

Improving the Public Image of the Uherske Hradiste Hospital

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Úvod

Teoretická část

Zpracujte teoretickou rešerši literatury vztahující se na problematiku marketingu, marketingového mixu, podnikové image s ohledem na specifika oblasti zdravotnických zařízení, jmenovitě nemocnic.

Praktická část

Představte Uherskohradištskou nemocnici a. s. včetně jejích oddělení.

Analyzujte současný stav image Uherskohradištské nemocnice a. s.

Na základě výsledků analýz vytvořte návrhy na zlepšení image Uherskohradištské nemocnice a. s..

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Zlámal, Jaroslav. Marketing ve zdravotnictví. Brno: Národní centrum ošetrovatelství a nelékařských zdravotnických oborů, 2006.

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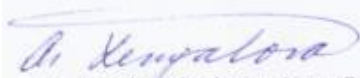
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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá Uherskohradišťskou nemocnicí a.s. a její image. Je rozdělena do dvou částí – teoretické a praktické. Hlavním cílem této práce je navrhnout doporučení sloužící ke zlepšení současného stavu image Uherskohradišťské nemocnice. Teoretická část zahrnuje informace z odborné literatury týkající se tématu – marketing, marketing ve zdravotnictví a jeho specifika a image, která je spojována s firemní identitou. Výsledkem praktické části je PEST analýza, dotazník a jeho vyhodnocení a návrh na zlepšení image nemocnice.

Klíčová slova: marketing, nemocnice, image, zdravotnické zařízení, zdravotnictví, komunikace.

ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis concerns with image of Uherské Hradiště Hospital and its public image. It is divided into two parts – theoretical and practical. The main goal of this thesis is to propose recommendations, which can be used to improve the current state of image of the Uherské Hradiště Hospital. Theoretical part includes information from specialized literature related to the topic – marketing, health service marketing with its specific features and image, which is associated with corporate identity. The outcome of the practical part consists of PEST analysis, questionnaire and suggested improvement.

Keywords: marketing, hospital, public image, medical facility, health service, communication.

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INTRODUCTION

Hospitals play an important role in life of every human. People are born there, visit them when they have health problems and die there. They are part of our lives. It is important to realize that hospitals are also economic subjects and they are also parts of a state economic process. Their functioning depends on economic situation of the state. Their income consists mainly of public health insurance and a state budget and money to these institutions comes from inhabitants' pockets, so it is an economic circle.

To run a medical facility correctly, many requires must be accomplished. But the crucial elements for smooth functioning are the patients, because without them, there would not be a need for hospitals. To gain patients and primarily to keep them satisfied, hospitals need to focus on services and moreover on marketing. Nowadays marketing has a huge strength in acquiring clients and every company should have its own marketing section. Marketing influences company image and vice versa. Therefore, it is crucial to pay attention to both of these issues.

The topic was chosen because the image of the Uherské Hradiště Hospital is often discussed and there are many different opinions. Anticipated opening of the new hospital's pavilion brought discussions about the hospital among the general public. It is appropriate to make a research before it opens and the research could be the subject of comparison to potential further researches concerning the public and their opinions.

This bachelor thesis is focused on image of Uherské Hradiště Hospital and its public image. It is divided into two parts – theoretical and practical. The main goal of this thesis is to propose recommendations, which can be used to improve the current state of image of the Uherské Hradiště Hospital. Theoretical part includes knowledge from specialized literature related to the topic – marketing, health service marketing with its specific features and image, which is accompanied by corporate identity. The outcome of the practical part consists of PEST analysis and a questionnaire called „Image Uherskohradišťské nemocnice, a.s.“ The last section of the practical part is concentrated on suggested improvement, which could help the state of image of the Uherské Hradiště Hospital.

I. THEORETICAL PART

1 MARKETING AND ITS IMPORTANCE

There are many different definitions for marketing. It is a certain kind of philosophy and strategy of an enterprise that goes into non-economic spheres and contains also spheres of different activities. These activities have only a few common factors with the basic business environment. Nevertheless, also environments as science, education system, health service, service trades etc. contain elements of marketing. These fields are different from the former industrial environment, where the marketing was born as a managing principle of enterprise, but they surely use many tools of marketing mix. So if these facts are taken into consideration, marketing could be defined as: The process of managing resulting in cognition, foreseeing, influencing and in the final phase also in the satisfaction of needs by an effective and advantageous way that guarantees fulfillment of the organization's aims.¹ Or simpler, the definition by American Marketing Association can be used: „Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.“²

Marketing is very important for every business in the world. Because without marketing, potential customers would not know that they can find what they want in a certain company. Sellers or service providers need to show themselves to the people outside the company. And that is when marketing should come to help – market research, promotion, planning, checking and many more can be used to make a better business. Competition is strong these days. „As competition creates infinite choices, companies look for ways to connect emotionally with customers, become irreplaceable, and create lifelong relationships.“³ Marketing's importance grows every day as there are more and more companies and enterprises and there is a need to „fight“ for customers.

¹ Jaroslav Zlámal, *Marketing ve zdravotnictví* (Brno: Národní centrum ošetrovatelství a nelékařských zdravotnických oborů, 2006), 21.

² American Marketing Association, “Definition of Marketing,” <https://www.ama.org/AboutAMA/Pages/Definition-of-Marketing.aspx> (accessed August 3, 2014).

³ Alina Wheeler, *Designing Brand Identity* (New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 2009), 2.

1.1 Marketing mix

Marketing mix can be understood as a summary of internal factors of enterprise, which allow influencing a customer's behaviour. These marketing tools – product, place, price, promotion – have to be combined and harmonized in a manner that best suits the market. Only then they can effectively perform their functions and bring synergistic effect. Marketing mix is a complex of tactical marketing tools – of product, price, distributional and communication policy, that allows company to modify the supply according to customers' wishes on the target market. There are usually two names connected with the term marketing mix – Jerry McCarthy and Neil H. Borden, though, the term was used firstly by James Culliton in 40's of last century.⁴

4P term is used because of its simplicity and brevity. But there can be many more marketing activities, which are initiated in order to form the best supply. Furthermore, every P itself can be a set of activities, not only one activity – this can be seen in picture 1.

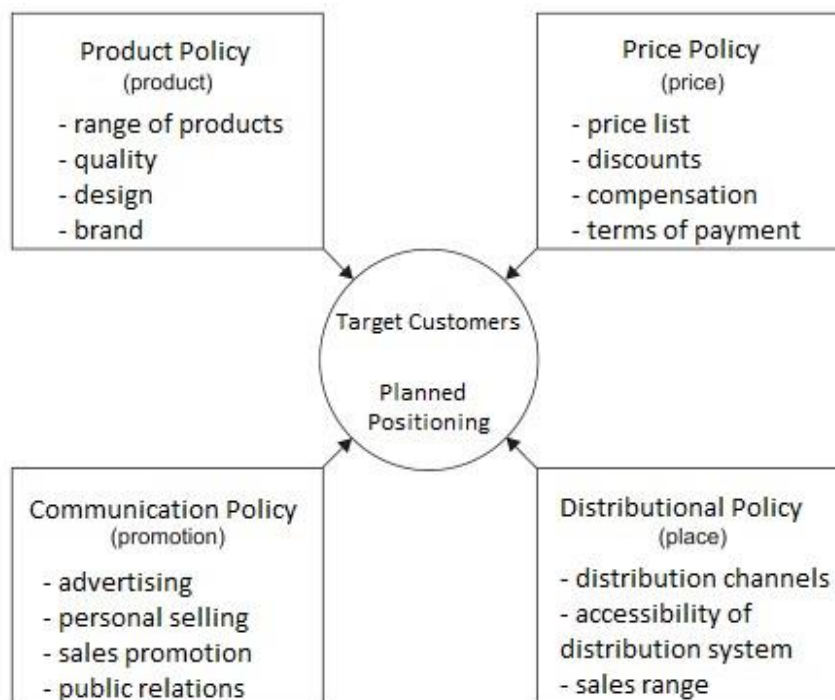


Chart 1: Marketing Mix (4P). Source: Marcela Zamazalová, *Marketing obchodní firmy* (Havlíčkův Brod: Grada Publishing, a.s., 2009), 40. (Adjusted by own translation.)

⁴ Marcela Zamazalová, *Marketing obchodní firmy* (Havlíčkův Brod: Grada Publishing a.s., 2009), 39.

In specific fields, models that are widened by another P can be seen – 5P model. Usually, the fifth P is „people“. For services, 7P model is typical. Here, „personnel“ and „process“ are added. It is crucial to mention that it is not important, nor perfectly correct to strictly hold to the mentioned definition of 4P (5P, 7P). Marketing is mainly about ideas and creativity, about searching for new ways to customers and the mentioned simplified schema should be used only as assistance. 4P model can evoke the feeling of „inside“ enterprise’s attitude and can give the impression that it lacks the typical marketing action: listening to the market. Therefore, some authors advise to emphasize the outside, customer’s point of view. And that is where Lauterborn’s 4C model appears. It is not very different from 4P model, but as mentioned above, it is seen by customers’ perspective:

- product → customer solution
- price → customer cost
- place → convenience
- promotion → communication.⁵

⁵ Zamazalová, *Marketing obchodní firmy*, 40 – 41.

2 HEALTH SERVICE MARKETING AND ITS SPECIFIC FEATURES

The main characteristic distinguishing health service from the other branches of economy is that its primary goal is to help people. There is an effort to save a life or to improve the quality of a life. This is very difficult and problematic to measure from the economic point of view. Health service marketing has its specifics and restrictions. The main reason is a differentiated structure of health service organizations, because some of them work as business entities and some as non-profit organizations.⁶

The basic specifics of health service, which have to be respected in order to use correct marketing management, can be defined as:

- The system of health service is only a part of the whole complex of health care. The system of health care demands also existence of many other subsystems, which create the global complex of health care in a certain country.
- Health of the population is the required output. But not only for the current generation, but also for the future generations. So it is not only about needs of this generation, but also about creating good conditions for a health development of the next generations.
- Health service affects everyone and people sensitively perceive the healthcare issues.
- There is often a very long time between the results of science and research and the possibility to apply certain medicine or medical method. Medicine has to be approved and that requires long research and testing.
- Health service requires a high level of education and lifelong education not only for doctors, but also for the majority of staff. The process of self-education is an essential feature.
- Prices in health service, one of the main tools of marketing management, are highly restrained in the Czech Republic health service. There are practically

⁶ Pavla Staňková, *Marketingové řízení nemocnic* (Žilina: GEORG, 2013), 72.

only two types of prices – regulated and contractual. Great part belongs to the regulated type.

Based on the mentioned facts, it is clear that the market mechanism of health service is restricted. This is reflected in the realization of marketing principle of management, when it is not possible to use all the principles and tools of marketing without consideration of many other factors.⁷

Health services should be focused on:

- permanent innovation and know-how techniques,
- marketing that is focused on a satisfied patient.

