

# Human Resources in Medical Organizations in the Republic of Kazakhstan

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## Abstract

**Background:** During two decades, Kazakhstan has been conducting various reforms, and specifically in the healthcare sector, which inherited the Soviet Union system. Timely implementation of governmental programs depends on the human resources (HR) potential opportunities. One of the main dimensions of healthcare system development is planning and establishing HR, based on the healthcare needs and requirements. National observatory of HR in health care was established for the realization of healthcare system development. The research that we had been conducted is dedicated for providing evaluation and assessment of the present HR performance and activity in healthcare organizations of the Republic of Kazakhstan. **Aim:** The aim of this research is to present critical evaluation and assessment of the present HR activities in healthcare organizations of the Republic of Kazakhstan. **Result and Discussion:** On analysis of research data, it was found out that there is an extreme need in elaboration and development of the HR institution capacity in Republic of Kazakhstan. Second, power base and establishment of the national observatory of HR in health care in Republican center for development can be mentioned as an upward trend. **Conclusion:** There is a demand in conducting professional training among HR managers in the perspective of providing talent pipeline for medical organizations and implementation of professional development programs HR in medical organizations.

**Key words:** Human resource management, Kazakhstan, motivation in health care, performance of healthcare services

## INTRODUCTION

During two decades, Kazakhstan has been conducting various reforms, and specifically in the healthcare sector, which inherited the Soviet Union system. Timely implementation of governmental programs depends on the human resources (HR) potential opportunities. The question of the proper professional background and qualification of the management in healthcare organizations, and companies providing services in HR development becomes extremely important when making decisions in the management of the medical staff, their direct activities in the formation of high-quality HR potential of medical and nursing staff. The majority of studies proved that HR management plays an essential role in the quality of healthcare services development and improves the functioning of healthcare personnel by means of creation motivational

and incentives system and tools, as well as a system of bonuses for competence.<sup>[1,2]</sup>

Nowadays, the majority of researchers confirm the connection between the efficient work of HR management and productivity of the medical organization.<sup>[3-5]</sup>

E. Denisova-Schmidt noted that there are two different categories of professionals in Kazakhstan: One with previous professional experience in the Soviet Union (or in today's large Russian corporations that still retain elements of the Soviet corporate culture) and another - modern generation.

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Both groups have different expectations from their employers and different understanding of the job, motivation to work, and retention factors.<sup>[6]</sup>

Thus, HR planning system became one of the main directions in the development of the healthcare system<sup>[7]</sup> based on healthcare needs HR planning system is the key factor in resource-saving technologies implementation process. The creation of high-quality HR management is of particular importance. National observatory of HR in health care was established for realization of this task.<sup>[8]</sup>

The aim of this research is to present critical evaluation and assessment of the present HR activities in healthcare organizations of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

## METHODS

We developed a questionnaire based on a literature review. The key words are HR, capital, HR management, and candidate pool. Working group has generated two types of questionnaire with differentiated questions. The first questionnaire was dedicated for estimation and studies the opinion among staff of medical organizations (doctors, nurses, and other personnel – group 1) of the question of HR performance and functioning. The second questionnaire was dedicated for HR personnel in medical organizations (group 2). First, the surveys were tested among three medical organizations and also examined by two independent reviewers. The application of tested surveys was approved by Republican center for healthcare development.

Respondents were asked to select the most appropriate option for their opinion regarding the asked question. The survey was conducted anonymously using online Survey Monkey program. There is online database of addresses within the Republican center for healthcare development that was being used during research.

The survey was conducted in the second quarter of 2016. The participation in this survey was confidential and voluntary. We have conducted a sociological survey among 6143 people of the 1<sup>st</sup> group, as well as 652 employees from the 2<sup>nd</sup> group from 16 regions of Kazakhstan. Our study involved different representatives of almost all types of healthcare organizations in Kazakhstan. Types of medical organizations and the quantity of participants are represented in Table 1. There is high percentage of the respondents represented by organizations which provide inpatient care, general medical practice, as well as inpatient clinics with outpatient department [Table 1]. The analysis and data processing were performed using the specialized data processing SPSS statistical software.

**Table 1:** List of organizations took part in survey

Type of health organization	Abs. (%)	
	Group 1	Group 2
Organizations providing outpatient care	1191 (19.4)	158 (24.2)
Organizations providing inpatient care	1954 (31.8)	125 (19.2)
Organizations providing outpatient care and inpatient care	1580 (25.7)	195 (29.9)
Organizations emergency medical services and medical aviation	426 (6.9)	11 (1.7)
Organizations of rehabilitation treatment and medical rehabilitation	134 (2.2)	16 (2.5)
Organizations carrying out activities in the field of blood services	141 (2.3)	13 (2.0)
Scientific organizations and educational institutions in the sphere of healthcare	-	22 (3.4)
National funds	-	4 (0.6)
Healthcare management organizations	-	66 (10.1)
Organizations of the private health sector, working on a voluntary insurance scheme	717 (11.7)	42 (6.4)
<b>Total</b>	<b>6143 (100)</b>	<b>652 (100)</b>

## RESULTS

We have deduced that the majority of the 1<sup>st</sup> group - 57.0% of respondents believe that their career depends on the decision of the head, at the same time, the business and organizational competences and attitude to work are also taken into account. However, 23% of the employees of the 1<sup>st</sup> group do not know what determines their career growth.

