

Medical Tourism In India

Mrs. Anjali Daniel Chatterton¹ and M. Usman Danawala²

Sr. Lecturer¹ and Student²

Anjuman-I-Islam's Institute of Hospitality Management, Mumbai, India

Abstract: *The practice of visiting outside one's home nation to obtain medical treatment is known as medical tourism. The media, scholars, and policymakers are taking notice of the growing trend of medical tourism. The phrase originally described the movement of patients seeking therapies unavailable in their own countries to more industrialized countries.*

Keywords: Medical Tourism, India, Treatment, Therapies.

I. INTRODUCTION

India is currently regarded as one of the top 6 medically worthwhile travel destinations worldwide and has become a major hub for medical tourism in recent years. That's all there is to know about it. The practice of visiting outside one's home nation to obtain medical treatment is known as medical tourism. The media, scholars, and policymakers are taking notice of the growing trend of medical tourism. The phrase originally described the movement of patients seeking therapies unavailable in their own countries to more industrialized countries. The fact that patients frequently remain in foreign nations following medical procedures is what properly qualifies the term "tourism" in the context of medical tourism. Thus, visitors can make the most of their stay by going on day trips, sightseeing, or engaging in any other customary tourism activities.

The multibillion dollar phenomenon of medical tourism is anticipated to expand significantly over the next ten years. Cost is the primary determinant for the person considering medical services when deciding whether to seek care overseas. Due to the uncontrollably high prices of healthcare in the US and other countries, medical tourism has gained popularity among employers and insurance providers as a means of reducing expenditures. As more and more nations realize how lucrative this new market may be, they provide high-quality healthcare at significantly reduced costs. The main factor influencing developing country clinics' and hospitals' ability to reduce their costs is the economic standing of the country. The direct relationship between Costs is the primary determinant for the person considering medical services when deciding whether to seek care overseas. Most estimates found that treatment costs in India start at around one-tenth of the price of comparable treatment in the United States or the United Kingdom. The most popular treatments sought in India by medical tourists are alternative medicine, bone-marrow transplant, cardiac bypass, eye surgery, and hip replacement

Surgery costs are thus between 30% and 70% less expensive in the nations that are encouraging medical tourism. Patient mobility is changing both qualitatively and quantitatively today as more people migrate from industrialized to developing nations to receive medical care. The availability of inexpensive flights, the relative affordability of treatments in less developed countries, increasing marketing, and online consumer information about the availability of medical services are the main factors driving this movement.

In India, the travel healthcare industry is expanding. With the support of the government's Heal in India initiative, an estimated 2 million patients from 78 countries go to India annually for medical, wellness, and IVF treatments. The majority of medical patients who arrived in India in 2019 were from Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and the SAARC area, according to a research published by Ernst & Young and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry in 2019. A sizable number of medical patients from Australia, Canada, China, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States are also sent to India. Chennai has earned a reputation as India's centre for healthcare. In order to facilitate the travel procedure and promote applications for medical tourists, the government extended the scope of the e-tourism VISA program in February 2019. Six months is the longest stay allowed under this visa? With the exception of organ transplants, foreigners can obtain any medical care in India without a medical visa as

of August 30, 2019. In the last 10 years, India has established itself as a destination for medical tourists from all over the world seeking high quality care at reasonable price.

It is becoming one of the main draws for people to seek health and medical attention from all over the world. However, the number of medical tourists visiting during the COVID-19 epidemic had decreased due to travel limitations. Benefits of receiving medical care in India include lower costs, access to the newest technologies, compliance with international quality standards, doctors trained in western nations like the US and the UK, and staff who speak English, which makes it less likely that foreigners will experience language barriers in India.

Standard of care

There are 839 NABH-accredited hospitals in India. Finding the best doctor-hospital combo is crucial for a patient who is traveling to India. After receiving treatment, the patient might choose to recover in the hospital or in a nearby paid lodging facility. Additionally, a lot of hospitals offer telemedicine as a means of continuing the treatment. The phrase "India's health capital" has been used to Chennai. Approximately 150 international patients are admitted daily to the multi- and super-specialty hospitals in the city. Chennai receives over 45 percent of the world's medical tourists and 30 to 40 percent of domestic medical tourists annually

Low prices, short wait times, and amenities provided by the city's specialized hospitals are some of the reasons for the influx of tourists. Of the estimated 12,500 hospital beds in the city, only half are occupied by residents; the remaining beds are shared by patients from other states and international nationals. Dental care tourism has been drawn to Chennai by dental clinics.

