

ABSTRACT

Abstract of thesis submitted to the Graduate School of Maejo University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration in Business Administration

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR OF USING PRIVATE HOSPITALS IN

CHIANG MAI PROVINCE

By

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APRIL 1999

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The purposes of this research were to examine 1) behavior of using private hospitals in Chiang Mai province i.e. frequency of using in 1 year, period of time for treatment, room rate, service charges, payment method, reason for hospital selection, people helping in making decision, hospitals' public relations, opinions on hospitals' public relations that affected decision, satisfaction with services of physicians, nurses and other personnel, satisfaction with waiting time, treatment charges, and hospitals' layout; and 2) problems concerning using private hospitals and solving guidelines. The data were collected by means of questionnaires from those using private hospitals in Chiang Mai province, selected by stratification random sampling. The hospitals were divided into 3 categories by number of patient beds: 2 small hospitals, 3 medium-sized hospitals and 3 large hospitals. The number of samples was 456, consisting of 104 in-patients and 325 out-patients. The data were analyzed with the use of the SPSS/PC+. The findings were as follows:

Most of the patients of small hospitals used the hospitals' service only once a year; those of medium-sized hospitals, 2-3 times a year; and those of large hospitals, over 3 times a year. The in-patients stayed at the hospitals for 1 – 7 days. The expense for an out-patient of small hospitals was about 500 baht and that for an in-patient, 1,001 – 5,000 baht. The expense for an out-patient of medium-sized and large hospitals was 501 – 1,000 baht and that for an in-patient, over 20,000 baht. Most patients made payment by themselves. The most important reason for choosing a certain hospital was availability of specialized physicians. Most respondents knew of the hospitals from their friends or acquaintances and they made their own decision on using the hospitals.

After using the hospitals' services, the patients' satisfaction was at a high level in all aspects: services of physicians, nurses and officials, waiting time, expenses and hospital layout. Those using small, medium-sized and large hospitals were not significantly different. Occupations did not affect hospital selection but income did, that is most of those using small and large hospitals did not earn their own incomes but those using medium-sized hospitals had income of 5,000 – 10,000 baht.

The following problems concerning using private hospitals in Chiang Mai province were found: physicians' inappropriate time for treatment; nurses' unwillingness to give advice or answer questions; and other personnel's insufficiency and slowness in providing services as well as improper and inefficient coordination.