Fifty three (4%) of the respondents made a point that employee turnover rate is mostly average, 8.3% of employees are willing to change jobs, in case of getting satisfying working conditions such as salary and position. 25.4% of the 1<sup>st</sup> group are ready to change their workplace [Table 2]. Employees of the HR department, respondents of the 2<sup>nd</sup> group noted the presence of internal personnel reserve and 32.1% and 38.8% found it difficult to answer [Figure 1].

Forty seven (4%) of the 1<sup>st</sup> group respondents stated that work and process efficiency of the HR departments depends on the application of new technologies in their work [Table 2]. However, 34 (3%) of respondents of the 1<sup>st</sup> group pointed that the level of HR department is moderate, but still requires improvement in its efficiency

**Table 2: Opinion of the 1<sup>st</sup> group of respondents about HR department in medical organizations**

<b>Career development in medical organizations</b>	<b>N (%)</b>
Career depends on the decision of the head, at the same time, the business and organizational competences and attitude to work are also taken into account	3500 (57.0)
Career does not depend on the decision of the head, at the same time, the business and organizational competences and attitude to work are also taken into account	642 (10.5)
Based on the results of the commission	549 (8.9)
Was not interested/do not know	1411 (23.0)
Other opinion	41 (0.7)
Turnover rate of the medical staff in medical organization	
Low	2139 (34.8)
Average	3281 (53.4)
High	723 (11.8)
How much are you willing to change your workplace	
Looking for a new job	516 (8.3)
Did not think, but if there will be offers with better conditions, I will consider them	1561 (25.4)
No, I am not intended to change workplace and there is no reason for that	3341 (54.3)
Difficult to answer	676 (11.2)
Other	49 (0.8)
Total	6143 (100)
How do you assess the work of HR department of your organization?	
HR managers are performing well and applying new technologies in their work	2913 (47.4)
HR managers are working moderately and there is a need to improve their efficiency	2105 (34.3)
HR department does not work in a right direction and does not apply new technologies	321 (5.2)
I do not know/was not interested in that	784 (12.8)
Other (specify)	20 (0.3)

HR: Human resource

**Table 3: Appropriate mechanisms of formation of personnel potential**

<b>Answer options</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>More likely no, rather than yes</b>	<b>Difficult to answer</b>	<b>More likely yes, rather than no</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Total</b>
Engaging college graduates (non-medical), providing training HR managers	53 (8.1)	40 (6.1)	134 (20.5)	95 (14.5)	206 (31.5)	528 (80.9)
Implementing training programs for HR managers in the healthcare field in the domestic medical institutions/universities	29 (4.4)	29 (4.4)	85 (13.0)	109 (16.7)	303 (46.4)	555 (85.1)
The introduction of training programs in the field of HR management in the field of public health	20 (3.0)	18 (2.7)	75 (11.5)	107 (16.4)	342 (52.4)	562 (86.1)

HR: Human resource

[Table 2]. At the same time, 52 (4%) from the 2<sup>nd</sup> group consider the implementation of HR management professional development programs in the sphere of health care is essential and feasible [Table 3]. 46 (4%) consider the best solution is to implement HR management professional development programs in local medical universities and 31 (5%) presume on engaging recent

graduates from non-medical universities, mostly of HR management specialization to provide their services in HR development [Table 3]. It was also conducted that 55 (2%) of the respondents from the 2<sup>nd</sup> group are attending professional development courses in institutes that are not of medical specificity and other 54 (6%) in specialized medical institutions [Figure 2].

