

# ·卫生经济·

## Resources Competition Strategies the Competition Strategies of Private Hospitals

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**ABSTRACT:** To investigate the essence of resource competitiveness of private hospitals based on resources view in order to solve the problems encountered by private hospitals. Three competition strategies, including optimizing the operation and configuration of existing resources, strengthening resources integration and acquiring of private hospitals are given through analysis of circumstance. Fostering the capacity of resources innovation is the core competition strategy.

**Key words:** Private hospitals; Resources view; Resource competitiveness

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### Introduction

The health service market has witnessed a great development of private hospitals with the economy progress and health system revolution. But many private hospitals have encountered difficulties due to short time of development in the health service market which is characteristics of public hospitals near-monopoly<sup>[1-2]</sup>. Based on the competitiveness theory research of resources view, this paper investigate the development strategies of private hospitals combining the analysis of internal and external environment so as to provide the reference for private hospitals in seeking and maintaining their own competitive advantage.

### 1 The competitiveness of private hospitals based on resources view

#### 1.1 The theory of resource competitiveness

Survival and development of all organizations requires certain resources. The research on resource scarcity has promoted the development of the theory of management. The theory of resource competitiveness consists of a series of theories including "the theory of resources view", "the capacity-based theory" and "the knowledge-based theory" and so on<sup>[3-4]</sup>. Three views can be summarized from the theory. First, the competitive advantage of the enterprise comes from its resources (including ability and knowledge). Second, The core competitiveness of the enterprise roots in the heterogeneous resources. And the distribution of resources among enterprises is unbalanced, which may lead to the competitive advantage of certain enterprise.

#### 1.2 Connotation of the resource competitiveness of private hospitals

As other organizations, private hospitals in different stages of development possess different resources. And the demand of re-

sources is also different, which is the basis driving force of the development of private hospitals. For example, in the early development stage, indispensable resources for private hospitals include the entrepreneurial founder and medical technology and equipment. In the rapid development stage, the existing resources can not meet the needs of private hospitals. Finance, high-quality talent and new technologies become the urgent resources to private hospitals. So integration of social resources is one of the most effective development strategies.

For the development of private hospitals, resources include material resources and non-material resources such as capacity, knowledge and social relations and so on. Resources competitiveness means not only the ownership of certain resources but also the competence of resource allocation, resource integration and resource innovation.

### 2 Analysis of the competitive environment of private hospitals

It should have a clear understanding about the competitive environment of private hospitals before the research on the competition strategies based on resource review. From the external and the internal, both positive and negative factors of the competitive environment are analyzed.

#### 2.1 The negative factors

**2.1.1 The external environment** The unfair policy and over powerful competitors, public hospitals are the most important external negative factors of private hospitals. Policy environment has a decisive impact on the survival and development of private hospitals. To private hospitals, the current policy is so restrictive in classification of hospitals, tax policy and health insurance that the formation, operation and development of private health capital markets are directly affected<sup>[5-6]</sup>. The majority of private hospitals are classified as for-profit hospitals. The negative influence shows in two aspects because of the classification: First, there is a misleading concept in the public that "the only goal of private hospitals is for profit", which leads to the deep mistrust to private hospi-

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tals. Second, the results in heavy tax burden to private hospitals. What's worse, the exclusion of health insurance qualification has sharply reduced the quantity of patients of private hospitals<sup>[7-8]</sup>.

Public hospitals are the more powerful competitors compared with private hospitals. As the main provider of health services, public hospitals have inherent advantages in human resources, financial resources and social resource etc. They have a monopoly status in health market, which makes them the main resource competitors to private hospitals.

**2.1.2 Internal environment** Internal negative factors are mainly embodied in the lack of strategic management and the unsound management mechanism. More than 80% of private hospitals are family-run enterprises. In the transition from clinics to hospitals, there is no consciously adjustment in strategic thinking and strategic orientation, which lead to serious problem when the scale of the hospital grows up<sup>[9-10]</sup>. It is shown in two aspects.

First, structural problem in competition is highlighted. From STD clinics to plastic surgery hospitals, the problem of private hospitals are exposed to the market development such as identical product, convergence of industrial structure, the poor correlativity of the industrial. Because of the excessive homogeneity of market development, the competition becomes vicious<sup>[11]</sup>. Under the tremendous pressure to survive, some private hospitals ignored the industrial self-discipline and adopted improper means of competition for the pursuit of profit such as false advertising, exaggerated curative effect, induced demand, unreasonable check, which makes serious damage to the reputation and the competitiveness of private hospitals in the long term.

Second, the human resource management is too quick returns. Most private hospitals encounter obstacle in the recruitment and introduction of high-caliber talents and they have to spend lots of money for it<sup>[12]</sup>. Accordingly, the cost increases. In order to balance the budget and recover the cost, private hospitals introduced more low-end talents but paid little attention to training. It makes the phenomenon of dumbbell-shaped personnel. And few private hospitals can build the expert echelon of their own as result.

## 2.2 Positive factors

**2.2.1 External environment** External positive factors mainly consist of the economic and social progress and the gradual improvement of the policy environment. With the development of economy, the conflict between the growing demand for medical services and limited capacity of supply becomes the principal contradiction of health care system, which is exacerbated by the aging of the population. In addition, the demand for high-level medical services can not be fully satisfied by public hospitals alone. Therefore, the role of private hospitals is particularly important to meet medical needs of residents in multi-level and as a useful complement to public hospitals.