Health service marketing should answer the following questions:

1. What is the purpose of the existence of the health service organization?
2. Who is our client?
3. What does our client need?
4. What markets should we address?
5. What are the strengths of our organization?
6. Which weaknesses does the organization need to suppress?
7. Who is our competition?
8. Which market segments do we want to take care of?
9. Which strategies will we use to communicate with the key segments and which ones should we develop?

The marketing of hospitals can be understood as a process of the clients' needs and wishes, prediction of their demands, influencing and satisfying in a manner, which provides satisfied customers and at the same time provides also an effective management of the hospital.⁸

⁷ Staňková, *Marketingové řízení nemocnic*, 73 – 74.

⁸ Staňková, *Marketingové řízení nemocnic*, 74 – 75.

2.1 Hospital relationship marketing

The basis of hospital marketing management is relationship marketing. According to Kotler, the relationship marketing is focused on a creation, preservation and expansion of the strong relationships with customers and other target segments, which bring a value to the certain organization. The goal of relationship marketing is to take a long-term care of the relationship with different groups that are involved in the hospital activities, so called stakeholders.⁹ The main stakeholders are:

Patient and his family – it is needed to respect patient and meet his needs, from giving information through professional care to communication and so on.

The founder – it can be private legal entity or person, ministry, region, town etc. The emphasis is on the realization of the economic and social goals.

Unions – they belong to stakeholders that influence functioning of the hospital by the employees' rights representation. Medical Union Club (in Czech *Lékařský odborový klub*) was important mainly for the well known event „Děkujeme, odcházíme“.

Employees – doctors, pharmacists, nurses etc. create a group, which influences the quality of services. Mainly doctors and nurses need to be allowed to study and should be supported.

Competing hospitals – it is useful to use the methods of benchmarking to find strong and weak points of a competition, focused on the strengths of the hospital and minimize the weaknesses.

Health insurance companies – they have privileged position in health service, they act as the main buyers of the health care, guarantee the availability of health care, they push the efficiency of the whole health care system and they can apply sanctions based on the control of a provided health care.

Faculty of medicine – provide the education for doctors and other hospital staff. Some hospitals are directly connected to faculties of medicine and they provide the education for

⁹ Staňková, *Marketingové řízení nemocnic*, 75.

students at their workplace. We can mention also other subject influencing hospital management – for example media, public, emergency medical services etc.¹⁰

2.2 Marketing mix in health services

As Buckley states: „All aspects of traditional marketing functions – product, price, place, and promotion – are a challenge for hospital and health system marketers. In healthcare, so many processes depend on so many people performing so many specialized tasks that it is not surprising that hospital and health system marketers often struggle to explain to people outside of the healthcare field exactly what it is that they do. It’s not even easy to get people inside the organization to understand what marketing is all about.“¹¹ Therefore, it is clear that hospitals’ marketing is tough to manage, because it is basically a living system full of subsystems. Many marketing rules and ideas that can be used in a factory certainly cannot be used for hospitals. The functioning is very different and it deserves its own approach.

2.2.1 Product

In connection with health service, products can have several forms, but medical services absolutely predominate. Only a small part of products in health service have material character – medications and medical equipment. Service marketing is different from material products marketing and has its own specific features that have to be perceived:

- services have intangible character,
- services cannot be stored,
- it is often an individual performance,
- it is often a personal matter,
- the performance cannot be standardized,
- the recipient is often a part of the service performance.¹²

In health services, there can be other specific features added, for example:

¹⁰ Staňková, *Marketingové řízení nemocnic*, 75 – 77.

¹¹ Patrick T. Buckley, *The Complete Guide to Hospital Marketing* (USA, MA: HCPro, Inc., 2009), 3.

¹² Zlámal, *Marketing ve zdravotnictví*, 62.

- the most common product is diagnostic, therapeutic and nursing services,
- a healed patient is the required output – so input equals output,
- products cannot be tested in advance and are nontransferable to other patients,
- products often have an impact in a time, which can differ,
- health service system is based on insurance and a patient often requires the best services and often even extraordinary care „for his money“.¹³

Therefore it is clear that a product in health service is not the same as a product in other business fields. It needs a certain approach, individuality and respect to human. Patients can sense arrogant behaviour and preferences to doctors' friends and family, functionaries etc., so mainly this should be avoided.¹⁴ In short, a patient needs to be sure that he gets the best care that is available. But he does not see what is happening in doctors' offices and it can make him nervous. Therefore, the communication between patients and doctors is crucial and part of the product.

2.2.2 Price

In health services, the price is not based on supply and demand functioning, as it is in many other business fields. Practically there are only two types of prices – regulated and contract price. Most of the performances of health care, services and products belong to the regulated price category. This regulation is not based on the usual parameters as supply and demand or the real costs associated with the production. A big part of prices in health service is a result of an outcome of proceedings between the representatives of health care providers (chambers) and health insurance companies. Ministry of Health steps in when these two participants cannot reach an agreement. The basis for pricing health service performances are health-insurance plans that are made by insurance companies, mainly by VZP ČR.¹⁵

Despite the pricing principle in health service, when it basically depends on the insurance companies, it is important to mention that there are certain expenses that should be

¹³ Zlámal, *Marketing ve zdravotnictví*, 62.

¹⁴ Zlámal, *Marketing ve zdravotnictví*, 64.

¹⁵ Zlámal, *Marketing ve zdravotnictví*, 71 – 73.

taken into consideration. First of all, there are fixed costs. The typical fixed costs in health service are overhead costs like the heating costs. There must be a certain temperature in a doctor's office before the doctors come in and before the patients start to come. Or the electricity costs. These are fixed costs and they do not change whether there are ten patients or fifty of them. Then there are variable costs. These differ with the number of patients. For example vaccination – it is proportional to patients (doctors need as many shots as they have patients). By calculation of these costs we can obtain lower economical line.¹⁶ Even though the pricing is, as mentioned above, regulated by other factors and not only by economical ones, it is good to realize these costs.

2.2.3 Placement

This component of marketing mix means the place and location, in other words – how can a client get to a certain product or service. In health service area it means mainly how available is health care and its range. Availability of health care in the Czech Republic is given mainly by historical development. It has its roots in the Middle Ages, when hospitals were established by the church and later by the rulers near cloisters. The current medical facilities are mostly given by the state dirigisme from 1945 – 1989. From 1989, the amount of hospitals decreased, but on the other hand the amount of outpatients' departments (mainly the private ones) increased. Mainly the amount of hospitals and also their internal structures do not meet current needs and the numbers of treated patients are very different in individual hospitals. Besides the state hospitals that are managed directly by the Ministry of Health, the health care is also provided in hospitals managed by regional offices, other resorts (for example military hospitals are managed by the Ministry of Defence), or the private hospitals (mostly forms of joint-stock companies or limited liability companies). The structure of medical facilities changes – the number of hospices grows, the number of emergency services centers decreases.¹⁷

Part of this marketing mix section is also a site culture. The following factors can be included in the site culture:

- interior equipment of offices, hospitals and other medical facilities,

¹⁶ Zlámál, *Marketing ve zdravotnictví*, 71 – 75.

¹⁷ Zlámál, *Marketing ve zdravotnictví*, 75 – 76.

- amount of patients in halls, waiting areas and rooms
- dining culture,
- waiting times,
- colours of rooms, furniture and staff's clothes,
- cleanness and hygiene etc.¹⁸

Many medical facilities have improved the mentioned aspects lately and not only private facilities pay attention to those aspects and they try to meet patients' needs. Also hospitals start to have colourful rooms and halls, there are vending machines in the corridors and overall there is an effort to have a good and comfortable environment for patients and also for the employees.¹⁹

2.2.4 Promotion

Even medical facilities have to communicate with potential and real clients, patients, consumers of tangible and intangible products. Medical facility which is unknown and does not have any reputation is not trustworthy for clients, patients, business partners, public, etc. Success belongs to those who are well-known and whose qualities are verified and evaluated, the image is crucial when considering hospitals and other medical facilities. The demand for communication is very strong.²⁰ Therefore, communication is also one of the crucial forms of promotion and together with advertising and public relations it creates the main forms of promotion.

2.2.4.1 Communication

One of the most important types of communication in health service is certainly communication between the medical employees and the patients. Communication is not only verbal, but there are some forms of nonverbal communications, which are often more significant for patients. Patients perceive facial expressions, gestures, tone of speech, hidden meanings, looks etc. The well-known „keep smiling“ should be applied here, because a simple smile can minimize fears and a smiling person can gain fondness easier than sad,

¹⁸ Zlámál, *Marketing ve zdravotnictví*, 77.

¹⁹ Zlámál, *Marketing ve zdravotnictví*, 77.

²⁰ Zlámál, *Marketing ve zdravotnictví*, 77.

worried person. It is cardinal to realize that patients are usually worried about their health or even life, are sometimes ashamed, are anxious, nervous and sometimes they are in pain. This needs to be moderated by staff, by saying for example: „It is not a serious problem“ or „Do not worry, we can heal this“. Many patients wish to be informed elaborately, including unfavourable parameters. Even though the primary principle is to give hope, it is needed to inform patient or his family about all possible impacts.²¹

When communicating with patients, human aspect can appear as much as nowhere else. There are many nurses who are kind and smiling almost all the time and many doctors who are willing to help at all costs. But people are diverse and there is a possibility that a patient can meet a nurse who had a bad day and that could prevent her from being helpful and nice. And that patient can be not satisfied and spread his unpleasant experience to his friends and family and that is displeasing for the hospital's reputation. Therefore, communication with patients is very important in health service.

2.2.4.2 Advertising

Advertising in health service has limited and regulated options. This regulation is given mainly by code of ethics. Code of ethics of the Czech medical chamber is full of prohibitions and regulations. The crucial ones are:

- a doctor has to abstain from all undignified activities, which directly or indirectly mean propagation or advertisement of his person or his medical practice, aimed to expand clientele. He cannot do this either via other people,
- if a doctor recommends a medication or a medical device, he must not act upon commercial viewpoint, but only upon his conscience and patient's benefit.²²

Therefore, it is clear that a doctor simply cannot have a proper advertising, for example on the radio, on TV or leaflets. What attracts clients in health service is a good reputation. And that is a well-known fact. Word of mouth is very important here and it is what hospitals need to realize.

²¹ Zlámal, *Marketing ve zdravotnictví*, 78 – 79.

²² Zlámal, *Marketing ve zdravotnictví*, 100.

