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AWARENESS AND INTEREST OF RESIDENTS OF THE KHARKIV REGION IN HEALTHCARE FACILITIES SUSTAINABILITY

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Summary

Aim. To show the level of interest and awareness of the residents of the Kharkiv region in the management of waste, air quality, and water resources in healthcare facilities.
Materials and methods. An adapted version of WHO Europe's Behavioural Insights tool was used in the randomized survey of 2114 respondents. The results were processed using jamovi v. 2.3, which is distributed under the rights of an open license by the methods of descriptive statistics.
Results. The greening of healthcare facilities often is a result of society's request. Public's environmental awareness and their interest in the sustainable management of environmental resources in Ukraine's healthcare facilities was the object of this research. Three questions in the block on environmental issues were analyzed: the possible impact of environmental resource management on the environment in healthcare facilities; choice of healthcare facilities based on information about the management of environmental resources; and opinion on the level of attention of healthcare managers to the management of environmental resources. Received answers were grouped depending on the place of residence, educational level, presence of chronic diseases, and place of work (depending on belonging to the field of healthcare).
Conclusions. Residents of the Kharkiv region have rather high awareness in ecological issues and interest in monitoring the management of environmental resources in healthcare facilities. Consider that the attention of the CEOs of healthcare facilities to the management of environmental resources is insufficient. Awareness of the relationship between human activity and the quality of the environment is at a high level. Information about the quality of environmental resource management in healthcare facilities is important.

Keywords: **healthcare management, research methods, healthcare facilities, healthcare system, resources of healthcare facilities**

INTRODUCTION

During the last ten years, a large part of public opinion has been focused on environmental issues, ways to minimize them, or possible solutions. Environmental awareness and a positive attitude towards «greening» have become the norm in the developed world [1]. The issue of achieving sustainability and overcoming the consequences of environmental degradation is especially acute in developing countries [2].

Deterioration of environmental conditions, the limitation of natural resources, and, as a result, an increase in their cost, significant climate changes, and globalization – this is what any organization faces now [3]. However, environmental challenges can also become environmental opportunities, and managers should see them in time and use them in the organization entrusted to them [4]. After all, the «sustainable development» of an enterprise usually has not only environmental but also economic benefits [5]. Public opinion can become the driving force for the «greening» of the organization [6]. Standards of clean technologies, sustainable production, and activities with minimal impact on the environment, as a request of society, should form an adequate response

of business or industry [7]. People's concern about climate change, and environmental degradation, can play an important role in supporting environmental policies or implementations, as well as changing their behavioral patterns to mitigate climate change [8].

In addition to the request from the public, and as a result of it, there is an approach already within the company – «green» management of human resources [9]. This approach has the following benefits: empowerment of green workers, green procurement, and promotion of green supply chain management. The positive role of employees in ensuring the sustainable development of the company has been confirmed by many studies [10].

An obstacle to changes and pro-environmental behavior is precisely the lack of environmental awareness, which in turn is formed by knowledge. As a result, it is people's knowledge that helps reduce environmental problems, and their awareness prompts them to take actions aimed at protecting the environment [11].

Therefore, any change or new vector of the organization's activity must be a response to the request of society, thus changes will be perceived faster, better, and with more enthusiasm. It is the values that strengthen sustainability, support change, and transformation, create a social foundation, and are drivers for behavior change [12].

As part of our research on the greening of healthcare facilities, it was important for us to learn about the state of the public's environmental awareness and their interest in the sustainable management of environmental resources in Ukraine's healthcare facilities. Numerous studies have shown that a common and indicative way of studying public opinion as an indicator of attitudes toward the environment is a survey [13].

AIM

The aim of this article is to show the level of interest and awareness of the residents of the Kharkiv region in the management of waste, air quality, and water resources in healthcare facilities.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

An adapted version of WHO Europe's Behavioural Insights tool was used in the randomized survey process. The original English-language tool was translated and agreed upon with experts from the WHO European Regional Office. It was agreed to add questions that reflect the current problems of Ukraine and/or are relevant for the entire WHO European region, in particular, blocks on the management of environmental resources in healthcare facilities. After passing the standard review procedures (review of the questionnaire by 2 medical experts and 2 philological experts), validity check (assessment by groups of involved persons – representatives of different categories of the population, 6-8 experts in total), and reliability (double survey of 56/36 respondents) and was carried out pilot randomized trial [14]. The results were processed using jamovi v. 2.3, which is distributed under the rights of an open license, by the methods of descriptive statistics.

