

1st International Health Tourism Congress

Marketing Strategies
and Patient Services in Health
Tourism

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- Health tourism has become a worldwide industry behind a decade of rapid growth. People from all around the world are travelling to other countries to obtain medical, dental, and surgical care while at the same time touring, vacationing, and fully experiencing the attractions of the countries that they are visiting. A combination of many factors has led to the recent increase in popularity of Health tourism: exorbitant costs of healthcare in industrialized nations, ease and affordability of international travel, favourable currency exchange rates in the global economy, rapidly improving technology and standards of care in many countries of the world, and most importantly the proven safety of healthcare in select foreign nations have all led to the rise of Health Tourism. More and more people are travelling abroad as an affordable, enjoyable, and safe alternative to having medical, dental, and surgical procedures done in their home countries.

- Medical tourists are generally residents of the industrialized nations of the world and primarily come from The United States, Canada, Great Britain, Western Europe, Australia, and The Middle East. But more and more, people from many other countries of the world are seeking out places where they can both enjoy a vacation and obtain medical treatment at a reasonable price.
- Currently medical tourists are travelling in large numbers to other countries where the quality of healthcare is equal to anywhere else in the world and yet the cost is significantly lower. These regions also offer numerous options for touring, sight-seeing, shopping, exploring, and even lounging on sun drenched beaches. The industry is growing so rapidly that more and more countries and medical centres around the world are beginning to tailor services aimed specifically at medical tourists, and the expectation is that the options for where medical tourists can choose to travel will continue to increase.

- A myriad of options exist for medical tourists - from purely elective procedures such as rhinoplasty, liposuction, breast augmentation, orthodontics, and LASIK, to more serious and life-saving procedures such as joint replacements, bone marrow transplants, and cardiac bypass surgery. Medical tourists can now obtain essentially any type of medical or surgical procedure abroad in a safe and effective manner for a fraction of the cost that they would face in their home countries.
- The cost savings are enormous. For example, for the same price in the home country in Europe, a couple can travel to the natural and historical beauty of Turkey to include airfare, boarding & lodging, personal tour guide/concierge, and hair implant. Large price disparities exist across the board for numerous medical and surgical procedures. And because of favourable currency exchange rates for medical tourists, the costs associated with accommodations, food, shopping, and sight-seeing are similarly very favourable.

Health Tourism



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Non-medical

Medical

The non-medical health tourism can be arranged by tourism agencies but for the medical tourism a medical company is a must, it can be an assistance company, a healthcare company or any other company including medical staff experienced in health tourism.

Swot Analysis: Turkey

Strengths:

- **Good Quality of Care:** The Turkish hospitals have the latest technology and very good doctors
- **Accreditation:** Most of the A group hospitals have JCI or started the process of JCI
- **Available Capacity:** The private hospitals has enough capacity for both national and international patients
- **Competitive Pricing:** The prices are low according to competitive countries with the same service quality
- **Accessibility of Physicians:** There are no waiting lists
- **Proximity to Europe and Middle East:** Turkey is a bridge between Europe and Middle East and it is easy to travel to Turkey from both sides.

Weakness

- Accreditation: Most of the A group hospitals are accredited in big cities but if the other hospitals also interest in accreditation, we will have chance to give service of good quality with different cities, touristic choices and prices.
- Paper Work: The hospitals in west and south region know the paperwork for international patients very well, but the others have no idea.
- Multilingual Staff: Again the hospitals in west and south have multilingual staff but in other regions most of the doctors know English but the other staffs are not multilingual.
- Problems in Tourism Health: Most of the foreign insurance and assistance companies had problems in past so these are bad reference for us. Professionalism

Opportunities:

- Government support: Ministry of Health and Ministry of Culture and Tourism give support to any organisation for health tourism
- Turkey, a tourist destination: Whole Turkey is a tourist destination with wonderful beaches, historical places and culture.
- Long waiting lists in EU: Due to the old population in Europe the waiting lists are getting longer day by day.
- Feasibility of added value

Threats:

- Turmoil in the Middle East: Due to the turmoil in the Middle East, there might be cancellations

Then let's see the Target Countries for Medical Tourism:

- Neighbour Countries like Bulgaria, Georgia, Iraq, Syria
- Middle East Countries
- Turkish Republics like Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan
- Europe
- Turkish Population living outside Turkey, especially in Europe

