



## POSSIBILITIES AND PERSPECTIVES OF SOCIAL MARKETING IN REHABILITATION OF PATIENTS WITH BREAST CANCER

Yury V. Przhedetsky<sup>1</sup>, Elena G. Popkova<sup>2\*</sup>, Natalia V. Przhedetskaya<sup>3</sup>, Jeff French<sup>4</sup>

*1. Doctor of Medicine, Professor, Chief of Department of skin tumors, soft tissue tumors and breast tumors No. 2, Rostov Scientific-Research Institute of Oncology, Rostov-on-Don, Russia.*

*2. Doctor of Economics, Professor of the Chair "World economy and economic theory", Volgograd State Technical University, Volgograd, Russia.*

*3. Doctor of Economics, Professor, Rostov State University of Economics, Rostov-on-Don, Russia.*

*4. Chief Executive of Strategic Social Marketing Ltd., Canada.*

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to determine the possibilities and perspectives of using social marketing and rehabilitation of breast cancer patients. The methodology of the research is based on an application of standard methods of socio-humanitarian sciences: analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, formalization, and a specialized economic method – marketing mix. The authors show the ineffectiveness of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients, which is a problem in modern Russia, and prove that social marketing possesses wide possibilities of application in the rehabilitation of breast cancer patients. The work views the main direction of applying the tools of social marketing in this process and determines the elements of its marketing mix, as well as offers a perspective model for applying social marketing in the rehabilitation of breast cancer patients. It is concluded that using social marketing in the rehabilitation of breast cancer patients is justified and expedient. As compared to state monopoly for such rehabilitation, social marketing allows satisfying the current demand for it very effectively. Due to a wide specter of accessible tools, social marketing provides a possibility for the provision of commercial profit for sponsors, attracting private and corporate investors for rehabilitation of breast cancer patients.

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### Introduction

With development of modern society and growth of the rate of economic growth, higher living standards are achieved by means of satisfaction of social needs and increase of the volume of benefits accessible for each consumer. And the environment and living conditions of humans become less favorable due to increase of the volume of harmful industrial waste and increase of the number of stress states.

This raises the modern humans' aptitude to various diseases, also stimulating the growth of breast cancer rate. A social state is to take care of its citizens, especially when they find themselves in a difficult life situation. Therefore, quick and successful rehabilitation of breast cancer patients is one of the top-priority directions of state social policy in the sphere of healthcare.

In the conditions of market economy, the most effective tool for provision of client-orientation of companies is marketing, which allows determining existing clear and hidden (potential) needs of people and satisfying them. In non-profit spheres of economy, social marketing is used. The purpose of this article is to determine the possibilities and perspectives of using social marketing in rehabilitation of breast cancer patients.

**Corresponding Author:** Elena G. Popkova, *Doctor of Economics, Professor of the Chair "World economy and economic theory", Volgograd State Technical University, Volgograd, Russia*

## Materials and method

The problems of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients are analyzed in the works of such scholars as [1], [2], [3], [4], [5]. Possibilities and perspectives of using social marketing in the activities of non-profit organizations are viewed in the studies of such authors as [6], [7], [8], [9], [10], [11], [12], [13], [14], and [15].

Studying literature on the set problem showed that despite high topicality of the theme and high level of its elaboration, the possibilities and perspectives of using social marketing in rehabilitation of breast cancer patients are not sufficiently studied in the publications of modern authors, which is a basis for further research in this scientific sphere.

It should be noted that this article touches the problems of physical rehabilitation of breast cancer patients, which are a prerogative of reconstructive breast surgeons, and is devoted to psychological and social rehabilitation of this category of patients.

Methodology of the research is based on application of standard methods of socio-humanitarian sciences: analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, formalization, and a specialized economic method – marketing mix.

## Results

The literature shows that diagnosing a tumor in female breast is accompanied by deep psychogenic stress, which is based not only on fear of deadly disease but of losing a breast as a sexually important organ associated with female identification. Studies in this sphere show that the nature of these psychological disruptions is complicated, as it is determined by combined influence on the psychological sphere of the patients by intensive somatogenic and exogenous & organic factors, and psychologically damaging influences.

Studying the level of psychological health of women with breast cancer at the early stages of development of the oncological process allowed determining the structure of boundary neurophysic disorders that aggravate the somatic state and complicate the conduct of adequate treatment procedures. Despite that fact that there's improvement of aesthetic results of treatment of cancer patients related to early detection of cancerous growth and application of organ-saving operations, the consequences of generally accepted (standard) surgical attacks leave much to be desired.