Three questions were proposed in the block on environmental issues:

1. To what extent, in your opinion, can waste management, and attention to the water and air quality affect the quality of the environment in healthcare facilities? Rate on a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 – no effect, and 7 – maximum effect.

2. When choosing a healthcare facility, how important is for you the information about its waste management, water, and air quality? Rate on a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is not decisive at all, and 7 is the most decisive.

3. Do you think that the managers of healthcare facilities pay enough attention to the issues of waste management, and water and air quality in their activities?

For all three questions, the internal consistency of the concepts was confirmed (Cronbach's α is greater than 0.7). The high-reliability index of the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) – 0.721 of three questions confirms the hypothesis of environmental awareness and interest in greening processes.

RESULTS

In the course of a large randomized study, 2114 people took part in the Kharkiv region. Among the respondents who answered Question 1: 80.17 % were women, 19.83 % were men (N=2048); 80.12 % were women, and 19.88 % were men (N=2024) – for Question 2; 79.23 % and 20.77 % (N=2051) – for Question 3, respectively. Such a gender imbalance can be explained by the military situation in the country, when the majority of the male population is involved in military operations both directly and indirectly, especially in the front-line Kharkiv region. Men were not always able to respond to a fairly extensive online survey. In addition, the different ratio in the categories of answers is because not all respondents completed it, or answered for every question (it is shown as total N for every category of the analysis).

The dispersion on place of settlements is: those who live in cities 26,3 %, in regional center – 4,5 %, district center – 31,4 %, villages – 37,8 %; on educational level: basic secondary (up to 9th grade) – 1,2 %, postgraduate education (postgraduate studies, academic degree) – 0,6 %, higher education (specialist, bachelor, master) – 70,7 %, unfinished higher education (2 or more years, without a diploma) – 1,9 %, complete middle school – 4,6 %, medium special – 21 %; 94,12 % of responders

are non-healthcare workers, 5 % are healthcare workers, and 0,88 % didn't know how to answer; regarding the availability of the chronicle diseases: 44,8 % of responders answered «no» and 45,1 % – «yes», and 10,1 % didn't know how to answer,

The arithmetic mean for the 1st Question is 5,5728 (female 5,6083/ male 5,3840) with a standard deviation of 1,6915 (female 1,6789/ male 1,7413). The arithmetic mean for 2nd Question is 4,3473 (female 4,4154/ male 4,0680) with a standard deviation of 1,8867 (female 1,8556/ male 1,9741). For Question 3: the majority of the responders mentioned that there is «not enough» attention to the management of environmental resources in healthcare facilities from the CEOs: 1292 (female 1044/male 248) it is 63 % from all the responders (female 51,2 % / male 11,8 %).

The next stage for the analysis of the received answers to the questions presented above was their grouping depending on the place of residence, education, presence of chronic diseases, and place of work. In our opinion, the presence of chronic diseases potentially encourages more frequent visits to healthcare facilities, and to have a deeper understanding of the work of medical facilities. Also interesting is the difference of opinion between people who work in the field of health care (OH), and those who do not, in terms of whether involvement in the work of the industry somehow affects the understanding of environmental resource management. Both of them are direct beneficiaries of the activities of health centers and therefore are not only more knowledgeable about their work but also more interested in the high quality of their activities.

In the process of statistical analysis, it was assumed that the probability of an error of the first type does not exceed 5 % ($p<0.05$). Testing the normality of the empirical distribution of Questions 1 and 2 was first performed using a test for Skewness and Kurtosis. The analysis showed an acceptable normal distribution (< 2 does not violate the normal distribution [15]), and Question 1 (−1.041±0.55/0.180±0.109) and Question 2 (−0.259±0.55/-0.890±0.109). From the data presented in Table 1, it can be seen that both the set of answers to Question 1 and Question 2 correspond to a normal series of distributions.