2.2.4.3 Public Relations

Public relations is a quite new service when considering hospitals. However, its fast growth and the fact that many hospitals have public relations officers show that it has earned its place in hospitals. As Kunders states: „The importance of and the need for public relations in hospitals can be appreciated when one considers some of the problems today’s hospitals have to contend with – high cost of medical care and the growing public criticism of hospitals [...]. Different section of the public – community, employees, medical staff, patients, visitors, etc. – form their opinions about the hospital according to the source of their information. These opinions can be influenced by a good public relations programme.“²³ Therefore, there should be some finances in economic budget for PR of every hospital.

The main responsibilities of hospital public relations are:

- to interpret different opinions of public to hospital’s management and recommend solutions,
- to monitor management activities of the hospital and their potential influence on changes of public’s perception of the hospital,
- to gather and analyze data leading to better communication between the hospital and the public,
- to help in raising funds and gaining sponsors, etc.²⁴

Event marketing has an important role in public relations. Event marketing is based on an event, that should evoke an emotional experience in order to gain attention within the enterprise. The most often used forms of event marketing in connection with Czech hospitals are events focused on:

- specialized public – particularly lecture activities and conferences,
- general public – charity events, anniversary of the hospital,
- patients – events for hospitalized children,

²³ G. D. Kunders, *Hospitals: Facilities Planning and Management* (New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Company Limited, 2004), 204.

²⁴ Kunders, *Hospitals: Facilities Planning and Management*, 206.

- employees – balls, employees gatherings etc.²⁵

²⁵ Staňková, *Marketingové řízení nemocnic*, 127 – 128.

3 IMAGE AND CORPORATE IDENTITY

3.1 Image

Image has a nature of generalized and simplified symbol that is based on a summary of ideas, attitudes, opinions and experience of a person, in relation to a certain object.²⁶ Based on how image influences the market, there are three types of image:

- **Generic image:** for the specific type of goods, where the main role is played by emotional relationships to a specific class of products. For example SUV automobiles with the image of expensive, high-performance cars, which have a high fuel consumption. It can include also companies and institutions.
- **Product/brand image:** for a product known under a certain brand. This type of image is important when a consumer cannot be well informed about the differences among offered products.
- **Corporate image:** is determined by a company quality and the manner of communication. Also by how the specific company is received by people.²⁷

When considering hospitals, corporate image is the most crucial. People are interested in a corporate image because a good quality and also a good reputation is what they seek. There are different factors influencing corporate image. Some authors think the crucial factors are product and service and their qualities. It can be also marketing communication in all forms, price and a manner of working with the price. Corporate image can be influenced also by an attitude and behaviour to vicinity. It is about a style of managing a company, dealing with partners, relation to employees and also a willingness to contribute to community projects. Even the best communication can be useless when a company has no quality to mention and promote.²⁸ Therefore, if a hospital wants to have a good image, it should focus on quality of services, attitude to partners and also employees and last but

²⁶ Jitka Vysekalová and Jiří Mikeš, *Image a firemní identita* (Havlíčkův Brod: Grada Publishing, a.s., 2009), 94.

²⁷ Vysekalová, *Image a firemní identita*, 99 – 100.

²⁸ Vysekalová, *Image a firemní identita*, 103.

not least to contributing to community projects (for example hospital open day, activities for children etc.).

3.2 Corporate Identity

Image and corporate identity are closely connected. Corporate identity is an important part of a company policy. It includes history of a company, philosophy and vision, people who belong to the company and its ethical values.²⁹ It can be shortly defined as: „Organization’s strategic choices and its expression thereof.“³⁰ Picture 2 shows basic elements of the relationship between corporate identity and corporate image – design, culture, communication and product/service and their connections. It is necessary to take into consideration that there can be changes in the system, so continuous analysis is essential for an enterprise.

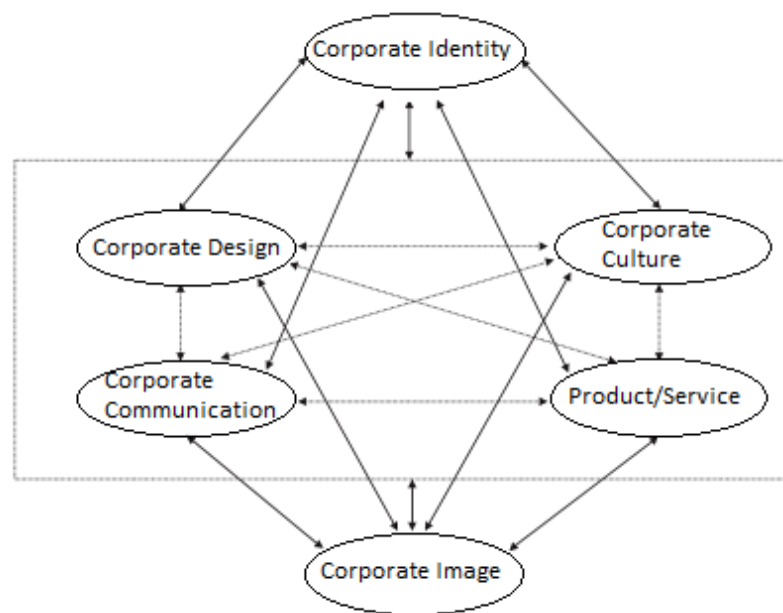


Chart 2: Corporate Identity System. Source: Jitka Vysekalová and Jiří Mikeš. *Image a firemní identita*. (Havlíčkův Brod: Grada Publishing a.s., 2009), 21. (Adjusted by own translation.)

²⁹ Vysekalová, *Image a firemní identita*, 14.

³⁰ Russell Abratt and Nicola Kleyn, “Corporate identity, corporate branding and corporate reputations: Reconciliation and integration,” *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 46 (July 2011), 1050. <http://www.emeraldinsight.com.proxy.k.utb.cz/journals.htm?articleid=17042735> (accessed July 28, 2014).

In short, corporate identity it is what the company is or what it wants to be. On the other hand, image is a public reflection of this identity.³¹ When considering hospitals, it is very important to think properly about identity and image. Hospital managers and PR workers ought to pay attention to these phenomena, because many people (clients) might not go to a certain hospital because of its bad image.

³¹ Vysekalová, *Image a firemní identita*, 16.

II. PRACTICAL PART

4 METHODOLOGY

The main goal of this thesis is to propose recommendations, which can be used to improve the current state of image of the Uherské Hradiště Hospital. The first step was to make a theoretical research, which enabled me to fully understand the topic and to go deeper. In order to accomplish the goal, I have chosen suitable means – PEST analysis and questionnaire. Descriptive statistic was used as a method of data evaluation.

PEST analysis was chosen, because it helps to get the overall picture of external environment of the company. The main purpose of it is to analyze environment which cannot be influenced by the company, but which influences the company. The main factors are political, economic, socio-cultural and technological.³²

For acquiring data about hospital's reputation, questionnaire survey was chosen, because it is the fastest and the simplest method of collecting data. People who live in Uherské Hradiště and potential clients of the hospital were the target group, because they are the ones who perceive the image of the hospital most. All of them were at the age of 18 and more, because people under 18 usually do not chose the hospital for them according to the image, their parents do it. The aim of the questionnaire was to gather data about people's opinions concerning hospital's services and its image and find out what they are not satisfied with, so that the improvements can be suggested.

The questionnaire was available online and the link was sent to my friends and acquaintances and also put on Facebook to groups concerning Uherské Hradiště. Moreover, twenty printed forms were distributed in the hospital to several medical departments and all of them were included in the results of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was based on Martina Jablunková's questionnaire in her dissertation about Thomas Bata Hospital.³³

³² Staňková, *Marketingové řízení nemocnic*, 152 – 153.

³³ Martina Jablunková, "Projekt zlepšení image Krajské nemocnice Tomáše Bati" (Master's Thesis, Thomas Bata University, 2012). Appendice: Questionnaire.

5 INTRODUCTION OF UHERSKÉ HRADIŠTĚ HOSPITAL

5.1 History of the hospital

Hospital in Uherské Hradiště was put into operation on January 15, 1924. It received 3000 patients in only a half-year and the need for enlargement and modernization appeared. In 1925, a position for senior consultant for inner and infectious diseases was established and further years brought the development of other medical wards. The Second World War influenced the development appreciably. Many of the medical wards were created after it finished. The hospital acquired new face in 1990's, when it was modernized with an information system. In 2004 and 2005, Zlín region was preparing district hospitals for a transformation into registered companies. Uherské Hradiště Hospital was transformed into a joint-stock company and was signed into a business register on September 22, 2005, with Zlín region as the only shareholder. Hospital as a state-funded institution terminated its activity on December 31, 2005 and started year 2006 as a joint-stock company.³⁴

Roentgenological workplaces were digitized in 2006 and the hospital, as the first one in Zlín region and one of the first hospitals in the Czech Republic, was involved in PACS system (subsystem of a hospital information system). A new building for obstetrics and gynaecology department was opened in 2009 and a year later, a kindergarten for employees was acquired. Many projects considering heat economy were realized and many dispensable buildings were demolished because of a planned construction of a central building. This construction, commenced in July 2012, is the biggest investment in almost ninety years long history of the hospital.³⁵

Year 2013 was primarily the year of constructing this central building, which will assemble surgical departments under one roof. The first patient in the new building should be received in November 2014. In economic field, the company tried to eliminate health insurance companies' restrictive moves and regulatory restrictions and increasing of VAT. In July 2013, babybox was put into operation and the hospital became the fifty-seventh

³⁴ *Výroční zpráva Uherskohradištské nemocnice 2013*, <http://www.nemuh.cz/doc/vyrocní-zpráva-za-rok-2013> (accessed July 20, 2014), 5 – 6.

³⁵ *Výroční zpráva Uherskohradištské nemocnice 2013*, <http://www.nemuh.cz/doc/vyrocní-zpráva-za-rok-2013> (accessed July 20, 2014), 6 – 7.

place in the Czech Republic, where mothers in need can use this service. Despite difficult conditions of financing hospital operation and restrictive policy of health insurance companies, plus economic result was achieved in 2013 by the hospital.³⁶

5.2 Characterization of the hospital

The main mission of the hospital – to treat and heal, comes from the orientation to a satisfied patient, from the offer of well done work, reliability of staff and a guarantee of performed medical procedures. The hospital provides outpatient and inpatient care in primary and specialized fields including rehabilitation and physical medicine. There are about 1224 employees in the hospital and the capital is 415 900 000,- CZK.³⁷

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Internet: www.nemuh.cz



Chart 3: Hospital Logo. Source: www.nemuh.cz

³⁶ *Výroční zpráva Uherskohradištské nemocnice 2013*, <http://www.nemuh.cz/doc/vyrocní-zpráva-za-rok-2013> (accessed July 20, 2014), 7 – 8.

³⁷ *Výroční zpráva Uherskohradištské nemocnice 2013*, <http://www.nemuh.cz/doc/vyrocní-zpráva-za-rok-2013> (accessed July 20, 2014), 8 – 9.

