

Growing without losing trust - a new model shows the way

Axel Natt och Dag & Carl Carlberg

How can a private healthcare company grow without losing its legitimacy amongst its patients, regulators, or employees? This master's thesis has developed a model showing that the answer is not choosing between care, profit or rules, but satisfying all three at once.

Sweden's psychiatric care system struggles with long waiting times. Thousands of patients wait for months or even years for an ADHD or autism assessment, despite Sweden's healthcare guarantee stating that specialist care should be provided within 90 days. This has created a major gap in the market, and private clinics are growing to meet that demand. However, their situation is slightly different compared to public care: they must make money, maintain high clinical quality, and follow strict regulatory requirements at the same time, without giving up on any of them.

THE CASE

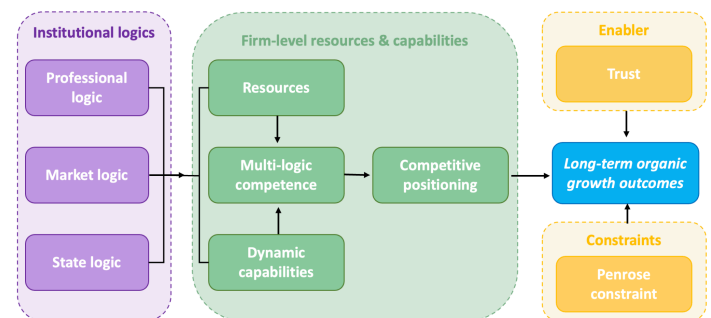
How does one solve that? That is the question we investigated through a case study of Nova Psykiatri, a Swedish clinic specialising in neuropsychiatric assessments. Through 16 interviews, ranging from founders to clinicians, we mapped how a company can grow organically, meaning without acquiring competitors, in an industry with extremely high demands on legitimacy.

FINDINGS

Our main result is a model showing that the most successful strategies are not about balancing care, profit and regulation against each other. They are about finding solutions that satisfy all three simultaneously. One concrete example: the clinic publishes clinically reviewed articles about ADHD that patients find through Google. The same article works as health information, marketing, and regulation-compliant health communication, all at once. None of the three demands is sacrificed for the others.

THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL

These findings come together in a conceptual model of how organic growth happens in regulated healthcare. It starts with three institutional logics that any private clinic must answer to at once: a professional logic (clinical quality), a market logic (revenue and competitiveness), and a state logic (regulation and oversight). These logics shape the resources and capabilities a firm builds, and the firms that succeed are those that develop what we call multi-logic competence. This is the ability to deploy those resources in ways that satisfy all three logics simultaneously rather than trading them off. This competence enables a strong competitive position, which in turn drives organic growth. Two forces then shape how fast that growth can happen. Trust acts as an accelerator, turning clinical quality into patient recommendations and market acceptance. The Penrose constraint acts as a brake, limiting growth to the pace at which clinical expertise can be passed on to new staff.



The developed conceptual model

THE KEY INSIGHT

The underlying logic is not unique to psychiatric care. Any private business operating in a market shaped by professional standards, public funding, and strict regulation faces the same three-way pull between quality, profit, and compliance. The key insight is that this pull is not a “constraint to manage”. It can be turned into a competitive advantage. For founders and managers in these industries, the lesson is to stop treating quality, profit, and compliance as competing priorities, and instead look for the activities that can genuinely serve all three at once.