Table 1

Answers to Questions 1 and 2 by residents of different types of settlements

Type of settlement	Total quantity (N)/% of total quantity	Median	Skewness / Kurtosis	Percentiles		
				25th	50th	75th
Question 1 (N=2037)						
City	526/25,82 %	6	-1,055/0,172	4.25	6.00	7.00
City, regional center	90/4,42 %	6	-0,890/-0,277	4.00	6.00	7.00
City, district center	640/31,43 %	6	-1,162/0,431	5.00	6.00	7.00
Village	781/38,34 %	6	-0,965//0,118	4.00	6.00	7.00
Question 2 (N=2015)						
City	516/25,61 %	4,0	-0,313/-0,904	3.00	4.00	6.00
City, regional center	89/4,42 %	4,0	0,092/-0,905	2.00	4.00	5.00
City, district center	636/31.56 %	4,0	-0,177/-1,037	3.00	4.00	6.00
Village	774/38,41 %	5,0	-0,310/00,721	3.00	5.00	6.00

The results of the analysis of the answers of respondents to Question 3, who live in different settlements, show the trend in answer that there is «not enough» attention to the management of environmental resources in healthcare facilities from the CEOs: in cities 60,57 %, in regional center – 65,59, district center – 70 %, villages – 58,37 %.

After analyzing the answers to Questions 1 and 2, and grouping them by the level of education received, the data presented in Table 2 were obtained. The largest number of respondents have a higher completed education, as well as secondary special education.

The following results of the analysis of answers to Question 3 of respondents with different levels of education show the preferred answer that there is «not enough» attention to the management of environmental resources in healthcare facilities from the CEOs in every group of educational level: basic secondary (up to 9th grade) – 52,63 %, postgraduate education (postgraduate studies, academic degree) – 53,85 %, Higher education (specialist, bachelor, master) – 64,36 %, unfinished higher education (2 or more years, without a diploma) – 57,5 %, complete middle school – 59,14 %, medium special – 60,84 %.

Answers to Questions 1 and 2 of respondents who are healthcare workers and people with chronic diseases were also analyzed. The former, by their profession, are constantly in healthcare facilities, and the latter, due to ailments, theoretically often visit medical facilities.

The answers of healthcare workers were compared with the answers of respondents who do not work in healthcare facilities and respondents with chronic diseases with the answers of people without such diseases. The analysis of the answers is presented in Table 3. Respondents who answered «don't know» regarding their field of employment were excluded from the visualization.

Table 2

Answers to Questions 1 and 2 of respondents with different educational level

Educational level	Total quantity (N)/% of total quantity	Median	Skewness / Kurtosis	Percentiles		
				25th	50th	75th
Question 1 (N=2043)						
Basic secondary (up to 9th grade)	23/1,13 %	7,0	-1.03/0.162	5.00	7.00	7.00
Postgraduate education (postgraduate studies, academic degree)	13/0,64 %	6,0	-0.899/0.223	5.00	6.00	7.00
Higher education (specialist, bachelor, master)	1445/70,73 %	6,0	-1.069/0.362	5.00	6.00	7.00
Unfinished higher education (2 or more years, without a diploma)	40/1,96 %	6,0	-1.163/0.167	4.75	6.00	7.00
Complete middle school	93/4,55 %	7,0	-0.975/ −0.002	4.00	7.00	7.00
Medium special	429/21,00 %	6,0	-0.923/-0.322	4.00	6.00	7.00
Question 2 (N=2020)						
Basic secondary (up to 9th grade)	23/1,14 %	5,0	-0.433/-0.889	3,5	5.00	7.00
Postgraduate education (postgraduate studies, academic degree)	13/0,64 %	4,0	0.173/-0.635	3.00	4.00	5.00
Higher education (specialist, bachelor, master)	1432/70,89 %	4,0	-0.274/-0.822	3.00	4.00	6.00
Unfinished higher education (2 or more years, without a diploma)	39/1,93 %	5,0	-0.598/-0.671	4.00	5.00	6.00
Complete middle school	93/4,6 %	4,0	-0.020/-1.187	2.00	4.00	6.00
Vocational training	420/20,79 %	4,0	0.190/-1.062	3.00	4.00	6.00