Table 4: Criterion of the level of satisfaction of respondents in

Answer options	Satisfied		More likely satisfied, rather than no		Difficult to answer		More likely not satisfied, rather than yes		Not satisfied	
	1 <sup>st</sup> group	2 <sup>nd</sup> group	1 <sup>st</sup> group	2 <sup>nd</sup> group	1 <sup>st</sup> group	2 <sup>nd</sup> group	1 <sup>st</sup> group	2 <sup>nd</sup> group	1 <sup>st</sup> group	2 <sup>nd</sup> group
Wage/salary	2925 (47.6)	233 (35.7)	925 (15.0)	109 (16.7)	428 (6.9)	58 (8.8)	682 (11.1)	120 (18.4)	819 (13.3)	97 (14.8)
Working time	4224 (68.7)	476 (73.0)	834 (13.2)	74 (11.3)	220 (3.5)	15 (2.3)	244 (3.9)	34 (5.2)	161 (2.6)	20 (3.0)
Compliance of personal abilities	4317 (70.2)	449 (68.8)	735 (11.9)	85 (13.0)	294 (4.7)	41 (6.2)	148 (2.4)	15 (2.3)	66 (1.0)	13 (1.9)
Career growth opportunities	3358 (54.6)	279 (42.7)	729 (11.8)	76 (11.6)	812 (13.2)	132 (20.2)	216 (3.5)	35 (5.3)	298 (4.8)	51 (7.8)
Sanitary conditions	4382 (71.3)	476 (73.0)	634 (10.3)	54 (8.2)	170 (2.7)	19 (2.9)	160 (2.6)	23 (3.5)	135 (2.1)	21 (3.2)
The level of organization of labor	4094 (66.6)	452 (69.3)	784 (12.7)	76 (11.6)	268 (4.3)	35 (5.3)	213 (3.4)	20 (3.0)	136 (2.2)	15 (2.3)
Relationships with colleagues	4750 (77.3)	532 (81.5)	561 (9.1)	58 (8.8)	128 (2.0)	17	90 (1.4)	10	39 (0.6)	15
Relationships with management	4549 (74.0)	508 (77.9)	593 (9.6)	55 (8.4)	218 (3.5)	32	102 (1.6)	30	76 (1.2)	26
The level of technical equipment	3637 (59.2)	419 (64.2)	826 (13.4)	72	327 (5.3)	14	338 (5.5)	38	323 (5.2)	37

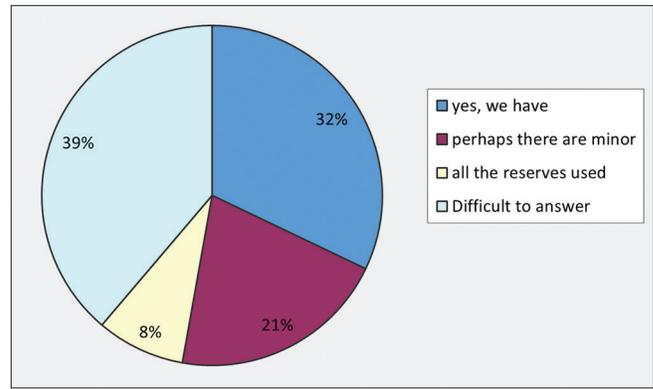


Figure 1: Internal personnel reserve (2<sup>nd</sup> group)

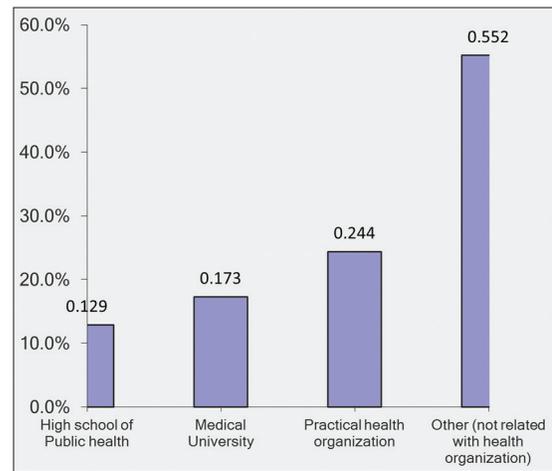


Figure 2: Organizations that are training the respondents from the group 2

Currently, only 47 (6%) respondents from the 1<sup>st</sup> group and 35 (7%) from the 2<sup>nd</sup> group are satisfied with their wages and the possibility of career growth Table 4.

## DISCUSSION

In medical organizations, not all employees are aware of the career opportunities and types of motivation to apply for providing better quality medical care in healthcare organizations. Only 10% of respondents noted the possibility of creating a competitive commission based on objective criteria. At present, duties of HR department include: HR administration, consulting employees on various HR issues, reception, translation, and dismissal of employees. Participation in the development of job descriptions, planning the staffing needs for a short- and long-term period, development of the motivation system, organization of trainings, educational seminars, professional development training courses, the creation of a personnel reserve, monitoring of the labor market, informing the management of the company about the current market situation with the labor and the average wage, monitoring, and evaluation of individual performance of the personnel, development of corporate culture.

A third of the respondents of the 1<sup>st</sup> group are not satisfied with their daily activities and in the case of better conditions are ready to change their place of work, moreover more than 65% of the healthcare organizations does not have the talent pool or personnel reserve. It is also important that 38.8% of the 2<sup>nd</sup> group is not informed about the personnel reserve in their organization. That is a big risk for the medical organizations representing aid for the population; organizations have a risk of failure timely provided medical care. Satisfaction regarding the wage rate and career growth factors is very low in both groups, which could be probably caused by the absence of motivation mechanisms for improvement that is also comprise the risk for healthcare organizations.<sup>[9]</sup> In the framework of the state program of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Densaulyk, proposed governmental - private partnership is contemplated as a tool for the development a competitive medicine. In this regard, it is important to take into account the role of motivation of HR development, which is an integral part of the productivity of the medical organizations.

## CONCLUSION

Nowadays, the HR department requires the improvement of working processes and motivational instruments, as well as implementation of new educational programs. Lack of motivation among the HR managers becomes a risk factor for stagnation and suspension of the development of capacity in this sector, resulting in the incapability of the implementation of innovation and resource-efficient technologies in the medical organization.

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