Promoting the diversification of the health care market capital is always one of the basic principles in the health system reform since the 1980s. A series of policies have been enacted to encourage social capital to participate in the health care market<sup>[13]</sup>. With the policy dilemmas get less, the future of private hospitals become brighter and brighter.

**2.2.1 Internal environment** Private hospitals are characteristic of clear property right structure and the market-oriented operation mechanism<sup>[14]</sup>. This ensures that the investment subject has full management autonomy and can make decisions flexibly for hospital to adapt to market changes.

## 3 Competition strategies of private hospitals based on resources view

Resources are scarce to all organization. The conclusion can be made that the distribution of resources between private hospitals and public hospitals is unbalanced. How to take advantage of favorable resources, reduce the impact of adverse factors on their own, and enhance the market competitiveness of private hospitals? The key is to improve the competitiveness of resources. Based on resources view, three aspects of resources competitive strategies of private hospital are suggested: optimization of the operation and configuration of existing resources, strengthen the ability to resources integration and acquiring, fostering the ability of innovation resources.

### 3.1 Optimize the capacity of operation and configuration of existing resources

The capacity of operation and configuration of existing resources is the foundation of the competitiveness of private hospitals. Policy resource is the most important non-material resource, which is the assurance of the development of private hospitals. In fact, every step of the development of private hospitals can be viewed as the consequence to policy support and guide<sup>[15]</sup>. So private hospitals should maintain the policy sensitivity, respond to health policy in time and make the best of the positive factors from policy in market development so as to improve the competitiveness.

Hospitals are the capital-intensive and technology-intensive organizations. For the long-term development, private hospitals should set up modern enterprise management system to achieve the coordination of capital and technology. When the scale of hospital expands, the management system is especially important in giving full play the advantages of human resources, reducing hospital operating costs, achieving the potential of financial resources.

### 3.2 Strengthen the integration capacity of acquiring resources

The integration capacity of acquiring resources is an extension of the competitiveness of private hospitals. It is the guarantee of continual survival and the vigor of private hospitals in the competitive environment by acquiring social resources, reducing the

cost of management<sup>[16]</sup>. There are three key aspects in integration capacity: the accurate direction of integration, the proper way of integration and the appropriate intensity of integration intensity:

Resources integration includes horizontal consolidation and vertical integration. Horizontal consolidation mainly refers to the alliance and merger of hospitals such as the strategic alliances of the same special hospitals. On the one hand, horizontal consolidation can reduce malignant competition; On the other hand, mutual benefits can be obtained by increasing social awareness. Meanwhile, alliance and merger can also improve the voice of private hospitals. It has important significance on maintaining close communication with government, getting the preferential treatment of policy, taxation for the long-term development of private hospitals. Vertical integration refers to the integration of the supply chain, patient resource. Private hospitals as a platform can integration the upstream and the downstream industry by the control information flow, logistics flow, capital flow and services flow. As a consequence, the hospital and patient's benefit maximization is achieved, so does the competitiveness of the hospital. In addition, more attention should be paid to the financing channels, the introduction of advanced treatment techniques and the use of corporate strategy planning.

### 3.3 Foster the capacity of innovation resources

The core resources competitiveness is the capacity of innovation resources. Only through fostering the unique capacity of innovation resources of their own by making the best of the external and internal resources, can private hospitals achieve persistent resources and get an invincible position in competition<sup>[17-18]</sup>. As the most important part, the capacity of innovation resources includes technology innovation, management innovation and hospital culture etc.

Technical innovation directly determines the market competitiveness of private hospitals. By exploring new modes of technological innovation actively and making it a long-term strategy, an effective technology innovation mechanism can be formed. With the unique technical innovation, private hospitals can provide high technical and excellent quality services and meet the demand of patients, which means stronger competitiveness. For example, unique specialized subject directly determines the amount of patients.

Management innovation performs in the innovation of management theory, management organization and management tactic, etc. It plays a decisive role of abandoning rough management timely system and guiding the innovation of management thoughts to management innovation of whole private hospitals.

Hospital culture, including ideas, concepts and values, is the moral support of the competitiveness of private hospitals, which infiltrates all aspects of the operation of private hospitals<sup>[19]</sup>. Private hospital culture can not be applied mechanically. It requires a

combination of the characteristics and operation of the hospital. Only by the continuous integration between the content and the form, the image and the substance of, can the unique style of hospital culture be truly achieved, and finally the promotion of the competitiveness of private hospitals.

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## 资源竞争策略 :民营医院发展策略初探

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摘要 :为解决民营医院发展中遇到的困境 本文从基于资源观的竞争力理论入手 ,在分析民营医院所处内外环境中的有利与不利因素的基础上 ,阐述了民营医院资源竞争力的内涵。作者建议民营医院一般发展策略包括优化现有资源运营与配置能力、强化资源整合能力 ,核心策略是培育创新资源的创新能力 ,通过这三种竞争力的强化以促进民营医院获取竞争优势 ,实现可持续发展。

关键词 :民营医院 ,资源观 ,资源竞争力

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