Table 3

Results of the survey of healthcare workers and respondents with chronic diseases on Questions 1 and 2

Statistical indicator	Are you a healthcare worker?	Total quantity (N)	Median	Skewness / Kurtosis	Percentiles		
					25th	50th	75th
(Non)healthcare workers							
Question 1 (N=2037)	I do not know	18	6.00	-1.473/2.133	5.00	6.00	7.00
	No	1916	6.00	-1.043/0.178	4.00	6.00	7.00
	Yes	103	6.00	-1.186/0.768	5.00	6.00	7.00
Question 2 (N=2015)	I do not know	17	5.00	-0.501/-0.563	3.00	5.00	5.00
	No	1898	4.00	-0.256/-0.903	3.00	4.00	6.00
	Yes	100	4.00	-0.227/-0.915	3.00	4.00	6.00
Respondents with chronic diseases							
Question 1 (N=2038)	I do not know	205	6.00	-1.205/0.588	4.00	6.00	7.00
	No	905	6.00	-1.022/0.130	4.00	6.00	7.00
	Yes	928	6.00	-1.023/0.157	4.00	6.00	7.00
Question 2 (N=2015)	I do not know	202	4.00	-0.258/0.898	3.00	4.00	6.00
	No	892	5.00	-0.312/0.773	3.00	5.00	6.00
	Yes	921	4.00	-0.191/0.997	3.00	4.00	6.00

Responses to Question 3 mostly don't see enough attention from the healthcare leaders to the management of environmental resources in facilities: 45,10 % of healthcare workers and 63,93 % of nonhealthcare workers noted exactly this relation to this issue. The same situation applies to people by disease group: 66,63 % with chronicle diseases and 61,06 % without them agree with the previous group.

DISCUSSION

General characteristics of the survey results.

Regarding the answers to Question 1, the value of the arithmetic mean is quite high, more than 5. Taking into account the standard deviation of 1.7, this indicates a positive assessment of the importance of environmental resource management in healthcare facilities. At the same time, both the arithmetic mean and the standard deviation indicator obtained in the answer to Question 2 testify to the average relevance of environmental resource management when choosing a healthcare facility. This trend is observed both among women and among men, with men having a lower arithmetic mean and a higher standard deviation when answering both questions.

Answering Question 3, the majority of respondents in general, and women and men separately, believe that the managers of health care facilities do not pay enough attention to the management of environmental resources. About 1/5 of the respondents refused to answer, and every sixth respondent believed that the managers of healthcare facilities pay enough attention to the management of environmental resources, or think that it should not be done at all.

Analysis of survey results of respondents by type of settlement.

Analyzing the answers to the questions, taking into account the place of residence of the respondents, we can see that in Question 1 there is a clear unanimity of high ratings among residents of all types of settlements, which is visible from the distribution of median values within 6 points. This means that the population believes that waste management and attention to water and air quality can have a maximum effect on the quality of the environment in healthcare facilities.

The answers to Question 2 by the place of residence of the interviewees show that when choosing a healthcare facility, information about its waste management, water, and air quality, is rather decisive. Figure 1 shows three peaks: the majority of respondents rated their choice based on information about the environmental sustainability in the healthcare facility between 4 and 5 points. A smaller peak is in the area of 7 points. The fewest respondents noted their attitude to decision-making based on information, in the range of 1-2 points, that is, not decisive at all. Taking into account the data from Table 4, it can be seen that residents of villages (median 5) are more inclined to choose healthcare facilities based on environmental information. It can be concluded that for the respondents, the level of waste management, and water and air quality in healthcare facilities are moderately prioritized when choosing a medical institution.

The obtained results of the answers to Question 3 showed that among those who don't see enough attention to environmental resources management in healthcare facilities, more than 20 % live in district centers and rural areas. In cities, this number is almost 16 %, and residents of the regional center hold the least such opinion. Fewer respondents from all types of settlements believe that the attention of managers is sufficient, and a very small percentage of respondents are convinced that this should not be a priority management issue.

