

# Patients in the Medical Services Market, Research on the Availability and Satisfaction with Medical Services

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## Abstract

Analysis of current studies on satisfaction with healthcare services reveals the main factors influencing the perceived satisfaction of patients. The quality of interactions with healthcare personnel, access to healthcare services, healthcare patterns and cultural factors are key to ensuring a positive patient experience. In addition, analysis of differences between patient groups can help develop more personalized approaches to healthcare[1]. It is worth mentioning that the observed trends in satisfaction with healthcare services indicate a positive development in the quality of healthcare, but continuous research and improvements are necessary to ensure further growth in this area. Reviewing data from previous studies allows us to assess what factors influence their experience. This helps both healthcare personnel and managers of healthcare facilities to make better decisions, improve the healthcare system and adapt services to the needs of patients[2].

**Keywords:** Medical Service, Management of Access to Medical Services, Satisfaction with Medical Services

## Material and methods

The target statistical group was considered to be the patients of one of the medical entities in Poland - the non-public health care facility Pilawa. Belonging to this group is a feature that unites this group, while other features such as age, gender, level of education distinguish such a group from each other. The study is subject to the phenomenon of feeling satisfaction with medical services. By definition, this is a partial study. The sample includes people who voluntarily undertook the effort to complete the survey. It seems, therefore, that the data obtained reveal problems and truly show the image of this phenomenon. The author hopes that the results obtained in this study are representative of the group of patients of this facility and their generalization will enable planning solutions and anticipating the development of the situation in the future.

The aim of the study was to assess the availability and satisfaction with medical services of patients in a city located in the Mazovian Voivodeship, Garwolin County in Poland. According to the Central Statistical Office, the number of inhabitants is 4,557 people. The health center provides care to 5,000 patients from

the city and surrounding towns. In the work, the author identified the following problems, which she formulated as research problems.

It was assumed that gender, age, education affect the overall assessment of satisfaction with medical services, similarly gender, age and education affect the assessment of the quality of work of nursing staff, their state of knowledge and competence. It was assumed that depending on gender, age and education, the assessment of showing care and kindness towards patients varies. It was assumed that depending on the gender, age and education of patients, the ability of nurses to communicate with the patient and the ability to provide emotional support are assessed. It was also assumed that patients assess emotional support and meeting psychological needs by nurses depending on gender, age and education. It was assumed that patients assess nurses' skills in educating patients about self-care activities depending on gender, age and education. The study was conducted over a period of six months.

## Results and Discussion

The vast majority of respondents (87%) agreed that the reception staff were polite and dealt with their issues quickly. 9% of

respondents had the opposite opinion. Detailed data are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Registration staff courtesy rating**

Were the registration staff polite to you and did they deal with your issue quickly?	N	proc.
I strongly disagree	5	5%
I rather disagree	4	4%
I have no opinion	4	4%
I rather agree	4	4%
I definitely agree	83	83%

Source: own study

The doctor's courtesy and commitment during the visit was confirmed by 96% of respondents. Detailed data are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Doctor's courtesy rating**

Were the registration staff polite to you and did they deal with your issue quickly?	N	proc.
I strongly disagree	1	1%
I rather disagree	1	1%
I have no opinion	2	2%
I rather agree	11	11%
I definitely agree	85	85%

Source: own study

The overall satisfaction rating is the sum of the answers to all survey questions. The higher the number of points, the higher the patient satisfaction. The maximum number of points that the respondents could award was 70 points. The average rating was 60.1 points (SD=10.31). The lowest rating recorded among the respondents was 15 points (N=1), and the highest was 65 points

(N=64). It is worth noting that these ratings were made by 64% of the respondents, which means very high satisfaction with the services provided in the facility under study. Women and men do not differ in their ratings of satisfaction with the services of the primary healthcare facility (U=1153;  $p>0.05$ ). Detailed data are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: The level of satisfaction with the availability and medical services depends on the gender of the respondents.**

Complexion	N	M	SD	U	P
Woman	59	60,12	10,98	1153	0,645
Man	41	60,10	9,41		

Source: own study

The respondents also did not differ in their assessment of satisfaction with medical services taking into account their age (H=3.0;  $p>0.05$ ). The education of the respondents also does not significantly differentiate them in terms of the ratings they gave for medical services (H=0.224;  $p>0.05$ ).

The analysis of the assessment of individual aspects of the work of the medical facility by gender did not reveal any significant differences between women and men in any of the aspects discussed in the study. Detailed data are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Comparison of average ratings for individual aspects of medical staff work by gender.**

	Woman	Man	U	p
Were the registration staff polite to you and did they deal with your issue quickly?	4,58	4,54	1165	0,634
Was the doctor polite and engaging towards you during your visit?	4,80	4,76	1166,5	0,627
During the visit, was the doctor engaged with you and provided you with clear information about your health problem??	4,78	4,76	1186	0,796
Are there adequate sanitary conditions in the clinic, are the toilets clean and does the waiting room have an adequate number of seats?	4,83	4,80	1167	0,567

Would you recommend the medical facility to your loved ones?	4,63	4,59	1151	0,577
During your visit, was the nurse polite and concerned about your health problem?	4,51	4,54	1165,5	0,68
The quality of nursing activities during your visit to the treatment room was high and did the nurse answer your questions about the planned tests?	4,54	4,54	1162,5	0,66
During your visit to the treatment room, did you feel safe, and the nursing activities undertaken respected your privacy and personal dignity?	4,61	4,63	1208	0,988
Did the nurses efficiently and carefully perform activities such as taking blood for tests, connecting an IV, administering medications, washing their hands and putting on gloves?	4,78	4,76	1169,5	0,651
During the visit, did the nurses provide you with psychological support in the form of conversation, relieving anxiety and fear, and listened to your needs and doubts?	4,47	4,54	1172,5	0,729
Did the nurses explain to you what activities they would be performing before you began them and provide you with information about self-care at home related to your health problem?	4,47	4,54	1196	0,898
During your visit to the office, did the nurse talk to me about your health and provide clear answers to questions about your health?	4,51	4,54	1177	0,753
Did the nurses work in an organized manner and was there a good atmosphere in the office that was friendly to you?	4,61	4,59	1151,5	0,568