This fact leads to another problem – increase of the living standards of patients after the treatment. Unfortunately, qualitative characteristics of life cannot be provided traditional methods of treatment of the tumor process, as most patients cured of cancer still remain in the emotions that are different as to the character and expression. Primarily, this concerns the patients with aesthetically damaging operations in the form of radical mastectomy, after which there remains visually detectable and disfiguring life-long effect.

Among breast cancer patients, working age females account for 60%. Annual growth reaches 4.7%, which, together with low mortality allows speaking of the growth of the number of patients who have experienced the radical operation for breast cancer. At that, there's an urgent issue of improvement of living standards which aggravate as a result of traditional radical mastectomy. For each woman, breast is a symbol of women's pride for her sexuality and maternity.

Disabling general somatic influence of breast cancer is small even with late detection. The paradox is that radical treatment of this disease leads to formation of stable psychosocial deadadaptation and even disability for women, which differs by the character but exceeds by the scale deadadaptation and disability during many other oncology diseases. Oncological fear, stress after radical treatment, threat of family dissolution, the issue of losing a job and further employment – all of these are faced by women after treatment of breast cancer.

After radical surgical interferences, all working age patients have anxiety, depression, sense of lameness and helplessness, and up to 30% of women after treatment experience large aggravation of quality of living due to losing a social role and functional capabilities. There are also problems in social interrelations. Breast cancer patients' experiencing psycho-emotional difficulties due to harsh character of the disease and further damaging operation dictate the necessity for studying the character of personal reaction and ways of its overcoming (correction).

Studying the patients' reaction to the diagnosis, conducted treatment, and quality of life after the therapy remain important aspects. For long years, the 10-point scale of Kanovsky and ECOG-WHO have been the main methods of evaluating the quality of life. Then, other methodologies were developed in the form of surveys and liner analog scales that were completed by the patient or the doctor and studied various aspects of patients' life activities.

At present, there's a definition and term "life quality" as a totality of objective and subjective characteristics of a human reflecting the level of life comfort, including psychological peculiarities of a human, the level of frustration, physical and sexual well-being, and the level of everyday and labor activity. That's why modern concept of treatment of malignant diseases should be aimed not only at saving the life and treatment but at provision of high quality of life after the interference, i.e., the result of the treatment should be evaluated not only by the number of years lived.

Ineffectiveness of measures for rehabilitation of breast cancer patients is a problem in modern Russia. One of its manifestation is that the set of measures conducted in the sphere of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients is selected wrongly. It includes the measures that are not necessary, leading to inexpedient spending of resources, while the events which the patients' needs are not conducted.

The reason for non-conformity of the set of requires and conducted events in the sphere of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients consists in the fact that their organizers (rehabilitation centers) lack the interest in the result. Being the government establishments of healthcare, such centers do not develop and do not show flexibility and innovational activity – they just formally perform their functions.

Another manifestation of this problem is that the expenses related to conduct of measures in the sphere of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients are imposed on the state. Despite the presence of market relations in the sphere of healthcare, private business does not consider rehabilitation of breast cancer patients a commercially attractive segment of the medical services market. Under the conditions of deficit of budgets of all levels of the Russian budget system, even the expenditures for healthcare are cut. Lack of financing leads to insignificant scale of measures in the sphere of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients.

This problem is manifested in the fact that rehabilitation centers for breast cancer patients are established with hospitals and are located in the places that are inconvenient for patients. Such centers are very rare in Russia, so to get there one must cover quite a distance. This hinders full attraction of all those who require their services.

Another manifestation of this problem is lack of promotion of measures in the sphere of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients. Due to that, a lot of patients that require such measures are not aware of them or show low loyalty due to biased attitude to all medical services, provided by the state, as of low quality.

Thus, the government approach to rehabilitation of breast cancer patients, which supposes establishment of state monopoly for conduct of corresponding measures, is ineffective. Social marketing possesses wide capabilities for application in rehabilitation of breast cancer patients. Let us view the main directions of application of all social marketing tools in this process and determine the elements of its marketing mix.

