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## **An integrated model for dental practice management**

### SUMMARY

The following PhD thesis relates to creation of a model of dental office management in the area of patient service that allows efficient use of available resources while considering the influence of nonmedical factors on patient's decisions. A literature overview was performed on the topic of management, in the context of management in dental services. The reference was made to the commonly used linear model of dental practice operation, in which management is focused on winning new patients, while at the same time providing treatment only to the range of services that they request for. It was observed that there is an existing need to build a model for the management of a dental office, which, on the one hand, allows to change the efficiency of operation and, on the other hand, considers patients' expectations towards professional service.

Basing upon consultations conducted with dentists and dental office managers, key nonmedical factors were selected and presented in three areas: technical-organizational, financial and interpersonal. A diagnostic survey was conducted to examine the relevance of these factors for five groups: patients, dentists, hygienists, managers and dental staff. The results pointed out differences and similarities in evaluation of factors influencing patients' decisions to choose a dental office, drop out of services and treatment beyond the original need, in groups which were researched.

It has been observed that the management of dental offices is based on intuition, excluding monitoring of the business being run. The scarcity of effectiveness indicators results in the knowledge regarding financial information such as revenue and profit being commonly used in the management process. The author's indicators for assessing the levels of operation of a dental office have been proposed. Based on actual numerical and financial data, the average values of these indicators were calculated. Participatory observations were performed, during which the course of a first-time patient's visit was evaluated in the dental office, as seen from his perspective. The averages of the ratings given at each stage of the visit are presented.

Based on the conclusions of the research, a model of dental office management in the area of patient service was developed that considers the impact of nonmedical factors on the choices made by patients and allows influence on the efficiency of the office's operations and consequently, its financial result. It is indicated which factors are important for building the advantage of the practice in the market of medical services. Practical recommendations were developed for practice managers in evaluating and interpreting the performance parameters of individual dental offices, and directions for further research were presented.

**Key words:** resources management, medical facility efficiency, non-medical factors in dentistry, management model in dental office, patient communication