Board of directors:

MUDr. Petr Sládek – chairman of the board, also director of the hospital,

Ing. Vlastimil Vajdák – also deputy director,

MUDr. Petr Kavalec.³⁸

To provide holistic services, there are different health departments in the hospital. These are divided into three main groups:

1. **surgical medicine:** surgery, orthopaedics, traumatology, urology, obstetrics and gynaecology department, anaesthesiology and resuscitation, otorhinolaryngology, department of ophthalmology
2. **internal medicine:** medical wards, children's department, pulmonary department, department of infectious diseases, neurology, oncology ward, etc.
3. **complements:** biochemistry, microbiology, pathology, nuclear medicine, etc.³⁹

The structure of the hospital operation is completed by first aid service, pharmacy and transport of patients.⁴⁰

From the economic point of view, the hospital is financially healthy. The last two years it was in black numbers and is the only hospital in Zlín region, which is not in debt. It operates about 6500 people per year and hospitalizes four times more. The outpatient department takes care of more than 300 000 patients per year and wants to attract even more.⁴¹

Recently, fresh air was brought to the hospital by a major change in top management – a new director Petr Sládek replaced the previous director Antonín Karásek, who

³⁸ *Výroční zpráva Uherskohradištské nemocnice 2013*, <http://www.nemuh.cz/doc/vyrocní-zpráva-za-rok-2013> (accessed July 20, 2014), 9 – 10.

³⁹ *Výroční zpráva Uherskohradištské nemocnice 2013*, <http://www.nemuh.cz/doc/vyrocní-zpráva-za-rok-2013> (accessed July 20, 2014), 15.

⁴⁰ Josef Jančář, *Uherskohradištská nemocnice: Její vznik a proměny* (Uherské Hradiště: GRASPO CZ, a.s. 2009), 59.

⁴¹ Jana Fuksová, “Nový ředitel chce nemocnici v Hradišti vrátit pověst i lidi,” *iDnes.cz*, April 2, 2013, http://zlin.idnes.cz/plany-noveho-reditele-v-uherskem-hradišti-petra-sladka-pgn-/zlin-zpravy.aspx?c=A130402_1911618_zlin-zpravy_ras (accessed July 25, 2014).

was criticized for his strict and tough attitude to doctors who were involved in a 2011 protest „Děkujeme, odcházíme“. Because of his uncompromising policy many good doctors left the hospital. He was removed from the office on March 3, 2013. Sládek claims he will try to eliminate bad mood among employees and make the environment happier, because only then the employees can transfer their positive attitudes to patients.⁴² Changes in top management can always lead to major changes in a company and this fact is a huge chance for the Uherské Hradiště Hospital to improve its image.

⁴² Michael Lapčík, “Nový ředitel Uherskohradištské nemocnice Sládek: Chci odstranit blbou náladu,” *iDnes.cz*, April 3, 2013, http://slovacky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/novy-reditel-uherskohradistske-nemocnice-sladek-chci-odstranit-blbou-naladu-2013.html (accessed July 22, 2014).

6 ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT STATE OF IMAGE

6.1 PEST analysis

6.1.1 Political environment

Government of the Czech Republic comprises of a coalition of three political parties – ČSSD, ANO, KDU-ČSL. One of the main goals of this government is a development of high quality and affordable public services in health service. The prime minister is Bohuslav Sobotka, minister of health service is Svatopluk Němeček.⁴³ This government already brought some major changes in health service. Regulatory fees, which were introduced in 2008 by government of Miroslav Topolánek, will be probably cancelled from January 2015. Patients will not have to pay 30 CZK for a prescription neither for a doctor's visit. Only 90 CZK fee for emergency cases will remain. Recently, the 100 CZK fees for a stay in a hospital were cancelled. The cut of fees will be compensated by increased state contributions.⁴⁴ Another change lies in VAT for drug – it will be decreased from 15 % to 10 % in January 2015. Prime minister says he wants Czech health service to be transparent and efficient.⁴⁵

One of the main documents for hospitals and medical facilities overall is a payment regulation (in Czech *úhradová vyhláška*). Payment regulation for 2014 counts with medical expenses 235 billion CZK. Former minister of Ministry of Health Martin Holcát claims that maximum was done to stabilize health service. This regulation is a result of compromise, because the specific health service segments made certain requests which simply

⁴³ Vláda České Republiky, “Koaliční smlouva mezi ČSSD, hnutím ANO 2011 a KDU-ČSL na volební období 2013 – 2017,” January 29, 2014, <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/media-centrum/dulezite-dokumenty/koalicni-smlouva-mezi-cssd--hnutim-ano-2011-a-kdu-csl-na-volebni-obdobi-2013---2017-115459/> (accessed July 21, 2014).

⁴⁴ ČT 24, “Vláda schválila zrušení poplatků u lékaře a v lékárnách,” July 2, 2014, <http://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ct24/domaci/278999-vlada-schvalila-zruseni-poplatku-u-lekare-a-v-lekarnach/> (accessed July 22, 2014).

⁴⁵ Vláda České Republiky, “Osmá bilanční cesta: V oblasti zdravotnictví vláda snížila DPH na léky a zrušila také regulační poplatky,” July 24, 2014, <http://www.vlada.cz/cz/media-centrum/aktualne/osma-bilancni-cesta-v-oblasti-zdravotnictvi-vlada-snizila-dph-na-leky-a-zrusila-take-regulacni-poplatky-121282/> (accessed July 21, 2014).

cannot be granted. But these segments certainly improved their position compared to restrictive 2013 regulation. The main goals of 2014 payment regulation are: to help segments with financial problems (health resorts, children's psychiatry, hospitals - acute inpatient care), to unite basic rates among health insurance companies and to respect segments, which reached an agreement with health insurance companies without the payment regulation (these are general practitioners and gynaecologists).⁴⁶

6.1.2 Economic environment

Health service in the Czech Republic is funded by public health insurance and therefore is dependent on macroeconomic development of the country. The crucial data are the development of GDP and unemployment. GDP should increase (according to prediction of Ministry of Health from October 2013) by 1,9 %, meaning 3,924 trillion CZK. Average unemployment in 2014 is expected to rise from 7,1 % to 7,3 % and that can have a negative impact on financing health service (more inhabitants the state pays the health insurance for).⁴⁷ Inflation rate to June 2014 is 0,7 % and the unemployment to July 2014 is 7,4 %, in Zlín region 6,8 %.⁴⁸

As in the previous years, also in 2014 the funds in the system of public health insurance are divided by a payment regulation. For this year 234,9 billion CZK will be distributed. That is 10 billion more than in 2013. The main reasons are:

- expected increase in insurance collection as a result of economic growth

⁴⁶ Ministerstvo zdravotnictví ČR, "Základní parametry úhradové vyhlášky pro rok 2014,"

http://www.mzcr.cz/dokumenty/zakladni-parametry-uhradove-vyhlasky-pro-rok-2014-_8427_1.html (accessed July 18, 2014).

⁴⁷ Daniela Kandilaki and Miroslav Jankůj, "Ekonomika českého zdravotnictví 2014," *Health Policy Institute*, February 10, 2014, <http://hpi.sk/hpi/sk/view/10830/ekonomika-ceskeho-zdravotnictvi-2014.html> (accessed August 2, 2014).

⁴⁸ Český statistický úřad, "Statistiky," <http://www.czso.cz/xz/redakce.nsf/i/statistiky> (accessed July 20, 2014).

- increase in payments for insured people – from November 2013 the payments went up from 723 CZK to 787 CZK per person.⁴⁹

The average month salary of employees in health services in 2013 was 30 174 CZK, for physicians and dentists it was 60 635 CZK and for general nurses and midwives it was 28 706 CZK. The average total salary decreased by 0,8 % from 2012.⁵⁰

6.1.3 Socio-cultural environment

The population in Zlín region is 585 962 (to March 31, 2014). In 2009 it was 591 042 and ever since the number of population is decreasing.⁵¹ In society a process of population aging appears. The share of older people increases and the share of children and adolescents decreases. This can lead to problems with employment, housing, and it can bring a need for a different health services.⁵²

People in the Czech Republic are not very much interested in preventive medical examination, which are for free. Approximately 40 % of adults use them on a regular basis. Many people do not visit a doctor until they already have some problem.⁵³ According to regulation 70/2012 sb., adults can request a general preventive examination once in two years, a gynecological examination once a year and a dental examination twice a year. These are important even though a person feels healthy. They can reveal serious illness and

⁴⁹ Daniela Kandilaki and Miroslav Jankůj, “Ekonomika českého zdravotnictví 2014,” *Health Policy Institute*, February 10, 2014, <http://hpi.sk/hpi/sk/view/10830/ekonomika-ceskeho-zdravotnictvi-2014.html> (accessed August 2, 2014).

⁵⁰ ÚZIS ČR, “Mzdy a platy ve zdravotnictví v roce 2013,” *Zdravotnictví jako součást národní ekonomiky*, <http://www.uzis.cz/category/tematicke-rady/ekonomika-financni-analyzy/mzdy-platy> (accessed July 28, 2014).

⁵¹ Český statistický úřad, “Statistiky,” <http://www.czso.cz/xz/redakce.nsf/i/statistiky> (accessed July 20, 2014).

⁵² ÚZIS ČR, “Zdravotnická ročenka Zlínského kraje,” <http://www.uzis.cz/katalog/rocenky/zdravotnicka-rocenka-zlinskeho-kraje> (accessed August 2, 2014).

⁵³ Eva Sovová, “Co je zdarma, neumíme moc využívat. Prevenci zanedbává většina z nás,” *iDnes.cz*, March 9, 2010, http://finance.idnes.cz/co-je-zdarma-neumime-moc-vyuzivat-prevenci-zanedbava-vetsina-z-nas-10b-poj.aspx?c=A100308_111205_poj_sov (accessed July 20, 2014).

therefore prevent from later financially demanding medical treatment.⁵⁴ These preventive examinations are in most cases done by a general practitioner, who might send the patient for further tests to hospital.

6.1.4 Technological environment

Technological factors are very important for every hospital, because they influence the quality of services. Ministry of Health announced that on January 22, 2014 the government of the Czech Republic approved two documents of research and development for years 2015 – 2022: **Concept of medical research up to 2022** and **Program supporting medical applied research and development for the years 2015 – 2022**.⁵⁵

The main goal of the **Concept** is to ensure internationally comparable level of medical research and a utilization of its results for the improvement of Czech population's health. The concept determines strategic areas of medical research, identifies expected results and defines indicators in order to follow world's trends, especially in European Union. **Program** is an implementing document of Concept and there are mentioned all the planned individual public tenders. The first public tender will be announced in 2014 and the support providing from 2015. Total expenses are expected to be 7 891 million CZK, 7 100 million CZK will be provided from the state budget.⁵⁶

Every year there are more modern drugs, vaccines, apparatuses, technology etc. They affect hospitals and their functioning on a daily basis, but their acquisition is firmly connected with an economic situation of the hospital. Good decisions about purchases are needed and an economic return should be considered well.

