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Relationship marketing in healthcare services

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Keywords: relationship marketing, medical marketing, physician-patient relationship, patient satisfaction

Summary of the Work

1. Introduction

The doctoral thesis explores the implementation of relationship marketing strategies in healthcare, emphasizing their impact on patient satisfaction and loyalty. The importance of the research derives from the need for healthcare units to continuously improve their relationships with patients, not only to ensure patient satisfaction, but also to create a solid image and a strong brand on the Romanian healthcare sector. The author emphasizes the relevance of the study in a context in which the quality of healthcare services is essential for the long-term success of healthcare facilities.

2. Theoretical Foundations in Relationship Marketing

This chapter discusses the evolution of the concept of relationship marketing from its origins in the 1970s to its widespread adoption in various sectors, including healthcare. The transition from transactional to relationship marketing is presented, emphasizing the importance of customer loyalty and building long-term relationships. The author notes the significant contributions of theorists such as Philip Kotler and Leonard Berry, who have redefined the way organizations manage their customer relationships.

3. Particularities of Services Marketing and Medical Services Marketing

This chapter analyzes the specific nature of services and the differences between services and tangible products, highlighting the unique characteristics of healthcare services. These include intangibility, inseparability, perishability and variability, which require organizations to adapt their marketing strategies. It also discusses internal marketing, which plays a crucial role in improving the quality of services by motivating and involving employees. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is identified as an essential tool for personalizing patient experiences and improving patient loyalty.

4. Applicability of Relational Marketing Tools within Medical Units

This chapter provides an analysis of the marketing mix of services, starting from the traditional 4P model (product, price, placement, promotion) and extending to the 7P model by including the elements of personnel, processes and physical evidence. Each of the seven components is tailored to the specifics of healthcare services, emphasizing the importance of each policy in the context of patient relationships. The relevance of patient loyalty is also discussed.

5. Overview of the Healthcare Services Sector in Romania

This chapter presents an overview of the Romanian healthcare system, including its evolution over the last 30 years, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the quality and accreditation standards applicable to Romanian hospitals. It emphasizes the importance of implementing relationship marketing strategies to better respond to patients' needs, especially in the context of the new challenges brought by the pandemic.

6. Research on Factors Influencing Patient Satisfaction and Loyalty

The research methodology includes all necessary steps to study the factors influencing patient satisfaction and loyalty. The author explains the methods used, including statistical analysis and correlations between variables, to identify the elements that have the greatest impact on patient perceptions. The research results confirm that personalization of services and effective communication are key to patient loyalty.

7. Conclusions and Managerial Implications

The thesis concludes with the testing of hypotheses and the presentation of practical implications for the management of medical units. The conclusions emphasize the need for an integrated approach to relational marketing, involving both medical staff and management, to ensure patient satisfaction and loyalty. The author offers recommendations for improving current marketing strategies in Romanian healthcare.