

## PECULIARITIES OF MEDICAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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**ABSTRACT:** THE PAPER DEALS WITH THE QUESTION OF THE MODERN DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICAL TOURISM. MEDICAL TOURISM HAS COMPLETELY CHANGED THE CONCEPT OF THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM, MAKING IT MORE GLOBAL. AS IN ALL SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY THERE IS ALSO A HIGH LEVEL OF COMPETITION IN MEDICAL TOURISM, WHICH STIMULATES THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICINE IN THE WORLD, IMPROVES THE QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE AND PROMOTES THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN PUBLIC HEALTH CARE SERVICE. THE PAPER MAY BE USEFUL FOR PEOPLE INTERESTED IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM, MEDICINE.

**KEY WORDS:** MEDICAL TOURISM, TREATMENT, HEALTH CARE CENTERS, DEVELOPMENT, MEDICAL ASSISTANCE, NEW TECHNOLOGIES.

**MEDICAL** tourism - is a trend in the field of tourism, which allows combining medical treatment and rest abroad. Patients get professional medical care in the modern health care centers of worldwide reputation.

**MEDICAL** tourism is not a modern invention. Even in ancient times patients had to travel great distances to get adequate medical care from the best doctors. And in the days of Czarist Russia there was a fashion among the noble people to take the waters at a spa, most commonly in Germany or the Czech Republic. Today, medical tourism in Russia and the CIS is enjoying resurgence. Many people consider medical treatment abroad to be an actual alternative to the treatment in their native country. Trips to Europe, USA, and Asia for the diagnosis and treatment of diseases are becoming more popular. Medical tourism can be defined as the process of traveling outside the country of residence for the purpose of receiving medical care. Growth in the popularity of medical tourism has captured the attention of policy-makers, researchers and the media. Originally, the term referred to the travel of patients from less-developed countries to developed nations in pursuit of the treatments not available in their homeland.

**TODAY** we are experiencing both qualitative and quantitative shifts in patient mobility, as people travel from richer to less-developed countries in order to access health services. Such shift is mostly driven by the relative low-cost of treatments in less developed nations, the availability of inexpensive flights and increased marketing and online consumer information about the availability of medical services.

**WHAT** really puts the word "tourism" in medical tourism concept is that people often stay in the foreign country after the medical procedure. Travelers can thus take advantage of their visit by sightseeing, taking day trips or participating in any other traditional tourism activities. [1]

**MEDICAL** tourism represents a worldwide, multibillion-dollar phenomenon that is expected to grow considerably in the next decade. For the individual interested in health services, cost is the key factor involved in the decision to receive medical care abroad.

**AS** healthcare costs in the US and other parts of the world are excessively soaring, many employers and insurance companies started to view medical tourism as a way to lower them. More and more countries around the globe start to see the financial benefits from this emerging market, so they offer premium medical services at notably lower prices.

**THE** primary reason that clinics and hospitals in the developing countries are able to lower their prices is directly related to the nation's economic status. The direct correlation with per capita gross domestic product of the country is observed, which is a proxy for income levels. As a consequence, surgery prices are from 30% to 70% lower in the countries that are promoting medical tourism when compared to the US.

**EVERY** year tens of thousands of patients are choosing medical tourism. It is related to the fact that the treatment abroad is becoming increasingly accessible to a wide audience. Human nature stimulates people to choose the best for themselves and their relatives. Thanks to the development of medical tourism patients can get high-quality medical treatment in the best health care centers and hospitals in the world. An opportunity to address the medical specialists with the highest professional reputation is the main reason for taking the decision in favor of the medical treatment abroad. In addition, patients can be confident of the quality of service, reducing the time to diagnosis and treatment, and in many cases, the cost of treatment.

**TRADITIONALLY** Germany and Israel are the leaders in the field of medical tourism for people in Russia and the CIS countries. But this market is gradually expanded, and today among the popular destinations are Singapore, Turkey, Switzerland, France and other countries. Health care centers in Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and many others) are approaching the leaders. [2]

**THE** modern development of medical tourism has completely changed the concept of the health care system, making it more global. Now, if the patient is unable to obtain the required medical assistance in his native country, he has the opportunity to choose not only the country for medical treatment, but even a health care center and a specific doctor to be treated. In such a case, he will get the best health care using modern equipment and the latest methods of treatment.