⁵⁴ VZP ČR, "Preventivní prohlídky," <http://www.vzp.cz/klienti/programy-prevence/preventivni-prohlidky> (accessed July 30, 2014).

⁵⁵ Ministerstvo zdravotnictví ČR, "Koncepční dokumenty výzkumu a vývoje na léta 2015 – 2022," http://www.mzcr.cz/odbornik/dokumenty/koncepcni-dokumenty-vyzkumu-a-vyvoje-na-leta-2015-2022_8727_985_3.html (accessed August 4, 2014).

⁵⁶ Ministerstvo zdravotnictví ČR, "Koncepční dokumenty výzkumu a vývoje na léta 2015 – 2022," http://www.mzcr.cz/odbornik/dokumenty/koncepcni-dokumenty-vyzkumu-a-vyvoje-na-leta-2015-2022_8727_985_3.html (accessed August 4, 2014).

6.1.5 Summary of PEST analysis

It is appropriate for the hospital not to neglect any of the mentioned factors, because they all affect hospitals' functioning. Contemporary government seek to have a quality and affordable health care and cancel many fees, which will be substituted by increased state contributions and therefore it should not have a harmful impact on hospitals and moreover, 2014 payment regulation is not as restrictive as in the previous year and one of its main goals is to help hospitals with inpatient care. This could help Uherské Hradiště Hospital gain more money to aggrandize its departments connected with inpatient care, which could lead to more satisfied patients who will probably spread their good experience around and that can help the hospital's image a lot.

It is the inpatient care where the attention should be concentrated, because not only the population is aging, but also the population is decreasing in Zlín region. This might cause a major loss of patients in certain departments and their closure in the future.

From economic point of view, the only threat can be seen in unemployment, which can increase health insurances paid by state and the money from state budget might be lacking in health service section. In a subsequent period, hospital can experience problem with aging population and need for a special services. But the technological factors are favourable, chiefly the Concept of medical research promises good development results in the following years, which might lead to the situation where hospitals can acquire much more advanced techniques of treatment and curing and therefore can offer better care for the patients. This would also probably lead to their full satisfaction, which is needed for a good image of the hospital.

6.2 Evaluation of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was focused on questions about clients' satisfaction and about the hospital's reputation. 70 % of them were women and 30 % men. The age range is following:

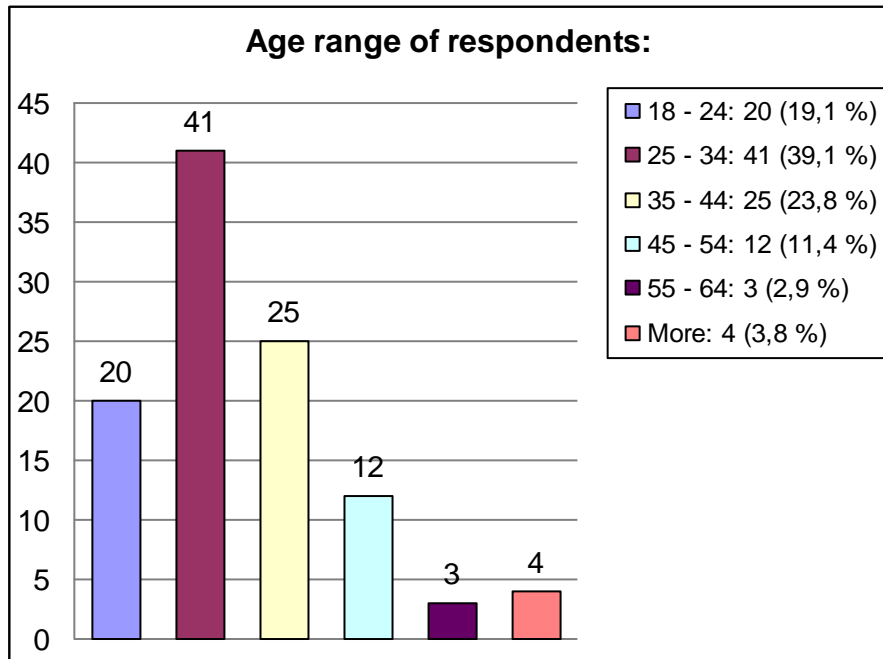


Chart 4: Age range. Source: own evaluation.

93 % are from Uherské Hradiště district, 2 % from Kroměříž district, 1 % from Zlín district and 4 % from other districts. 99 of the respondents (94 %) have a personal experience with the hospital. All percentage numbers are rounded.

According to the questionnaire, the most important for medical facility's image are high level of staff's qualification and education and also a friendly approach to patients. This shows clearly that majority of respondents think that employees are the main factors creating image.

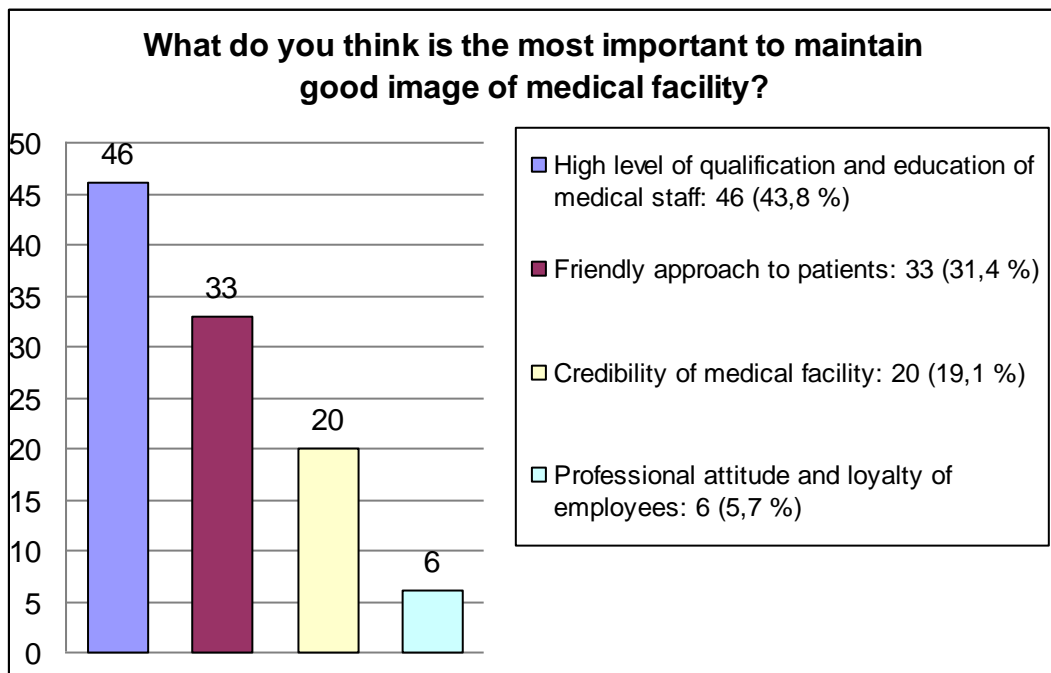


Chart 5: Important factors for maintaining good image. Source: own evaluation.

With connection to the above graph it is crucial to impart that the approach of medical staff is the one which patients are least satisfied with – almost 66 % from 99 respondents are not satisfied. 48 % are not contented with food and 40 % are missing Wi-Fi connection. 20 % are not happy that there is not a possibility to write questions or objections on website.

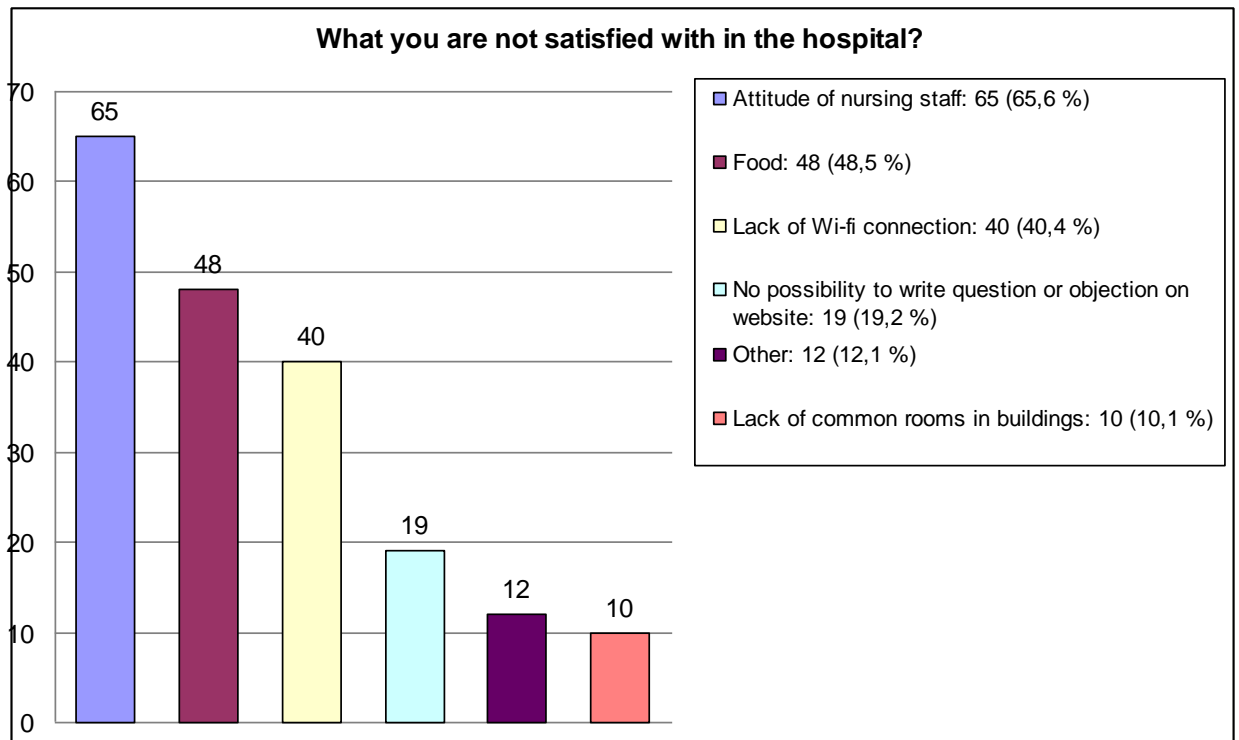


Chart 6: Dissatisfaction of the respondents. Source: own evaluation.

Beneficial fact for the hospital is that 27 % were satisfied with provided care and 41 % were rather satisfied with it. 33 % of respondents were not or were rather not satisfied.

