



Study on the Current Situation, Problems and Development Path of Medical Accompaniment Service in China

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Abstract. Based on the background of “Great Health” and the pain point of “difficult to see a doctor”, institutions and professions serving public health and medicine have emerged. As a new business form, medical accompaniment service has boarded the voyage of this new era of development. Medical accompaniment service is committed to high-quality accompany service provision for patients and medical channels’ dredge, which can reduce the physical hardness that cannot be overcome in medical treatment. At present, the accompanying diagnosis industry is in its initial stage. Although some results have been achieved, the development speed is relatively slow, and many disadvantages are gradually emerging that leads to the dilemma of development and equilibrium. This article first analyzes the current situation and problems of the development of accompanying medical service, then provides exploratory suggestions for its better development.

Keywords: Medical accompaniment service · accompanying physician · development path · accompanying institutions

1 Introduction

The concept of “great health” was put forward accompanying service’s further development to build a good social atmosphere. The issue of “healthy China 2030” provides a powerful policy support for strengthening key crowd in health service meanwhile promotes healthy ageing and maintains a healthy person for disability. The re-emergence of accompanying service not only contributes to the continuous solution of the social problem of “difficult to see a doctor, expensive to see a doctor”, but also relieves the burden of medical institutions. In the competitive market of this industry named empty-nesters, persons are all important demand singles who are labeled by single-parent families, pregnant women or working in other places. Our country is entering aging society, which is marked by lack of the related services, intergenerational contradictions.

2 Development of Medical Accompaniment Service

2.1 Development History of Medical Accompaniment Service

According to relevant data and papers, the medical accompaniment service has been on the historical stage. The word “accompaniment service” first appeared in print in 2001.

The report described an elderly man who successfully finished a medical appointment with the assistance of an escort. The medical accompaniment service first appeared in the public eye in 2003, and it ushered in a tiny wave of brief development in 2015. Several O2O companion firms received funding during this period [1], but they vanished within one or two years and subsequently expired. The reasons were as follows: public demand at the time was severely insufficient; corporate awareness and recognition were insufficient; publicity was tough; national policy did not provide adequate assistance, and the firm could not make ends meet. In 2021, the new business form of accompanying service and accompanying physicians has returned to the public's eye thanks to the promotion and exposure of new media.

2.2 Current Situation of Medical Accompaniment Service

Medical accompaniment service is an emerging industry that demands accompaniments which has both basic medical knowledge and professional ethics to satisfy people's varied and high-level needs. China has entered the moderate aging stage during the 14th Five-Year Plan period, and owing to the "smart divide", population aging and the associated health concerns have become a widespread worry in society. At the same time, pregnant women, people with impairments, people who travel to different locations for medical care, and single moms require medical escort services urgently. However, organizations providing medical accompaniment services are currently only located in cities with abundant medical resources, such as Beijing, Hangzhou, and Xi'an, and medical accompaniment services in other regions remain underdeveloped, with only 26,000 people searching for "medical accompaniment" on applications in the previous year [2]. The accompaniment service's attractiveness as a low-frequency offering has to be increased.

3 Problems Existing in Medical Accompaniment Service

3.1 Problems in the Demand for Accompanying Service

As a low-frequency just-in-time service offering, the consumers it serves fall into three categories: puzzled; familiar with the information but did not purchase it; and comprehending but experiencing the service. People who are perplexed account for the majority of them and many have never heard of them. The majority of orders are based on the introduction of acquaintances, making it difficult to break the circle. People who know about information but do not purchase it are skeptical about service quality, overpaying, privacy protection, individualized service, and other factors. Consumers who understand and use the service have both positive and negative feedback. The negative remarks mostly address the gap between the service and the expectation; the consultant's professional knowledge is not dependable; professional skills are not flawless; the cost input is not equal to the return, and cost performance is not high.

3.2 Problems in the Supply of Accompanying Services

Existing medical accompanying service suppliers in China are fewer personnel and institutions, insufficient to cover much of the city. Personalized service quality varies problems such as insufficient. The unique performance is that there are many part-time accompanying physicians, the nanny service provided by the housekeeping center, basic medical treatment advice and help, and the small program functions of the individual accompanying institutions are mixed. The service attitude of some accompanying physicians lacks warmth or lacks a sense of social duty and professional ethics. The vast majority of institutions are new ventures with insufficient funding and are not yet profitable. To avoid losing money, there is hostile rivalry, price gouging, arbitrary charges, and other phenomena that contribute to supply confusion, public misunderstanding, and societal prejudice.

3.3 Problems in Market Connection of Medical Accompanying Service

A wall of information separates the supply and demand sides of the related medicine sector. Because the entrance hurdle is low, numerous lawbreakers will take advantage of the opportunity to participate, complicating the industry's development. Some "scalpers," for example, promise to help patients gain the expert number, navigate the green channel, and complete the operation under the supervision of the accompanying physician [3]. Their presence disturbs the market, distorts the notion of duties, rights, and obligations of the accompanying physician, and harms the image of the accompanying physician and the establishment of the accompanying institution's reputation. Many businesses engage in destructive pricing competition, luring patients through unorthodox channels and causing market upheaval. The agreement between the rights and obligations of patients and accompanying physicians is ambiguous, which leads to frequent arguments between the two sides.