M – mean, U – Mann-Whitney test result, p – statistical significance

Source: own study

A similar observation concerns age, where regardless of the age group, the respondents assessed their satisfaction with the discussed aspects of the work of medical personnel at a similar level. Detailed data are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Comparison of average ratings for individual aspects of medical staff work depending on age**

	under 30 years of age	31-45	46-60	60 and over	H	p
Were the registration staff polite to you and did they deal with your issue quickly?	4,25	4,62	4,53	4,87	2,787	0,426
Was the doctor polite and engaging towards you during your visit?	4,54	4,90	4,75	4,96	5,009	0,171
During the visit, was the doctor engaged with you and provided you with clear information about your health problem?	4,54	4,90	4,72	4,96	5,474	0,140
Are there adequate sanitary conditions in the clinic, are the toilets clean and does the waiting room have an adequate number of seats?	4,75	4,81	4,75	5,00	5,672	0,129
Would you recommend NZOZ Eskulap Pilawa to your loved ones?	4,33	4,67	4,72	4,70	3,335	0,343
During your visit, was the nurse polite and concerned about your health problem?	4,29	4,38	4,59	4,78	2,299	0,513
The quality of nursing activities during your visit to the treatment room was high and did the nurse answer your questions about the planned tests?	4,37	4,43	4,56	4,78	2,149	0,542
During your visit to the treatment room, did you feel safe, and the nursing activities undertaken respected your privacy and personal dignity?	4,50	4,57	4,59	4,83	2,801	0,423
Did the nurses efficiently and carefully perform activities such as taking blood for tests, connecting an IV, administering medications, washing their hands and putting on gloves?	4,67	4,81	4,75	4,87	1,682	0,641
During the visit, did the nurses provide you with psychological support in the form of conversation, relieving anxiety and fear, and listened to your needs and doubts?	4,29	4,52	4,44	4,78	2,861	0,414
Did the nurses explain to you what activities they would be performing before you began them and provide you with information about self-care at home related to your health problem?	4,21	4,48	4,56	4,74	2,383	0,497
During your visit to the office, did the nurse talk to me about your health and provide clear answers to questions about your health?	4,21	4,52	4,56	4,78	4,219	0,239
Did the nurses work in an organized manner and was there a good atmosphere in the office that was friendly to you?	4,33	4,62	4,59	4,87	4,985	0,173

M – mean, U – Mann-Whitney test result, p – statistical significance

Source: own study

## Discussion

The main function of primary health care is to provide medical services at the local level. The more qualitatively adequate help patients receive in relation to their expectations, the more they accept medical activities, health education, and sometimes the burdensome diagnostic process, which promotes healing processes and individualization of services. An important factor influencing the assessment was the perception of staff involvement and the time spent on the visit. A primary health care nurse is just as important as the doctor, as confirmed by research. She is often the first point of contact in a clinic or during a home visit. In surveys, there is a tendency to highly evaluate the work of nurses due to their good attitude to patients, subjective treatment, and respect for their dignity. This is also shown by our own research.

The tendency to link good communication or the so-called availability of a nurse with satisfaction with medical services is revealed in research around the world and has a colossal significance for progress in treatment. The results of the study of patients' opinions from primary healthcare in Pilawa show that knowledge from the field of social psychology is useful or even necessary, which allows for a wise and conscious individualization of the approach to the patient depending on gender, age, education, aimed at optimizing the effects of treatment. This comes down to the issue of understanding the message - hence some differences between the groups.

Comparing the results of our own research to the analyses available in the literature, 87% of people taking part in the survey were satisfied with the kindness of the reception staff. These results compare favorably with the analysis by Plentar et al. from 2015, in which only slightly more than half of the participants in the study assessed the receptionists as friendly people, 27% described them as sometimes friendly and 13% of people who did not encounter any kindness were noted [3]. In turn, the publication by Krystyna Kurowska and Agnieszka Sawicka from 2016 examining the efficiency of the reception staff showed that 83.7% of the respondents assessed their actions positively [4].

The respondents highly assessed the work of the doctor, as 96% of the participants stated that the doctor was involved, polite, provided information about their condition in an understandable way and received the way of providing the information positively. Similarly, Plentara et al. in 2015, analyzing patient satisfaction in relation to similar factors, presented results indicating that 86% of the respondents were informed about the name of the disease entity by the doctor. Subsequently, the causes of symptoms reported by patients were explained by the doctor in slightly less than 70% of cases, while 16% of the respondents learned about them sometimes and 12% of the survey participants never learned about them [3].

## Conclusions

1. The research hypotheses were not confirmed in our own research, formulated on the basis of previous research, assumptions or ideas, and showed that the specificity of a healthcare entity significantly changes the image of the functioning of the facility in relation to others, which limits the possibility of generalizing the study results only to clinics of this type [4-10].

2. Gender, age, education of the respondent's facility did not significantly affect the assessment of the quality of the nursing staff's work, their knowledge and competence. Similarly, in the case of the assessment of showing care and kindness towards patients, they did not differentiate the assessments of the respondents. Also, in the matter of the nurses' ability to communicate with the patient, readiness to provide emotional support and education [11-20].
3. The age of respondents does not affect the level of satisfaction with medical services [21-30].
4. The education of the respondents did not significantly differentiate opinions on satisfaction with the availability of medical services [31-43].

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