Easily navigable

In an effort to encourage medical travel, the government has lifted limitations on tourist visas for citizens of Gulf countries, which previously required a two-month interval between successive visits. A 30-day medical stay for foreign citizens in India is permitted under a newly implemented visa-on-arrival program for visitors from specific nations. The majority of medical visas were obtained by citizens of Nigeria, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, the Maldives, and the Republic of Korea in 2016.

In upcoming years, medical travel is expected to increase for the following reasons:

- The Indian industry for medical tourism is currently valued at \$6 billion, and by 2026, it is projected to reach \$13 billion. From 2020 to 2027, the medical sector is projected to develop at a compound annual growth rate of 21.1%.
- A cardiac procedure in India only costs \$3,000 to 6,000, compared to the United States where it costs between \$40,000 and \$60,000.
- Additionally, medical value travel could account for 12–15% of the organized tertiary and quaternary market.

This is mostly due to the country's specific advantage of having access to all super-specialties, including organ transplantation. India's medical sector is strong due to the expertise of its doctors, nurses, and support workers as well as its cutting-edge infrastructure, which is on par with the best in the world. Since many doctors received their training overseas, language is not a barrier when interacting with patients from other countries. Great imaging and diagnostic services are offered in India for prices between a tenth and a fifth of those in the United States. The JCI (Joint Commission International) has accredited more than 35 hospitals around the country, guaranteeing quality, safety standards, and compliance with international criteria. Given its excellent infrastructure, highly skilled medical professionals, and superior results, India has a great chance to overtake other countries as the world's most popular medical tourism destination in the next years.

The Ministry of Tourism's initiatives to advance medical tourism

The following are some of the actions that the Ministry of Tourism has taken to market India as a destination for medical and health tourism:

On the recommendation of the government, the Indian Healthcare Federation, a non-governmental organization connected to the Confederation of Indian Industry, has created a guide on a few of the nation's Indian hospitals suitable for health tourism.

For further exposure, it has been posted on the Ministry of Tourism's website, www.incredibleindia.org.

The Ministry of Tourism has created brochures, CDs, and other promotional materials to encourage medical and health tourism, which have been extensively distributed to target audiences.

Specifically, medical and health tourism has been promoted on a number of worldwide platforms, including such as ITP Berlin, World Travel Mart in London, and others. □ A new "Medical Visa" category has been introduced, which can be granted for specific objective for foreign visitors seeking medical care in India

All State Governments have received guidelines for the accreditation of Panchkarma and Ayurvedic centres, which they are expected to implement. For increased exposure, these have been posted on the Ministry of Tourism's website, www.incredibleindia.org.

Under the Ministry of Tourism's "Incredible India Campaign," yoga, ayurveda, and wellness have been promoted over the past two years in print, electronic, online, and outdoor media. The Ministry of Tourism has also produced and widely distributed brochures and CDs on Body, Mind, and Soul that cover the traditional medical system.

II. CONCLUSION

With a projected market size of almost \$9 billion in 2019, India has established itself as the fifth-largest medical value travel destination worldwide. Support for the medical tourism industry, however, in the shape of new initiatives and incentives will be crucial to its post-COVID-19 recovery. The industry requires tax breaks, a reduction in import duties for medical equipment, the construction of infrastructure, particularly in the area of transportation, and collaboration between all important public and private players. We firmly believe that the country, with its value proposition of highly skilled clinicians, first-rate infrastructure, and superior results, has a great chance to emerge in the next years as the premier medical tourism destination worldwide. With the government of India's 'Heal in India' scheme, the medical tourism industry has completely recovered and is surely up for an unprecedented growth.

REFERENCES

- [1]. World Travel & Tourism Council. (2019). *MEDICAL TOURISM: A PRESCRIPTION FOR A HEALTHIER ECONOMY*. wttc.org
- [2]. Agnihotri. (2022, December 3). Medical Tourism in India: Top destinations, scenarios and all you need to know. *Hindustan Times*.
- [3]. Dr.TomislavMeštrović. (2018, August 23). *What is Medical Tourism?* news medical life sciences. Retrieved October 26, 2023,
- [4]. Neil Lunt, Richard Smith, Mark Exworthy, Stephen T. Green, Daniel Horsfall and Russell Mannion et al. (2018). *Medical Tourism: Treatments, Markets and Health System Implications: A scoping review*. OECD. <https://www.oecd.org/els/health-systems/48723982.pdf>
- [5]. World Travel & Tourism Council. (2019). *MEDICAL TOURISM: A PRESCRIPTION FOR A HEALTHIER ECONOMY*. wttc.org