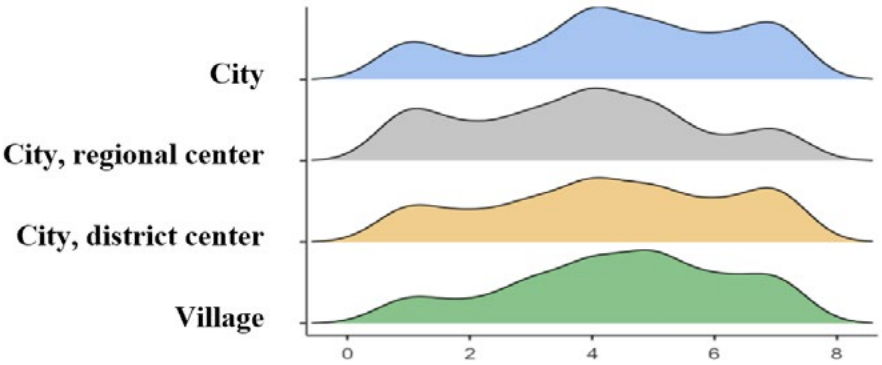

Figure 1. Respondents' opinion about the choice of a health care institution based on information about the state of management of environmental resources in it by place of residence.

Answers to the questions of respondents with different education.

The results of the analysis of the answers to Questions 1 and 2 reflect the same patterns as for the previous criterion. All respondents, regardless of the level of education, have positive unanimity about the perception of the impact of environmental resource management on the environment in healthcare facilities (median within 6-7 points). As for the selection of a healthcare center based on information about the management of environmental resources, the ratings are average. Respondents with complete secondary education and respondents with incomplete higher and secondary special education have several different peaks, which are visible in Figure 2, two peaks of which are within the range of average or maximum scores.

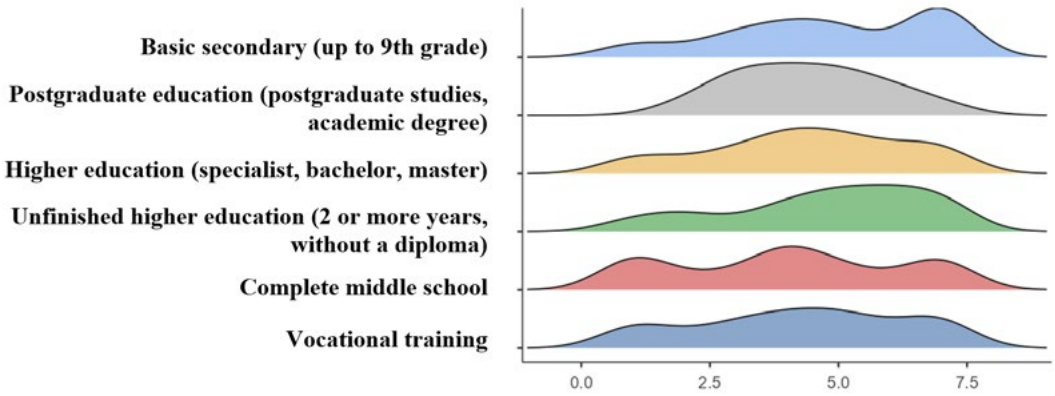

Figure 2. Opinions of respondents about the choice of healthcare facilities based on information about the state of management of environmental resources by the level of education received.

The highest percentage of those who consider the level of attention of healthcare managers to be insufficient is among respondents with higher (bachelor's, specialist, master's) and vocational training, the lowest among respondents with basic secondary education, as well as with the PhD degree and above. This is a result of the small number of respondents with an advanced degree among the probability sample.

Analysis of respondents' answers by field of employment and presence of chronic diseases.

The processing of answers to Questions 1 and 2 in the groups of healthcare workers and people with chronic diseases showed the same results as in general, as well as among residents of different settlements and with different levels of education. Issues of environmental resource management when choosing a medical institution are at the average level (median above 4). We can note that the respondents tend to make decisions about obtaining medical services based on information about the management of environmental resources in healthcare facilities.