**AS** in all sectors of the economy there is also a high level of competition in medical tourism, which stimulates the development of medicine in the world, improves the quality of health care and promotes the introduction of new technologies in public health care service. [3]

**TODAY**, according to analysts, over 50% of foreign patients in Israel - are patients from Russia and CIS countries. A steady increase in the number of patients from these countries is noticed in Germany, where in many clinics the number of Russian-speaking doctors and nurses is growing.

**THERE** is no question about the cost of medical treatment for the patients. They are interested in getting the highest quality of medical treatment using modern technology and the latest techniques and they are willing to pay money for it. In general, patients select as the destination place the following countries: Germany, Israel, Switzerland, France, Austria and

the United States - countries where the medicine quality has always been and is still at the highest level.

**MOST** often, people choose medical treatment abroad if there is cancer or cardiovascular diseases. This is due to a desire to clarify the diagnosis using the latest equipment and the modern techniques. Foreign clinics often offer more effective methods of treatment, many of which are personal developments of medical specialists. And the availability of the latest equipment enables to perform the most complex operations on the heart and blood vessels.

**IN** recent years there has been growth in the number of people wishing to use the services of dentists and plastic surgeons abroad. Residents of Russia and CIS countries are going with these goals to Europe, Asia and Latin America.

**TODAY** many clinics provide medical services in strict accordance with the highest international standards. Patients, who choose to get complex medical care abroad, just need to decide what they'd like to get from medical tourism. [5]

**AS** for the development of medical tourism in Russia, it should be noted that this industry in our country is only at its initial stage. But yet observers say that in recent years a large number of domestic tourist organizations became interested in this branch of tourism, as it is considered to be promising. In fact, most of the territory of Russia can provide many opportunities for rest and medical treatment, not only for Russians, but also for foreign guests.

**RUSSIAN** medical tourism has its own history. The positive influence of climate of Krasnodar and Adygea regions on the human body people noticed even in tsarist times. Nobles lived in boarding houses for several months, where they drank mineral water, bathe in the sea, take a variety of different treatment, relax, and breathe mountain air. At that time medical tourism started out Just as a visit to the mineral springs, which have a therapeutic effect. [6]

**HEALTH** resorts located in Kislovodsk, Pyatigorsk, Yessentuki and other cities of the Caucasus have all conditions to relax and treat health. The time people spend in these places has a positive effect on their physical condition, as all the procedures are prescribed only by experienced professionals. Besides meal at such sanatoria fully correspond the advice of nutritionists, while people will eat their usual food including elements of Caucasian cuisine.

**THE** cost of procedures and food are included in the vouchers price, and the list of these procedures is very solid. People will take a mud bath and will have a therapeutic massage. If some people need to pass additional tests or, for example, the course of ozone therapy, they will have to pay for it separately. [7]

**ALL** sanatoria in Siberia have modern medical equipment. A large number of people who have kidney problems are sent for treatment to the Altai. Beautiful scenery of this region very well complete the curative effects of air and medication procedures. In the Altai region people can improve respiratory health, treat eyesight, do the musculoskeletal system, nervous system, to cope with skin diseases.

**A** very good reputation among tourists won sanatoria in the Urals. It is not surprising, as the extraordinary beauty of the mountains, a great number of lakes and rivers provide many opportunities for medical treatment. There are more than four thousand health centers in the Urals, and they are willing to offer their patients a very good service.[4]

**RESORTS** of the Krasnodar Territory also have some tinge of elitism. Medical tourism is very well developed there and has a rich history. This applies in particular to the seaside

towns, where you can easily get rid of the skin, kidney, and bone diseases. You just need to swim in the Black Sea or walk along the high tide line in the evenings.

**POSITIVE** aspects of medical tourism in Russia are numerous. You don't need to open a visa, there is no inter-language barrier, and no any confusion, people can easily communicate with physicians, employees of the hotel, other travelers, and the presence of professional doctors and good service. [8]

**THE** Russian medical tourism today is ready to offer beautiful mountain air, mineral springs, excellent service, and expert help of medical professionals.

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