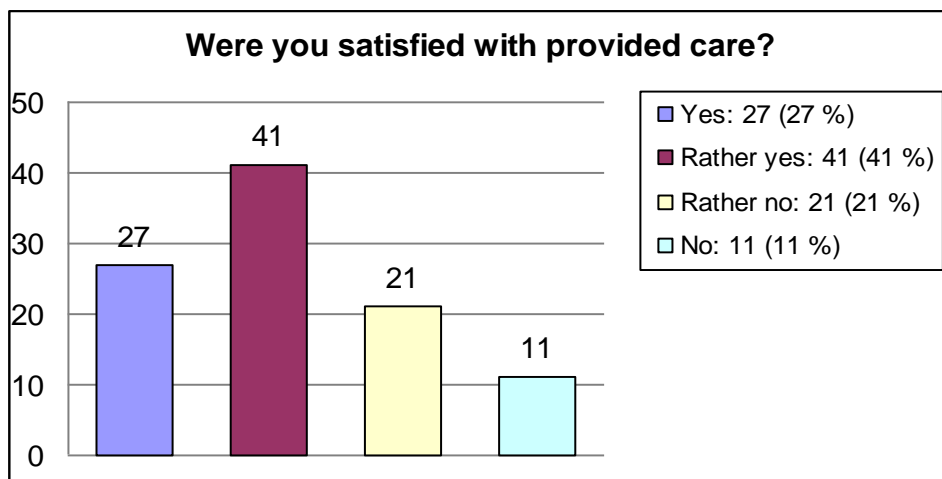


Chart 7: Satisfaction with provided service. Source: own evaluation.

Parking situation might also influence hospital's name. 78 from 99 respondents go to the hospital by car and 50 % of them sometimes experience troubles with finding a parking place, 19 % have always problems and only 19 % did not experience any problems. Hospitals should always make sure that they have enough parking places for the customers, because visiting hospitals is usually not a happy moment and looking for a parking place

might put another pressure on the patients or the visitors. Moreover, 47 % find the parking fees to expensive. There is a parking meter and the first half-hour is for free, next half-hour is for 15 CZK and every other hour is for 25 CZK.⁵⁷ There are marked parking places in the area, but not all drivers respect them and park elsewhere, which can cause troubles for ambulances.

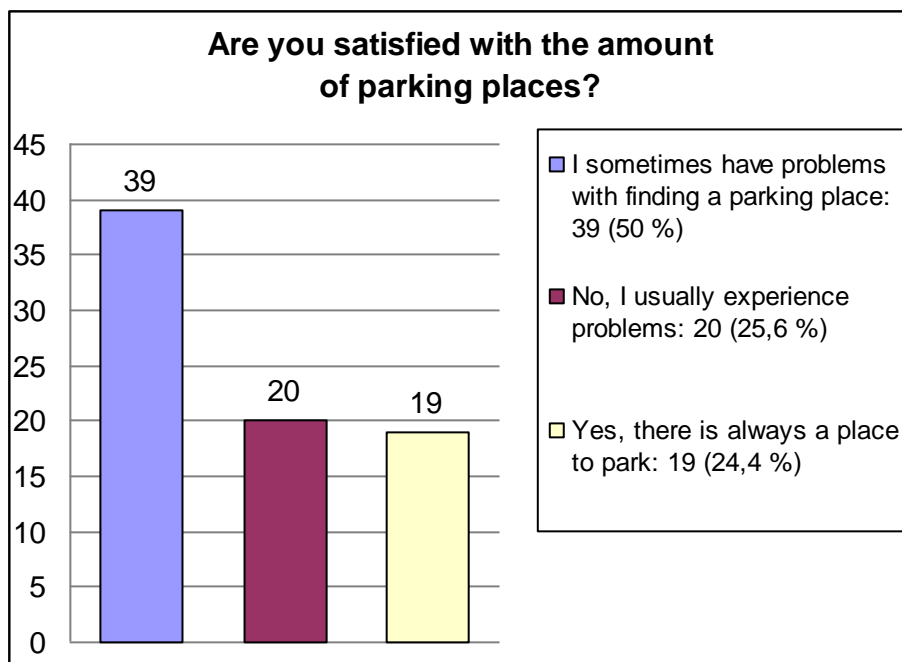


Chart 8: Parking situation. Source: own evaluation.

Communication with public is a key component in hospitals' management. Only 23 % of the respondents are happy with the hospital's communication. 39 % do not care and 38 % are not happy with it. Majority of the respondents (37 %) also do not know the communication or image of individual wards. The best image has obstetrics and gynaecology department (28,3 %), then children's department (12 %), followed by orthopaedics (6 %) and department of ophthalmology (5 %).

⁵⁷ Uherskohradišťská nemocnice a.s., "Provozní řád parkovišť UHN a.s.," <http://www.nemuh.cz/doc/provozni-rad-parkovist-uhn-as> (accessed August 3, 2014).

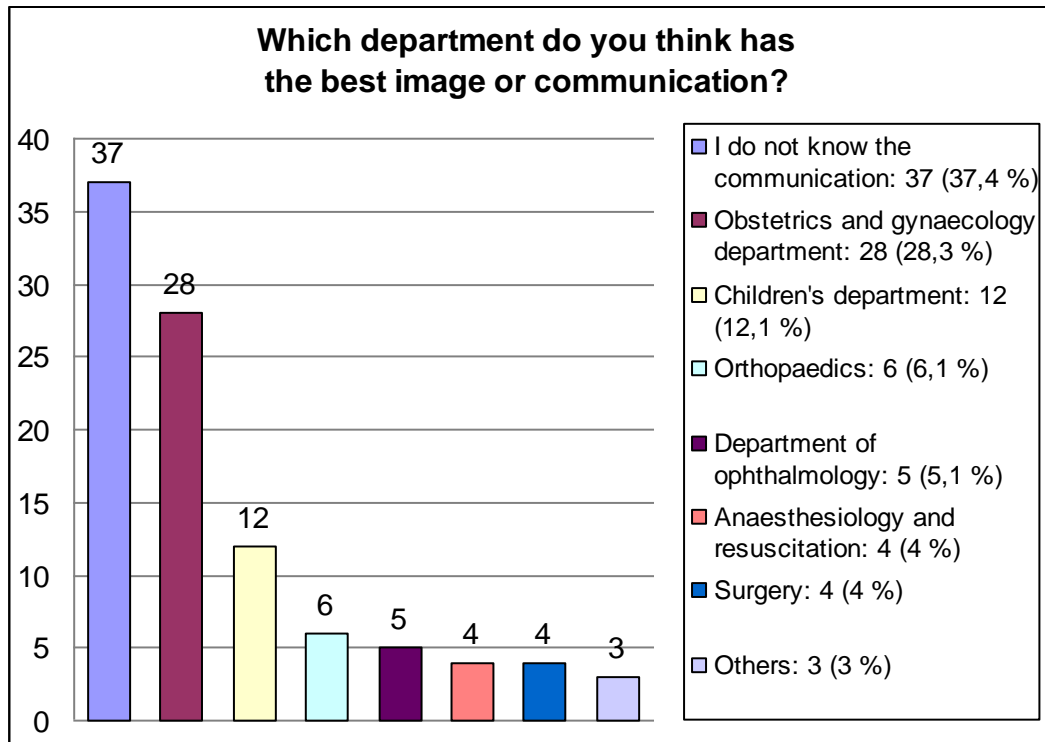


Chart 9: Individual departments and their image. Source: own evaluation.

Only 7 % from 99 respondents think that the hospital's image is good. 39 % answered that the image is bad and is not changing. 31 % think that the image is improving and 9 % think it is worsening. 13 % do not know.

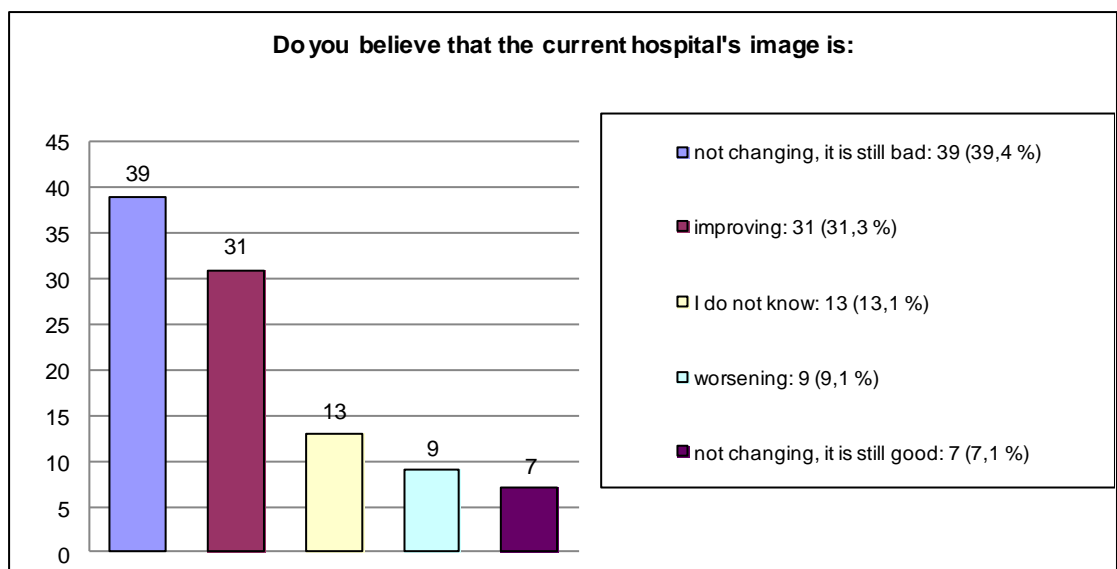


Chart 10: Current hospital's image. Source: own evaluation.

Optimistic mood appears among respondents – 46 % believe that the reconstruction and related improvement of the area will enhance hospital's image. 24 % are not sure and

30 % do not believe in the improvement. It is an advantageous fact that almost half of the people do believe in the betterment, because it is easier to gain good image when the potential clients are optimistic and open minded and not negativistic.

