

ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PATIENT-KINETOTHERAPIST-MANAGER IN THE RECOVERY CENTERS FROM IASI

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Abstract: *In a city with a population of approximately 300,000 citizens, with a fairly developed industry 30 years ago, recovery centers are a profitable business. The efficiency of physical therapy cabinets is based on the level of patient satisfaction, which in turn is given by the training level of kinetotherapists. The present study is a social survey conducted at 23 rehabilitation offices in Iasi and three in other localities. The survey was based on identifying patient satisfaction levels as well as managers' views on the professional training of employed physiotherapists. The aim of this study is to find solutions for optimizing the activity at the level of the recovery centers, and by the managers' responses to optimize the training of kinetotherapists by adapting the educational plans of the specialized institutions. One of the common responses from both managers and patients was the need to increase the level of communication from the physical therapist. The study highlighted the fact that the staff of the kinetotherapy centers must have communication and patient communication skills.*

Keywords: *manager, kinetotherapy, patient, efficiency.*

1. Introduction

In a free economy, most of the goods and services reach consumers through the market. Through the market, buyers, representing the demand and the sellers, representing the supply, meet and discuss about trading goods and services [2]. Analyzing supply and demand leads to understanding how the price is set for goods and services in different markets as

well as the influence of these prices on the quantity traded. In our case, the recovery centers offer different types of recovery services that cover the common conditions encountered within the inhabitants of a region [5]. The number of recovery centers from a region is directly proportioned to the population density, with the ratio of different age categories, but also with the economic level of the area [1]. When we talk about the economic level, a decisive

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aspect for the quality of the sanogenic level of the population is represented by the type and density of industrial agents [10].

The city of Iasi is among the oldest and most important settlements of the country. Located at the Eastern border of Romania, Iasi is a main development pillar of the eastern European Union and represents one of the most powerful university centers in the country [11].

On 1st of July 2015, the city of Iasi had a population of 359.843 out of which 150.713 were over 60 years old. This age category worked up until the 90's in one of the many plants or factories that existed around that time [12]. Up until the year 1990, the city of Iasi covered the entire range of industrial activities from heavy machinery plants to textile industry, through the food industry, electricity and electronic equipment. Another category of client-patient is represented by the adult population and even by children, mainly due to the lack of physical activity in the spare time, inadequate nutrition and numerous accidents.

These explanations are necessary because in the specialty literature there is a special chapter dedicated to affections encountered within older people [9], moreover at this age one can see signs of professional diseases caused by prolonged inadequate positions or caused by the toxic environment specific to some areas [6].

At this time, in all the big cities of our country, you can find two categories of recovery centers: the public institutions, from within the hospitals as well as independent and the private institutions. Besides the recovery centers with legal status, recovery medical assistance can also be seen in ambulatory system offered at home by free practice therapists [5].

Private kinetotherapy centers established under the law provide a wide range of

recovery services, from manual ones (massage, medical gymnastic, passive mobilization), to electrotherapy, laser therapy, magnetotherapy, ultrasounds etc., balneotherapy, thermotherapy, aerosols etc. Compared to the recovery centers from the hospitals, which are specialized on affection categories and benefit from state funding, the private centers focused on offering a wide range of services. At the same time recovery private practice is focused on patient satisfaction to attract him and to get him to buy a complete and more varied package of services. With this, they are concerned both with the diversification of service offerings through the purchase of modern equipment and the provision of highly professional staff [1]. In order to assure qualified personnel, recuperation centers, not only in Iasi, have at their disposal two large categories of graduates of specialized studies: kinetotherapy and special motricity – offered by the numerous Faculties of Physical Education and Sports – and balneophysiotherapy – offered by the Faculties of Medicine -, as well as graduates of training courses – offered by different private or public institutions - Apprenticeships or traineeships programs. This rich offer of specialists on the labor market allows managers to select the most valuable graduates and at the same time to offer them a modest salary [8].

Purpose

The study was aimed at identifying the number of recovery centers in the private sector in Iasi, the type of services offered by them, the busiest period of the day, respectively in the year. Also, the sociological survey was aimed at identifying the satisfaction level of patients / clients of recovery centers. The purpose of the study was to establish the

professional qualities of the employees, as requested by the employer, to adapt the skills of graduates of Kinetotherapy and special motricity programs. At the same time, from analysing the responses from the patients, one can see their expectations of the centers in regard to the quality of the equipment, the hygiene conditions, the professional relations with the employees etc.

Hypothesis

The research was based on the idea that both patients and center managers require a high level of patient communication. It has also been assumed that the most requested procedure is the massage, and that the most disorders are those located in the spine.

2. Material and Method

The study was carried out between April and May 2018, comprised 41 operators on the ground and was based on the survey method using the direct questionnaire technique. The questionnaire addressed to patients included 8 items and had 68 respondents, while the one addressed to managers included 13 items.

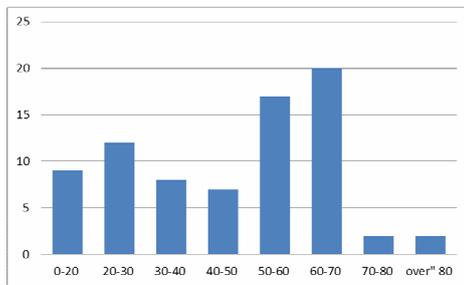
3. Results

Analysis of the results of the questionnaire addressed to the managers of private recovery centers. In the city of Iași, 23 private recovery centers have been identified and they offer a wide range of services. Of these, only one center specializes in pediatric recovery, although others have this service. All centers offer kinetotherapy, electrotherapy, medical gymnastic, massage and only 4 (17,4%) offer spa services, aerosols and paraffin wraps. From the managers' responses, the

most common disorders are those of the spine followed by the lower limbs, and the most frequent are the rheumatological ones followed by the neurological then the posttraumatic.

