital sector has been proven, which leads to inefficient use of the bed stock and uneven rhythm in the activity and workload of the medical staff; the study fills a gap in the necessary culture of competition between hospitals as a guarantee of the quality of medical services; there are differences in the level of marketing culture of the staff in the public and private hospital sector; shortcomings in the use of the means of informing the public about the offered medical services have been proven; unsatisfactory coordination has been established between primary care (GP) and hospital care

specialists; the principle of target patients has been introduced in practice as part of the marketing approach.

The outlined differences in the management of public and private hospitals and the substantiated recommendations for improving the management will help to build policies for strengthening the management approaches in hospitals with poor financial results. The recommendation for overcoming the narrow framework of the hospital hospital and establishing effective connection and coordination with the outpatient network and in particular with the GPs is also essential.

Personal involvement of the author

The author has personally participated in all stages of the study - planning, design, guidance, coordination and control in the collection of information, analysis and processing. The dissertation shows that Dr. Petkov has in-depth knowledge, professional and personal qualities for independent research activities. The work is written in stylistically good language, gives a complete picture of the work done.

Scientific publications on the dissertation

The doctoral student has 4 published articles in which he is a leading author in authoritative Bulgarian journals - "*Medical meridians*" and "*Medical review*".

Abstract

The abstract fully reflects the achievements of the doctoral candidate, synthesizes the content of the dissertation and is fully compliant with the requirements of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its application and the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions in NCPHA.

CONCLUSION

I positively evaluate the presented dissertation. The reason for this is the practicability of the problem, the modern methodological approach used, the large volume of precisely performed and analyzed research work. *The dissertation is characterized by scientific integrity and practical orientation. It contains potential and ideas for future research, which increases its value.*

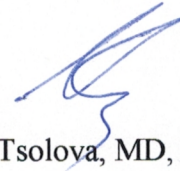
The dissertation fully meets the requirements of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB), the Regulations for the Application of the ADASRB and the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific

degrees and holding academic positions in NCPHA and the scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Social Medicine and Health Management".

The above considerations give me reason to confidently suggest to the members of the esteemed Scientific Jury to highly appreciate the dissertation and to vote positively for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" to Dr. Anton Petkov Petkov.

17.02.2021

Prepared by:



Assoc. Prof. Galya Tsolova, MD, PhD