Among healthcare workers, the share of those who consider the attention of healthcare managers to be insufficient is more than a quarter higher than those who consider it (attention) sufficient. And 4.5 times more respondents consider this indicator to be insufficient than sufficient for nonhealthcare workers. On the other hand, among patients with chronic diseases, attention is considered insufficient more than 4 times more often than sufficient, which coincides with the opinion of respondents without chronic diseases.

CONCLUSIONS

It has been confirmed that the results of the selected statistical model of the conducted survey are acceptable and have sufficient accuracy in reproducing the processes. The conducted representative randomized study shows that the residents of the Kharkiv region have a rather high interest in monitoring the management of environmental resources in healthcare facilities, the data obtained are valid, and their empirical series meets the criteria of a normal distribution. Respondents consider that the attention of the CEOs of healthcare facilities to the management of environmental resources is insufficient. Awareness of the relationship between human activity and the quality of the environment is at a high level. Information about the quality of environmental resource management in healthcare facilities is important, but not fully decisive for changing behavior when choosing a healthcare facility.

Further research is planned to be directed at the study of the components of environmental education of healthcare managers of Ukraine at the postgraduate level.

COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS

The study was conducted in accordance with ethical requirements, which is confirmed by the Conclusion (Protocols: No.6 from October 03, 2022; No.1/10-2023 from October 05, 2023) of the Ethics Commission of the Shupyk National Healthcare University of Ukraine.

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The Authors declare no conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Turianytsia S. M. – work concept and design, data collection and analysis, writing the article, responsibility for statistical analysis; Yurochko T. P. – critical review, final approval of the article; Balashov K. V. – work concept and design, data collection and analysis, critical review; Hulchiy O. P. – critical review, final approval of the article.

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Резюме

ОБІЗНАНІСТЬ ТА ЗАЦІКАВЛЕНІСТЬ МЕШКАНЦІВ ХАРКІВСЬКОЇ ОБЛАСТІ В СТАЛОСТІ ЗАКЛАДІВ ОХОРОНИ ЗДОРОВ'Я

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Мета. Показати рівень зацікавленості та обізнаності мешканців Харківської області щодо управління відходами, якістю повітря та водними ресурсами в закладах охорони здоров'я.
Матеріали та методи. Адаптована версія інструменту оцінки поведінкових чинників ВООЗ була використана для рандомізованого опитування 2114 респондентів. Результати опитування оброблено програмним забезпеченням jamovi v. 2.3, що розповсюджується на правах відкритого доступу, методами описової статистики.
Результати. Екологізація закладів охорони здоров'я – це часто відповідь на запит суспільства. Громадська зацікавленість та обізнаність в управлінні екологічними ресурсами в закладах охорони здоров'я були предметом цього дослідження. Було проаналізовано відповіді на три запитання з блоку екологічного здоров'я, а саме: можливий вплив управління екологічними ресурсами на внутрішнє середовище закладу охорони здоров'я; вибору закладу охорони здоров'я, спираючись на інформацію про управління екологічними ресурсами в закладах охорони здоров'я; думка про рівень уваги керівників закладів охорони здоров'я до управління екологічними ресурсами. Отримані відповіді було згруповано відповідно до типу місця проживання, рівня освіти, наявності хронічних захворювань та місця роботи (в залежності від приналежності до сфери охорони здоров'я).
Висновки. Мешканці Харківської області мають високий рівень обізнаності в екологічних питаннях та зацікавленості в моніторингу управління екологічними ресурсами в закладах охорони здоров'я. Вони відзначають недостатню увагу керівників закладів охорони здоров'я до управління екологічними ресурсами у ввірених їм закладах. Обізнаність щодо зв'язку людської діяльності та якості середовища – на високому рівні. Важливою для них є інформація щодо якості управління екологічними ресурсами в закладах охорони здоров'я.

Ключові слова: **управління закладом охорони здоров'я, методи дослідження, заклади охорони здоров'я, система охорони здоров'я, ресурси закладу охорони здоров'я**