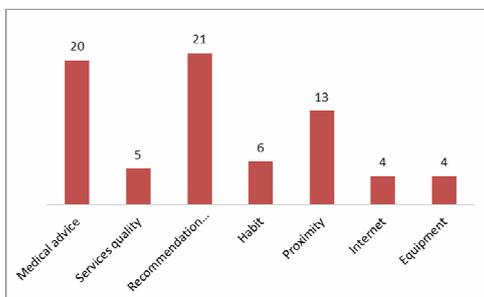
Regarding the most requested time periods, results showed that during the day between 8-11 and 15-19 is the most crowded, and during the year the periods February-May and September-November. Regarding the level of satisfaction of the managers with the level of training of the employees, 95% were satisfied. This can be easily explained by the inflation of kinetotherapists that exist at this time in Romania. In other words, the fluctuation of the staff is quite high, and the managers stop selecting only when they are satisfied [7]. 59,7% of the managers of the recovery centers demand a high level of communication from kinetotherapists, 32,3% demand seriousness and punctuality and the others, loyalty, the pleasure of working etc. Most managers (60,86%) say that their center stands out due to their "quality of the services", 30,43% say "quality of the staff", and the rest say it's their variety of offers and equipment. The statistics on the total number of employees in the centers identified reveal a total of 102 employees and a need of 28, also only 17% of the centers said they were not willing to work with volunteer physical therapists. Analysis of the results of the questionnaire addressed to the clients of the recovery centers. The questionnaire addressed to patients comprised 8 items and was completed by a total of 68 respondents, including 30 men and 38 women. Considering the specificity of recovery centers, most patients support on their own the treatment costs. This is a good reason to issue expectations about the quality of the recovery process [10]. At the time of the field research, from the

total respondents, 42,64% suffered from disorders in the spine, 26,47% of lower limb conditions and the others from other generalized diseases (obesity, neuralgia, paresis etc.). A rather interesting aspect was encountered in identifying the number of patients by age, respectively the evolution of the graph curve (graph 1), which recorded a significant percentage (17, 6%) at the age of up to 20 years compared to the relatively low percentage (2,9%) of patients aged over 70 years.



Graph 1. *Evolution of the patients by age*

Although most private recovery centers have fairly visible marketing strategies in both online and real-life environments (banners, bright lights, billboards, etc.), most respondents participated in the recovery sessions at the center (graph 2) at the recommendation of acquaintances (30,88%), followed by the doctor's recommendation (29,41%).

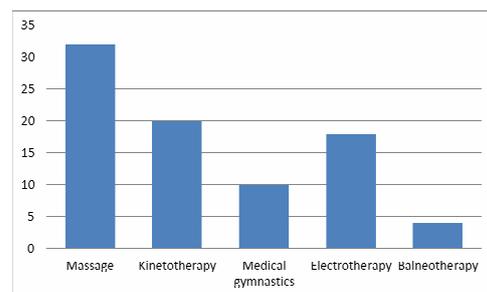


Graph 2. *Criteria for choosing recovery centers*

A good thing for the training of kinetotherapists is that 33,26% said they were happy with their behaviour and 22% said it would be better if they were communicating more.

Regarding the patients' experience when it comes to procedures, devices we can say that they are informed because 63,23% have been to other centers. This means that both the center manager and kinetotherapists have to provide quality services, to know the evolution of disease-specific therapy concepts. This way patients find differences between the recovery centers in relation to the equipment (12.6%), with the level of knowledge of the staff (10.2%), with the waiting time (7.35%). In this context, patients even suggested for some centers to purchase new devices and have more staff to lower the waiting time.

Most patients surveyed claimed that the most enjoyable procedure was massage, followed by kinetotherapy, electrotherapy and medical gymnastics (graph 3).



Graph 2. *Preferred procedures*

4. Discussions and Conclusions

Considering the existence in the city of Iasi of a rather large number of health clinics, 15 state hospitals with different medical specialties, of which one with specific recovery only (for all categories of diseases), three hospitals operating

under private regime, as well as many other private clinics, private recovery centers had to specialize in certain diseases or invest in purchasing specific equipment required by patients. Due to the existence of the two major institutions of higher education with specializations which confer competences in the field of recovery, the recuperation centers benefit from the possibility to select the most valuable graduates, to give the chance to young people to volunteer, but also to stimulate employees to improve through their participation in various workshops, scientific symposiums etc.

The existence of recovery centers in major hospitals is one of the main causes for which activity in private institutions is sporadic in both one day and one year. At the same time, the older population, mostly composed of retired people, benefits from medical insurance from the state, free treatment periods in the countryside.

A quite important problem identified in the study is the age segment up to 20 years suffering from spine disorders and obesity.

One of the most common disorders identified in both the questionnaire addressed to managers and patients is those found in the spine. This highlights some possible underlying causes, namely vicious attitudes and positions, lack of physical activities from the daily work schedule [3].

Another conclusion is the low level of communication between the physical therapist and the patient. This aspect was identified in both categories of respondents and could be a reference when completing the studies in the specialized higher education.

The study also highlighted the need to engage a greater number of kinetotherapists. Given the large number of graduates each year, this deficiency can be caused by patient fluctuations during the day and throughout the year, and managers can't afford to hire additional staff. In other words, there are times when patients wait to be taken over by a physical therapist and moments when they do not work.

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