PT1

The three environmental factors:

**Consumer Income**:  This environmental factor is one of the most important factors when considering marketing for the medical practice because it helps understand the socioeconomic group that we will be marketing to. Organizations should be knowledgeable about their consumers because it will help them market themselves in a way to attract patients. This can shape the organization into marketing aspects about the practice that are affordable to the people around them. There is no need to market about aspects the general area cannot afford.

**Health Care Competition:** The medical group should do our research on the health care competition that is located around us. This factor strongly affects the way that our organization should market.  The organization should also be knowledgeable of the services and costs of services with other healthcare competitors to stand out against the competition.  The organization can market better offers and market about the quality of the services as well as the costs.

**Demographic:**The patients in the general area of the practice are most likely going to be the people who see the advertisements and also become patients of the practice. While advertising it is not only important to know the patients income around the practice but also demographic do they fall under. Examples of this could be a higher elderly population, or a college town. This shifts the way the advertising will be distributed and what content will be advertised. The services that are being advertised can be shown in a way to attract a certain population such as mentioned before the elderly population.

Pt2

For any healthcare organization, attracting and keeping patients returning can be a challenge partially due to financial or insurance obligations, types of injuries and diseases, and the specific demographical regions the patients live and work in.  However, until there is a cure for death and or disease, patients will continue to utilize the services of healthcare organizations for generations to come. Exploring and understanding environmental factors while conducting a marketing effort to attract more patients is detrimental in allowing an organization the ability to accomplish this type of task. Below are three topics I believe are important environmental factors if an organization is inquiring on how to expand their practice as well as attracting more patients.

**Technological Factors**

            Technological advances continue to shape the healthcare field each year due to research and development. Technology refers to innovations or inventions from applied science and research (Berkowitz, 2017) and healthcare institutes continuously try and keep up with these types of advances. Sometimes, medical organizations are faced with the financial obligations from previous equipment purchases and service contracts overall preventing the advances from being implemented.  This ultimately can be labeled as an environmental factor because in today’s society, the advances in technology continue to shape the methods we as healthcare workers treat our patients. By not having the most up-to-date equipment, this can sometimes lead to a decrease in the number of patrons who utilize the services of the medical facility and can lead to marketing failure. I chose this factor because a business must maintain a sense of commitment to the technological advances in their designated occupation and in the healthcare field because these advances can determine how efficiently patients are treated based on their condition or symptoms. Technology continues to play a vital role in the healthcare marketing role because our ability to store, share and analyze health information is directly tied to improved technology. Furthermore, by maintaining technological advances, provider capabilities are amplified further evolving patient access. This causes overall improvement in the quality of life for some and saving the life for others.

**Economic Factors**

            One of the most important environmental factors in an organization marketing effort is cost. In the United States, health care costs are constantly on the rise based on patient demand and a decrease in available providers and services. Towards the end of the decade, health care will be around 20% of the nation’s gross domestic product (Berkowitz, 2017) and patients will continue to seek out organizations who comply with healthcare insurance plans as well as provide goods and services at lower costs. Those who have a higher gross income can afford healthcare costs based on the amount they earn annually. However, those that have a lower gross income are sometimes forced to use state or government insurances that many health care organizations recognize but not necessarily always accept. This puts the patient in a predicament and in some cases, the patient fails to get the treatment or services necessary to cure or suppress their ailments. Then there is the population percentage who cannot afford health care all together and rarely utilize the medical services offered. This is because of the pricing and their available funding for these costs. I chose this environmental factor because in the US, there are millions of citizens whom rarely seek medical guidance unless deathly ill or in an emergency situation. If a healthcare organization is wanting to address the concept of attracting more patients, then they may want to hypothesize on the idea of taking all forms of insurance both governments funded and personal. Regardless of one’s economic and financial status, health care is essential for everyone and looking at cost for a marketing effort, any medical institute has to understand that all people, regardless of their personal funding would actively utilize the provided medical services if they could afford it. This goes for all types of care especially woman and baby well-checks, preventive medicine, and vaccinations.

**Regulatory Factors**

 Most hospitals in the US fully abide by local, state, and government regulations. Yet, a vast majority of hospitals and treatment facilities are not complying with pertinent data needed by patients to view the costs associated with their care. Although federal institutes offer valuable data that allows patients to see what costs are associated with the services offered, many smaller organizations operate without fully providing the costs prior to administering their services. In most cases, the patients who do not have the access to the data are forced to utilize the medical organizations goods and services post care and are left with large bills. The transparency data is crucial in opening up opportunities for an organization to expand. If a specific organization openly provides their costs for services, then the patients can determine if they will utilize that specific organization. Also, if an organization does not provide the specific data for pricing, then the patient may want to explore their options in the methods they require medical care. Patients of all demographical backgrounds should be awarded the ability to see reviews on the goods and services being rendered by past patients and without “yellow tape” preventing them from the opportunity of shopping around for their care. I chose this environmental factor because if a medical organization is inquiring about attracting more patients, then the pricing, staff evaluations, past experiences with other patients, and provider information should be made public. This way, the organization can adapt to the demands of future patients and correct the deficiencies of past patients. This concept may overall increase the marketing effort by the medical organization and provide an opportunity for attracting more patrons to utilize its services.

Reference:

Berkowitz, E. N. (2017). *Essentials of Health Care Marketing 4th Edition.* Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.