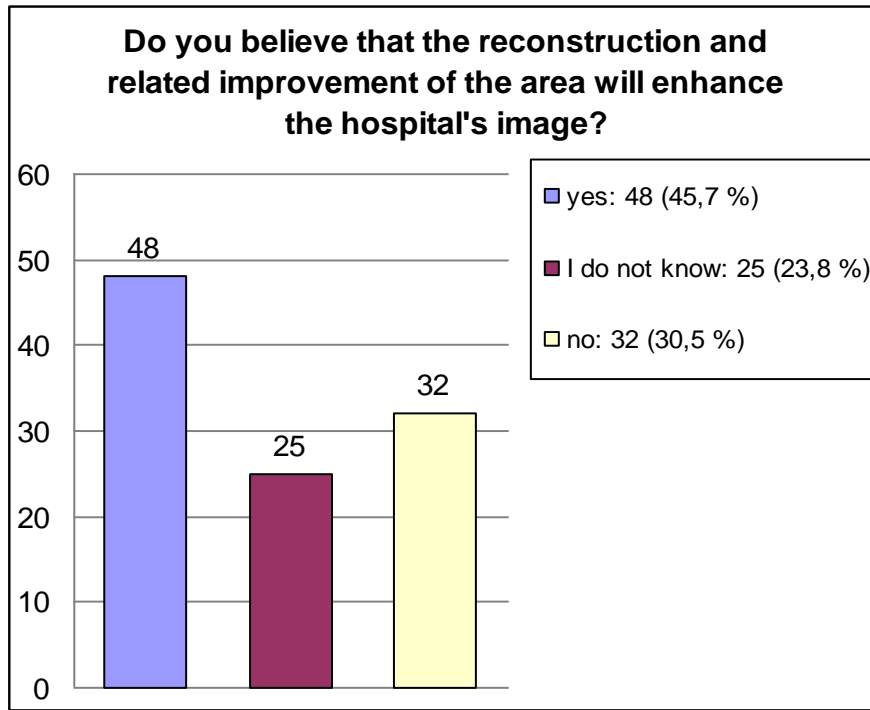


Chart 11: Expectation connected to hospital's reconstruction. Source: own evaluation.

The quality of hospitalization differs in certain aspects. Respondents were appealed to mark certain services of the hospital as in school – 1 is the best, 5 the worst. The results are following:

- cleanness of rooms: 2,3
- privacy during examinations: 2,7
- hospital's equipment: 2,9
- willingness of medical staff: 3,2
- quality of food: 3,5.

Services connected with outpatient examinations are similarly marked.

- hospital's logo: 2,4
- website's appearance: 2,5
- availability of food in the area: 2,7

- hospital's appearance and location: 2,7
- observance of appointments' time: 3,1.

6.3 Summary of questionnaire results and their confrontation with the results of PEST analysis

According to respondents the most important for medical facility's image are high level of staff's qualification and education and also a friendly approach to patients. It shows that respondents think that employees are the main factors creating image. The negative finding connected to employees is that almost 66 % of respondents are not satisfied with the approach of medical staff and the willingness of medical staff is marked 3.2, which is not a very good mark. On the other hand, majority of the respondents see provided care as a positive factor. That shows that the hospital is able to treat people well, but it should make a change in the employees' attitudes.

Many respondents expressed their displeasure with parking situation. They have problems finding a parking place and nearly half of them consider the price for parking too high. The same inconvenient is a situation with food. For almost half of the respondents the food is not satisfactory. Respondents miss an area for writing questions and observations on hospital's website and also a full Wi-Fi connection.

Communication with public is another key component that the respondents are not happy about. Almost 80 % are not satisfied with it or do not care at all. Majority of them do not know the communication or image of individual departments. That indicates a significant deficiency in marketing field, which is so important nowadays.

Overall, the public image of the Uherské Hradiště Hospital is not good. Most of the respondents think it is bad and is not changing. Positive factor is that many people believe that the reconstruction and related improvement of the area will enhance the hospital's image. If the issues people are not happy about will be changed, improved and pointed out, the image of the hospital will certainly be better.

The combination of PEST analysis and the questionnaires led to certain conclusions:

- The contemporary government is inclined to financially help hospitals, which is very positive, because with more money from the state the Uherské Hradiště Hospital can make bigger and better changes in issues people are not satisfied with.
- There are no planned pay rises and they even decreased in 2013 in health service salaries, compared with 2012. That means the employees cannot be motivated by salary, but should be motivated somehow, because their state of mind reflects in the attitude to patients and this is exactly the issue that patients are not satisfied with in the Uherské Hradiště Hospital.
- Many people take their health for granted. Research shows that a huge amount of people do not go to visit a doctor until they have some health problem and according to questionnaire, majority of the respondents do not know the communication of the Uherské Hradiště Hospital's departments. This shows that people basically do not care and find medical facilities something they do not need unless a health problem appears. But sometimes it is too late. People should be encouraged to start with preventive medical examinations and they should know what the hospital in their town can offer. It can bring some savings (when a serious illness is discovered in an early stadium) and people will be better knowledgeable about the services they can use.

7 IMPROVEMENT PROPOSAL

Based on the results of the questionnaire and also PEST analysis, there are some suggestions and recommendations which can be used by the Uherské Hradiště Hospital to improve its image.

Employees as the key factor

The questionnaire brought data which clearly show that the most crucial for hospital's image are employees. So the main task of the hospital should be to gain (or preserve) high-quality employees and keep them happy. A new director Sládek wants to accomplish the task and is forming a healthy medical staff with good mood. He already replaced some senior consultants at certain departments because they did not fit into his new hospital's vision. Some of the qualified and experienced doctors left or were dismissed because of the protest „Děkujeme, odcházíme“ and the following disagreements with the previous director Karásek, who reacted uncompromisingly and strictly. Sládek hired many of them back and the mood in hospital is stabilizing. The hospital organizes seminars and there is also annual medical ball and these events are great for medical staff to strengthen relationships among the employees, therefore the hospital should keep organizing them and should also search for new opportunities in educating and entertaining its employees.

Regarding the main goal of the director, it should now consist of finding good, qualified and experienced doctors, because they are the main part of hospital functioning. Of course, another medical staff is important too, because mainly nurses are in contact with patients and can extensively affect their state of mind. The hospital is in good economic situation and therefore its management should pay more attention to human resources management.

Communication with public

Communication with public is a major component in hospitals' management. Unfortunately, not very people are satisfied with the Uherské Hradiště Hospital's communication. Majority of people are not happy with it and many of them do not care. This could be improved by writing articles about the hospital in local newspapers and by public events, which can additionally earn some money for the hospital.

The hospital publishes its magazine called „Špitálská drbna“. This project started last year, simultaneously with the new top management. It is for free and contains little bit

of history of the hospitals, interviews with employees and celebrities, main affairs etc. But this magazine is not enough and many people might not know about its existence. Its distribution should be enlarged, for example to town's information centre and to various medical offices. The articles in local newspapers are great for references and for mentioning the hospital's affairs and achievements. Hospitals' public relation divisions should be in contact with newspapers and offer them a chance to write about the hospital, because it is for free and a good opportunity to appeal public. The considered newspapers are: „Slovácký deník“ and „Dobry den s kurýrem“.

The questionnaire shows that the best image has obstetrics and gynaecology department. The reason of this probably lies in the fact, that in 2008 this department was moved to a new building, which has modern and comfortably equipped wards. Hopefully surgical departments that will be soon moved to the newest building will also brighten their reputation. Nevertheless, the majority of people do not know the image or communication of individual departments. This unconsciousness can be rectified by hospital's open day where people and especially their children would be acknowledged with the departments and would have the opportunity to try for example artificial respiration on a figurine at anaesthesiology and resuscitation department, changing diapers at obstetric department or learn how to bandage an injured arm at surgery department. This funny learning is very popular and can only bring positive feedback.

Public events are favourite part of companies' marketing. The hospital organized these events on regular basis. This year was marked by the hospital's project „Rok seniora“. As the name suggests, this year is focused on seniors. It is because they are the largest group of patients and they spend the most time in hospitals. Generally, seniors are often neglected – socially and economically, and Uherské Hradiště Hospital decided to help them and make their hospital environment better and nicer, mainly by purchasing special adjustable beds, which are expensive. Recent event was beneficial concert of Hradišťan, which attracted more than 200 visitors and earned almost 37 000 CZK.⁵⁸

This is a great way to go; the hospital needs more of these events. Firstly, they attract public and might make a good impression on them and secondly, they help to earn

⁵⁸ Uherskohradišťská nemocnice a.s., „Koncert Hradišťanu se vydařil,” <http://www.nemuh.cz/doc/koncert-hradistanu-se-vydaril> (accessed August 5, 2014).

money for the hospital. The hospital should make use of the presence of associations from Uherské Hradiště and near towns – for example the favourite rock group Svatý Pluk, which is inseparable from the town's music scene. Dance club Rokaso is also a good source of potential performances and the hospital already used its services – at the medical ball in January 2014. Elementary art school - Slovácká základní umělecká škola, s.r.o., is also a luxuriant source of interesting musical and artistic activities. There are many sources in Uherské Hradiště that can be used as an attraction for the public, and the hospital's management should pay attention to them and use them more often to enhance public image.

Hospital diet

Further factor which causes patients' displeasure is hospital diet. Many people are not satisfied with. Fortunately, many people also realize that the hospitals' main goal is to heal and treat, not to feed. A lot of patients simply cannot have tasty food because they have special diet. There are not generally applicable rules or laws for hospital diet. Every hospital has a certain amount of money that can be spent on food and the diet is usually formed by a team of nutritional therapists.

The key is to communicate with the patient and explain him properly, that his diet is crucial for a good healing. When a patient does not need a diet and specific food, a restaurant and tasty meal should be offered. Many patients are willing to pay for meals from restaurants, but often do not have contact or they do not feel comfortable with special requirements. It would be appropriate to devise a system which allows nurses to mediate non-hospital meals for the patients. The patients would choose from a menu, given by a nurse. There are many restaurants near the hospital, since it is situated not far from the city centre and the cooperation with at least one of them would be beneficial.

Website

Website is a special type of communication with customers and is important because it can bring new clients and should convey a certain message towards potential clients. The Uherské Hradiště Hospital has a new logo since the beginning of 2014. The website has a new, modern design too. But clients miss an area for writing questions and observations. This should be easily done by graphic designer who takes care of the website. This task is not time-consuming neither expensive and should be realized for the satisfaction of the clients.

Wi-Fi connection

38 % of respondents miss Wi-Fi connection. There is a Wi-Fi possibility at some departments (for example children's department), but nowadays, when internet is a major source of information and fun, Wi-Fi connection should cover whole area of the hospital, so it is necessary for a good image of the hospital to complete its availability.

Parking

Parking is relevant for every company. How does client go to the company where there is no parking place near? He might choose another company. Many of respondents are not satisfied with the amount of parking places, but fortunately, the reconstruction of the new building will bring also many new parking places and that should please and satisfy clients. Hospitals should pay attention to sufficiency of parking places, because in other case clients might park anywhere in the area and that can cause weighty problems, especially for ambulances.

Participation in researches

PEST analysis revealed the fact that with the beginning of 2014, the Czech Republic starts special program for research support. It is a great opportunity for every medical facility to show its quality and qualified and skilled employees. „Concept of medical research up to 2022“ and „Program to support medical applied research and development for 2015 – 2022“ (in Czech „Koncepce zdravotnického výzkumu do roku 2022“ and „Program na podporu zdravotnického aplikovaného výzkumu a vývoje na léta 2015 – 2022“) represent major steps toward European Union's level of research and development quality. Uherské Hradiště Hospital should try to invent a high-quality project in a specific medical field and should apply for the public tender. Public tenders will take place annually from 2014 till 2019 and they accept project with the maximum length of 3 years. Total expenses are huge and paid mainly from the state budget. The hospital should use this opportunity and participate, because it could highly increase its prestige.