The product is measures for rehabilitation of breast cancer patients. For determining the needs and preferences in such measures and determining their optimal set, which allows achieving high results with minimal expenditures, we offer to conduct marketing research. Such marketing research should be aimed at receiving information on the following main issues:

- Physical, psychological, and social problems faced by the breast cancer patients;
- wishes of breast cancer patients for measures for their rehabilitation;
- preferences of breast cancer patients as to informing them on the conducted measures for their rehabilitation, etc.

Based on the gathered marketing information, a program of measures in the sphere of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients should be formed. It should be common for all patients or be flexible and be selected individually for each patient depending on the current possibilities with the organizers of such rehabilitation.

The measures for rehabilitation of breast cancer patients should be conducted at the charity organizations (private rehabilitation centers). They can be created on the basis of commercial companies interested in supporting the rehabilitation of breast cancer patients. Such centers should employ not just hired work but the people interested in helping breast cancer patients.

They should include the patients who were rehabilitated before. In order to determine preferable places for location of rehabilitation centers, it is expedient to conduct marketing research. The main aspects that should be specified by such marketing studies are brought down to the minimum:

- place of residence and leisure of breast cancer patients;
- geographical determination of places of concentration of breast cancer patients;
- how far breast cancer patients are ready to travel for rehabilitation;
- preferences of breast cancer patients as to geographical location of rehabilitation centers, etc.

The prices of measures for rehabilitation of breast cancer patients should be set not for patients and the state but for benefactors. The benefactors could include specially created charity organizations or private commercial companies that manifest their social responsibility.

For attraction of donations from sponsors (individuals and commercial companies), specialized charity organizations (rehabilitation centers), while cooperating with the state, should conduct PR of charity activity in the sphere of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients. The sense of such PR consists in conducting meetings with interested persons and potential sponsors, at which social significance of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients and potential advantages for sponsors from support for measures for their rehabilitation will be explained.

One of such advantages could be strengthening of the brand (both individual (brand of individual benefactor) and corporate (brand of organization-benefactor). For that, specialized charity organizations should conduct branding of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients in cooperation with the state, i.e., strengthen the society and business's loyalty to persons and organizations involved in charity organizations in this sphere.

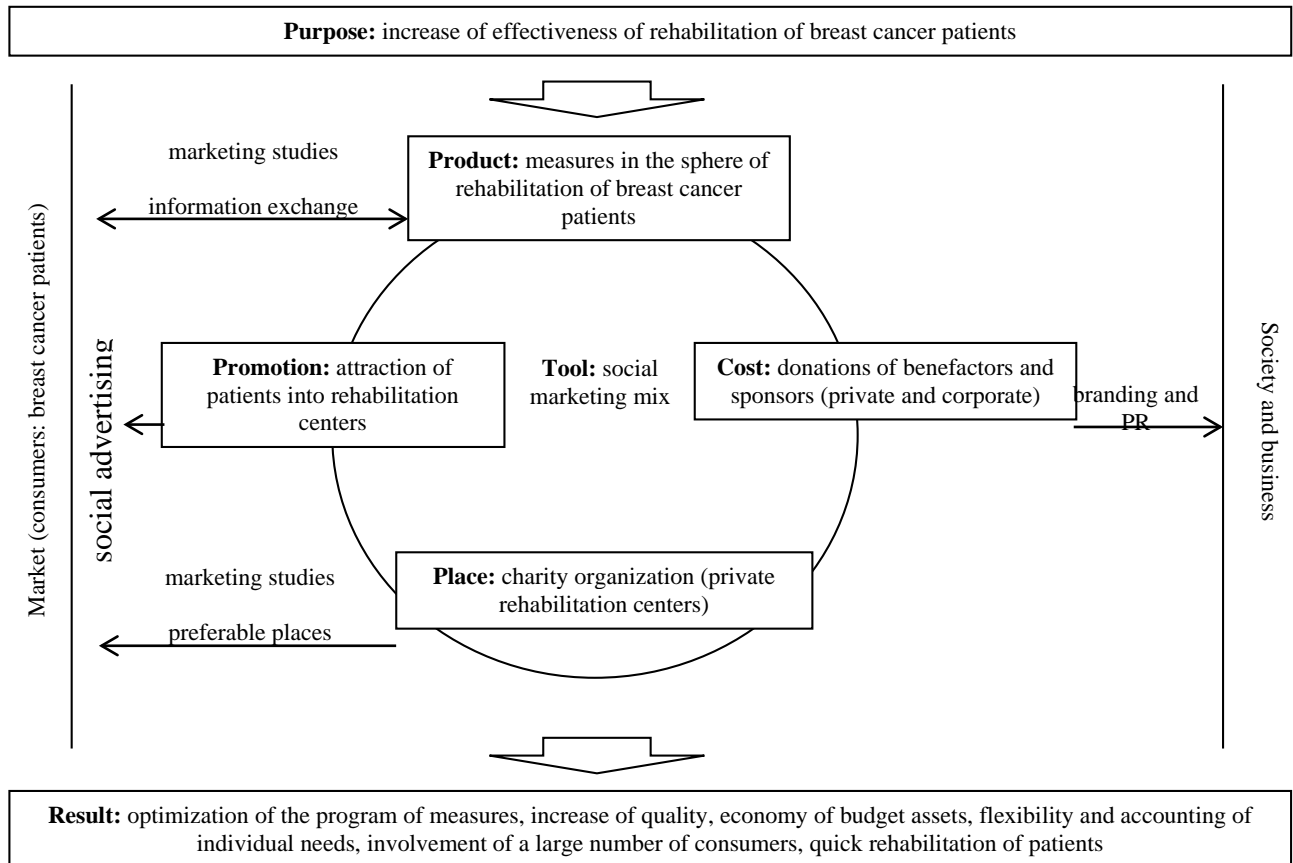
Having such a brand, specialized charity organizations would be able to share it with sponsors (assign the brand to them), and they, in their turn, would be able to get advantages from their charity organizations. That is, commercialization of charity activity will take place. Despite the fact that this contradicts the true nature of charity, this will allow attracting resources into the process of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients, making it commercially attractive.