3.4 Problems in Supporting Policies of Accompanying Service

At the moment, important institutions and departments are severely under investing in the growth of this industry, relying on the "invisible hand" of the market while neglecting to actively play the role of the other "physical hand" in support, direction, regulation, and limitation. There is no relevant and perfect policy support for the industry's access, requirements, and standards; there is no clear regulation on the charging standards, service quality, rights and obligations, and other aspects necessary for the industry's development; and there is no effective agreement and regulation on the skills, behaviors, and responsibilities of relevant practitioners. The relevant supervisory departments are extremely deficient in their oversight of the sector, their ability to control the chaos it causes, and their ability to safeguard the rights and interests of victims, which leads to the phenomenon that many customers are reluctant to attempt.

4 The Development Path of Medical Accompanying Service in China

4.1 Stimulate Demand of Accompanying Services

To increase their influence, accompanying service institutions should fully stimulate demand and improve their development level. In light of the current misunderstandings or unheard of the masses, agencies can use new media to spread propaganda like We-Chat, with the help of a platform for its development power, broadening the scope of the accompanying information dissemination. Accompanying institutions' work with hospitals to strengthen accompanying physicians' familiarity with hospitals, satisfy patients' medical requirements. Simultaneously, accompanying institutions and community-based medical institutions can serve more people in need, to achieve accompanying service grass-roots level, increase trust, and expand popularity. After the service, service evaluation channels should be established to establish benign interaction with consumers, complete information transmission, and emotional contact to continuously make up for deficiencies, improve the reputation of the accompanying service, and broaden the popularity.

4.2 Improve Professional Degree of Medical Accompanying Institutions

In the process of medical treatment, ordinary patients can't master comprehensive professional knowledge [4]. The accompanying institutions should clarify their position, develop personalized programs for consumers to remove social barriers for patients. Medical institutions should clearly define responsibility and obligation. Accompanying physician' rights and duties should be explained; their service concept should be enhanced; patients' and customers' privacy should not be tampered with or leaked, and permission forms or informed letters for related medical projects should not be signed on behalf of their families. To raise awareness of pertinent regulations and to internalize the professional principles of honoring, caring for, and respecting the elderly. To foster love, patience, responsibility and empathy, as well as practitioners' sense of social duty, the contribution of alleviating China's current condition of challenging medical treatment is necessary.

4.3 Government's Focus Moves Further to Pave the Way for Its Development

To aid the orderly growth of new industries and vocations, we should not wait until everything is in place before beginning to standardize and control, but rather proceed as needed [3]. Because this business is still in its infancy, it is critical to establish a realistic and moderate threshold, as well as to balance the link between market demands and industry quality. Create an industry-related qualification examination system, assess and record practitioners, and carry out correct management and supervision in the future development process. The hard skills and professional accompanying physicians require inner quality standardization and unification of accompanying service charge standards to carry out all activities within the industry and process constraints and management. The scope of power and obligation between consumers and accompanying physician's

clear rules paves the way for the development of the medical industry and forms a good paradigm to support the industry's development.

4.4 Mobilize Favorable Social Resources to Achieve the Role of “Visible Hand”.

The government should fully mobilize all favorable social resources for the development of the new mode of medical accompaniment service, under the requirements of the 14th Five-Year Plan of insisting on innovation-driven development and shaping new advantages in development. Encourage capable medical institutions to take the lead in establishing medical accompaniment services and open up channels of communication between medical schools, nursing colleges, and medical institutions to organize internships for nursing and students. The government can make some tax and fee discounts [5]. The government might also invite relevant companies, such as the insurance industry, to join the collaboration. The relevant departments should design the evaluation and assessment system approach to limit and regulate their conduct. Regular assessment, timely regulation furthermore to effectively protect the consumer's power and privacy. At the same time, it is critical to correctly address problems and inconsistencies between the accompanying parties and attending parties and to make every effort to defend both parties' rights and interests. To clamp down on hostile competition, arbitrary pricing, and market disruption, so that the “visible hand” play a strong role in supervision.

5 Conclusion

The medical accompaniment service is tailored to The Times' requirements and alleviates social issues against the backdrop of “great health” and the pain point of “difficult to see a doctor, tough to visit a doctor.” This study highlights the present state associated with the service and makes exploratory proposals for further research. For accompanying service popularity, lack of policy support, the current situation of the management and supervision system is not sound, in the face of accompanying service contact surface is insufficient, low service satisfaction, and the market information asymmetry problem, etc., medical institutions should stimulate demand to provide professional services and personalized solutions to increase consumers' trust and satisfaction. The focus should be shifted from the government level to guide development; social resources should be mobilized to provide support and encouragement; relevant policies and regulations should be formulated; evaluation and supervision systems should be improved; and a social environment conducive to the development of accompanying services should be formed to promote the faster, better, and higher development of medical accompaniment service quality.

6 Foundation Projects

(1) Shaanxi Provincial Social Science Foundation Project: Construction and Governance of the Ecosystem of Rural Laborers Returning to Entrepreneurship in the Context of Rural Revitalization (2020D005) (2) Shaanxi Provincial Education Science “13th Five-Year

Plan” Project: Research on the Ecological Construction of Returning Migrant Workers’ Entrepreneurship Training in the Context of Rural Revitalization (SGH20Y1184) (2022.9 Report, Thesis) (3) Shaanxi Provincial Department of Education 2021 Key Research Program Project (New Think Tank Project): Research on the realization path of Chinese medicine helping rural revitalization (21JT015) (2022.12) (810290616) (4) Shaanxi Provincial Science and Technology Plan Project: Study on the Construction of Innovation Ecosystem and Governance Mechanism of Shaanxi Traditional Chinese Medicine Industry in the Context of Rural Revitalization (2022KRM095).

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