Informative campaign

As the last, but probably the most important suggestion, is the necessity of making it all visible. Everything what is done for customers must be emphasized. Without emphasizing and letting customers know it would be only a half success. Since many people do not notice or realize certain changes and improvements, it is necessary to inform them about it and make all the good things visible. A big campaign should be held after the previous issues are improved to enhance the hospital's image.

Leaflets delivered into post boxes are suitable. They would contain short articles about the improved issues. Headings like the following should be used:

„We understand your problems with parking in the hospital area and preparing 50 new parking spaces for you“

„We help you to stay in touch with your family and the world – free Wi-Fi in the whole area“

„New service available in your hospital – chose your meal from restaurant menu“

„Looking into future - our hospital is participating in a prestigious research“, etc.

The campaign should use also public events as a supportive tool of marketing. For example a concert of some local group would probably appeal and attract the public. It could take place on a spot, which is well-known as a public entertain scene – Masaryk Square. There would be helpers distributing those leaflets for free. This campaign could be a great start for the new, good image of the Uherské Hradiště Hospital.

CONCLUSION

This bachelor thesis was focused on the Uherské Hradistě Hospital, its image and improvement of the image. The theoretical part acknowledged readers with marketing and marketing mix, which is a complex of tactical marketing tools – product, price, promotion and place. Further, the marketing was situated into health service environment, its specific features were mentioned and the main questions health service marketing should be focused on were enumerated. Image and corporate identity are closely connected and play an important role in marketing activities, therefore they were explicated too. Theoretical part serves as an informative section and helps readers to understand well the practical part.

The practical part was more entertaining to create, because it contains analysis and questionnaire and therefore it mirrors reality. It starts with the methodology of the thesis and explains characters of chosen methods. Then there is an introduction of Uherské Hradistě Hospital with its history and characterization. It is followed by PEST analysis and questionnaire evaluation. The analysis lists political, economic, socio-cultural and technological factors, which influence the hospital. The questionnaire evaluation brought the main discovery – patients think that the main factors creating good image of medical facilities are employees and at the same time, willingness of medical staff was badly rated. Many people also think that current hospital's image is bad and not changing. These results are not very positive, but the good fact lies in finding out that many people believe in improvement caused by the construction of the new main building.

The last section of the thesis is dedicated to improvement proposal. It was created according to the PEST analysis and the questionnaire. Areas appointed to improvement are:

- gaining high-quality employees and keeping them satisfied
- communication with public (articles in printed materials and public events)
- hospital diet
- website
- Wi-Fi connection
- parking places
- participation in researches

- informative campaign.

Aforesaid rules are based on the current external environment of the company and the needs of the hospital users and therefore reflect their needs and will serve as an improvement of their perception of the hospital's public image.

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APPENDICES

P I The English questionnaire

P II The Czech questionnaire

APPENDIX P I: THE ENGLISH QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear sir/ Dear madam,

I am a student of Tomas Bata University in Zlín, Faculty of Humanities. I would like to ask you to fill in a questionnaire, which will help to create my bachelor thesis about Uherské Hradiště Hospital. The questionnaire is anonymous.

Thank you in advance for your time and your willingness.

Aneta Zelená

1. What do you think is the most important to maintain good image of medical facility?

- a) High level of qualification and education of medical staff
- b) Friendly approach to patients
- c) Professional attitude and loyalty of employees
- d) High level of the hospital equipment
- e) Credibility of the medical facility
- f) Other

2. Do you have personal experience with the care provided in the Uherské Hradiště Hospital?

- a) Yes
- b) No (if no, please, go to question 13)

3. Were you satisfied with provided care?

- a) Yes
- b) Rather yes
- c) Rather no

d) No

4. Do you go to the hospital by car?

a) Yes

b) No (please, go to question 7)

5. Were you satisfied with the amount of parking places?

a) Yes, there is always a place to park

b) I sometimes have problems with finding a parking place

c) No, I usually experience problems

6. Do you consider the price for parking in the area too high?

a) Yes

b) No

c) I do not know

7. Are you satisfied with the communication of the hospital?

a) Yes

b) No

c) I do not care

8. Which department do you think has the best image or the best communication?

a) Obstetrics and gynaecology department

b) Orthopaedics

c) Surgery

d) Department of ophthalmology

- e) Anaesthesiology and resuscitation
- f) Children's department
- g) Other
- h) I do not know the individual communication

9. Do you believe that the current hospital's image is:

- a) Worsening
- b) Not changing, it is still good
- c) Not changing, it is still bad
- d) Improving
- e) I do not know

10. What you are not satisfied with in the Uherské Hradiště Hospital?

- a) The attitude of the nursing staff
- b) The food
- c) Lack of Wi-Fi connection
- d) No possibility to write question or observation on website
- e) Lack of common rooms in the buildings
- f) Other

11. How were you satisfied with the services provided by the hospital? Please, circle only one number 1 – 5 (as in school, 1 is the best, 5 the worst), which best expresses your opinion. Marking relating to hospitalization:

The hospital's equipment

1 2 3 4 5

Willingness of medical staff

1 2 3 4 5

Quality of food

1 2 3 4 5

Privacy during examination

1 2 3 4 5

Cleanness of rooms

1 2 3 4 5

12. How were you satisfied with the services provided by the hospital? Please, circle only one number 1 – 5 (as in school, 1 is the best, 5 the worst), which best expresses your opinion. Marking relating to outpatient treatment:

Compliance of ordered appointment

1 2 3 4 5

Appearance and location of the hospital

1 2 3 4 5

Hospital's logo

1 2 3 4 5

Website appearance

1 2 3 4 5

Availability of food in area

13. Do you believe that the reconstruction and related improvement of the area will enhance the hospital's image?

a) Yes

b) No

c) I do not know

14. Which district are you from:

- a) Uherské Hradiště
- b) Zlín
- c) Kroměříž
- d) Vsetín
- e) Other

15. Age range:

- a) 18 – 24
- b) 25 – 34
- c) 35 – 44
- d) 45 – 54
- e) 55 – 64
- f) More

16. Are you:

- a) Male
- b) Female

APPENDIX P II: THE CZECH QUESTIONNAIRE

Dobrý den,

jsem studentka Univerzity Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně, Fakulty humanitních studií. Chtěla bych Vás požádat o vyplnění tohoto dotazníku, který poslouží k vypracování mé bakalářské práce o Uherskohradištské nemocnici a.s. Dotazník je anonymní.

Předem děkuji za Váš čas a ochotu.

Aneta Zelená

1. Co je podle Vás nejdůležitější pro udržení dobré image nemocničního zařízení? (vyberte 1 odpověď)

- a) Vysoká kvalifikace a vzdělanost zdravotnického personálu
- b) Přívětivý přístup ošetřujícího personálu k pacientům
- c) Profesionální přístup a věrnost zaměstnanců
- d) Vysoký stupeň vybavení nemocnic
- e) Důvěryhodnost nemocničního zařízení
- f) Jiné

2. Máte osobní zkušenost s poskytnutou péčí v Uherskohradištské nemocnici?

- a) Ano
- b) Ne (Pokud ne, přejděte k otázce č. 13)

3. Byli jste s poskytnutou péčí spokojeni?

- a) Ano
- b) Spíše ano
- c) Spíše ne
- d) Ne

4. Jezdíte do nemocnice autem?

- a) Ano
- b) Ne (prosím, přejděte k otázce č. 7)

5. Jste spokojeni s množstvím parkovacích míst?

- a) Ano, vždy mám kde zaparkovat
- b) Občas mám problém najít místo k parkování
- c) Ne, většinou místo k parkování složitě hledám

6. Zdá se Vám cena za možnost parkování v areálu příliš vysoká?

- a) Ano
- b) Ne
- c) Nevím

7. Jste spokojeni s tím, jak Uherskohradištská nemocnice komunikuje s veřejností?

- a) Ano
- b) Ne
- c) Nezajímá mě to

8. Které oddělení má podle Vás nejlepší image, případně nejlepší komunikaci?

- a) Porodnicko-gynekologické
- b) Ortopedické
- c) Chirurgické
- d) Oční
- e) ARO a NIP
- f) Dětské

- g) Jiné
- h) Neznám komunikaci jednotlivých oddělení

9. Domníváte se, že současná image Uherskohradištské nemocnice:

- a) Zhoršuje se
- b) Nemění se, je stále dobrá
- c) Nemění se, je stále špatná
- d) Zlepšuje se
- e) Nevím

10. S čím nejste v Uherskohradištské nemocnici spokojeni? (možnost více odpovědí)

- a) Přístupem ošetřujícího personálu
- b) Se stravou
- c) Chybí možnost wi-fi připojení
- d) Na internetových stránkách chybí možnost dotazů a připomínek
- e) Chybí společenské místnosti v budovách velkých klinik
- f) Jiné

11. Jak jste byli spokojeni se službami poskytovanými v nemocnici? Zakroužkujte, prosím, vždy jedno číslo na uvedené škále od 1 do 5 (jako ve škole: 1 je nejlepší, 5 je nejhorší), které nejlépe vystihuje Váš názor. Hodnocení vztahující se k hospitalizaci:

Vybavení nemocnice

1 2 3 4 5

Ochota zdravotnického personálu

1 2 3 4 5

Kvalita stravy

1 2 3 4 5

Soukromí při vyšetření

1 2 3 4 5

Čistota pokojů

1 2 3 4 5

12. Jak jste byli spokojeni se službami poskytovanými v nemocnici? Zakroužkujte, prosím, vždy jedno číslo na uvedené škále od 1 do 5 (jako ve škole: 1 je nejlepší, 5 je nejhorší), které nejlépe vystihuje Váš názor. Hodnocení vztahující se k ambulantnímu ošetření:

Dodržení objednacích hodin

1 2 3 4 5

Vzhled a umístění nemocnice

1 2 3 4 5

Logo nemocnice

1 2 3 4 5

Vzhled internetových stránek

1 2 3 4 5

Dostupnost občerstvení v areálu

1 2 3 4 5

13. Věříte, že přestavba nemocničního areálu a s tím související vylepšení prostor zlepší pověst nemocnice?

- a) ano
- b) ne
- c) nevím

14. Jste z okresu:

- a) Uherské Hradiště
- b) Zlín
- c) Kroměříž
- d) Vsetín
- e) Jiný

15. Věková kategorie:

- a) 18 – 24
- b) 25 – 34
- c) 35 - 44
- d) 45 – 54
- e) 55 - 64
- f) více

16. Jste:

- a) Muž
- b) Žena