Even with a serious budget and large number of accessible resources, it is expedient to strive for minimization of expenditures for conduct of measures in the sphere of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients, for the sponsors not to consider them too large and not to cancel them. For that, it is expedient to maximize the labor intensity and minimization of capacity of other types of resources during their conduct – i.e., the emphasis should be made on volunteers.

Promotion of measures for rehabilitation of breast cancer patients should be conducted with the help of social advertising. It should be aimed at:

- informing the breast cancer patients on the measures conducted in the sphere of their rehabilitation, for them to become interested in the activity of rehabilitation centers;
- informing the public on the measures in the spheres of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients, for decreasing the fear of facing this disease;
- forming and strengthening of loyalty of breast cancer patients for measures conducted in the sphere of their rehabilitation, in order to attract them into rehabilitation centers.

Based on the viewed elements of marketing mix and the offered recommendations, we offer the following perspective model of application of social marketing in rehabilitation of breast cancer patients (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1.** Perspective model of application of social marketing in rehabilitation of breast cancer patients

As is seen from Figure 1, as a result of application of social marketing in rehabilitation of breast cancer patients, a lot of advantages are achieved. Thus, the program of measures in the sphere of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients is optimized due to determination of precise and actual needs for them with the help of marketing research. Attraction of private charity organizations helps to increase quality, save budget assets, reach flexibility and accounting of individual needs of breast cancer patients, involve a larger number of consumers, and quicken rehabilitation of patients.

**Conclusion**

Thus, using social marketing in rehabilitation of breast cancer patients is justified and expedient. As compared to state monopoly for such rehabilitation, social marketing allows satisfying the existing demand fully and effectively. Due to a wide specter of accessible tools, social marketing allows providing commercial profit for sponsors, attracting private and corporate investors for rehabilitation of breast cancer patients.

Theoretical significance of the received results in the course of the research consists in conceptual substantiation of the possibility and necessity for application of social marketing in rehabilitation of breast cancer patients, which developed fundamental provisions of the modern theory of non-profit organizations' marketing. The compiled authors' recommendations for application of social marketing to rehabilitation of breast cancer patients in the modern Russian practice pose practical value.

It should be concluded that attraction of private charity organizations to rehabilitation of breast cancer patients requires state's efforts for creating and supporting favorable conditions. In view of high social significance of this sphere, it is necessary to take it into the range of national strategic priorities. Similar to innovational entrepreneurship for specialized charity organizations in the sphere of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients, tax and other preferences should be provided.

Their introduction will be an impulse for starting the process of realization of the developed perspective model of application of social marketing in rehabilitation of breast cancer patients. Development of specific measures for creating stimuli for charity organizations in the sphere of rehabilitation of breast cancer patients is a perspective direction for further scientific studies on the viewed problem.

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