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**DEVELOPMENT OF A TOOL  
TO MEASURE SERVICE QUALITY,  
FROM THE PATIENTS' PERSPECTIVES,  
IN A NEW ZEALAND PUBLIC HOSPITAL.  
IS SERVQUAL THE ANSWER?**

A thesis submitted to the Institute of Technology and Engineering, Massey University,  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of  
Master of Philosophy.

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## Abstract

The measurement of service quality, using a two part customer questionnaire called SERVQUAL, has been described in the literature by a number of authors. The model itself, was developed from research conducted in the credit card, long distance telephone, banking, repair and maintenance service industries.

The model utilises a technique called disconfirmation which is a measure of the gap between similar components of the two questionnaires that the customers receive. For this project, it is a measure of the difference between the perception and the expectation of the service that elective surgical patients received at a provincial public hospital.  
i.e. Service Quality = perception - expectation.

The basis for this project has been the Tomes and Ng (1995) healthcare modification of the original SERVQUAL, which they used with some success, in a public hospital in England. The service quality was measured over a number of aspects of the service called dimensions. In this case there are eight dimensions, namely; Understanding of Illness, Relationship of Mutual Respect, Dignity, Empathy, Physical Environment, Food, Religious needs and Cultural needs. No evidence could be found of the application of the technique within the health sector in New Zealand.

This project has attempted to assess the usefulness of this disconfirmation based technique, as a measure service quality, from the patients point of view, in a provincial hospital in New Zealand.

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy at Massey University.

It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

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.....  
(Name of candidate)

..... *20* ..... day of ..... *December* ..... 2000.

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