Target treatments for Medical Tourism according to the needs of clients and our strengths are:

- Oncology
- Cardiac Care & Cardiovascular Surgery
- General Surgery
- Eye Surgeries
- IVF
- Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery
- Orthopedics
- Preventive Medicine(Check-up / Wellness programs)
- Dental Care
- Physical Treatment and Rehabilitation

Competitive Countries

- Germany
- Belgium
- Poland
- Russia
- India
- Malesia
- Singapour

Turkey Health Tourism Organisation:

- As a result there is a great market for Health Tourism and Turkey is ready to welcome both medical and non-medical health tourists but our target clients go to the competitive countries instead of Turkey, although we have good service quality, competitive price and other advantages like tourism and location.
- As being a medical doctor who worked at international insurance and assistance company and hospital, according to my experience at both side what to do first is Turkey Health Tourism Organisation:

Turkey Health Tourism Organisation

- Classification of Medical Centers
- Standart Pricing according to classification
- Standart invoicing with ICD codes
- Advantage of seasons
- Less PR and advertising expenses
- International Patient Services

Turkey Health Tourism Organisation:

- Classification of Medical Centres: We must classify the hospitals and choose the right ones for health tourism; otherwise the problems in tourism health will occur again.
- Standard Pricing according to classification: There must be a standard pricing among the hospitals according to the classification so the international patients and companies will not have trust problem with the prices.
- Standard invoicing with ICD codes: Hospitals must use the same invoicing style with ICD codes, so that the hospital or insurance company in home country will understand the diagnose and the treatment easily

Turkey Health Tourism Organisation:

- Advantage of seasons: If Turkey can build a general organisation for health tourism, it will be better to use the hospitals in touristic regions during winter and the hospitals in big cities during summer because the national patients are less at these times.
- Less PR and advertising expenses: Again if a general organisation works, there will be less PR and advertising expenses for hospitals in this group.
- International Patient Services: The organisation shall have or outsource a call centre that will give service to the international patients

International Patient Services Call Centre Model

- The International Patient Service must be a full-service department dedicated to meeting the needs and requirements of international patients who receive their care at Medical Centres.
- The International Service Department must offer a variety of services designed to make patients feel welcome, and ensure that their Clinic visit goes as smoothly as possible.
- Patients must be encouraged to call or write the International Patient Service before travelling Medical Centre for help in:
 - scheduling medical appointments;
 - securing lodging;
 - arranging for interpretation or translation;
 - assistance with hospital admissions; and
 - financial transactions

International Patient Services Call Centre Model

- **Medical Records and Second Opinion:** The Medical Centres often receive requests from patients who are uncertain about which form of medical treatment is necessary, which specific illness they are suffering from, the current state of illness, and whether the illness is affecting the patient's overall health. For the Medical Centre to be able to process a patient's request effectively, you must review all relevant medical records. In addition to the patient's consulting physician's written reports, the results of imaging process such as CT scans, MRI scans, or X-rays are also necessary in the case of many illnesses. These materials (in the form of films or on a CD-ROM) should be sent to Medical Centre via post, package delivery, or similar courier service. Without such records, it is impossible for the Medical Centre to make a proper recommendation. After receiving the records, the second opinion process starts and The Medical Centre's doctors evaluate the patient to see if he/she can be treated at their hospital.
- **Telemedicine:** If necessary telemedicine can be used too and all these organisations can be made by the Call Centre.

International Patient Services Call Centre Model

- The Treatment Proposal: After second opinion or/and telemedicine process, treatment proposal must be prepared. If necessary, several clinics take part in this process. In addition to provide information about the planned method of treatment and expected length of the hospital stay, Call Centre can also provide information about the expected costs of medical care. The prices given are total prices, in which all the costs are itemized. This will give the patient an overview of the total spectrum of provided services and costs. And if the patient agrees with this proposal, the appointment is scheduled.

International Patient Services Call Centre Model

- Financing Medical Treatment: Call Centre must offer special package prices to international patients. Full payment is required before any medical services can be received. The following forms of payment can be accepted:
 - • Wire transfers
 - • Cash
 - • Visa, MasterCard, American Express
 - • Insurance or Government guarantee

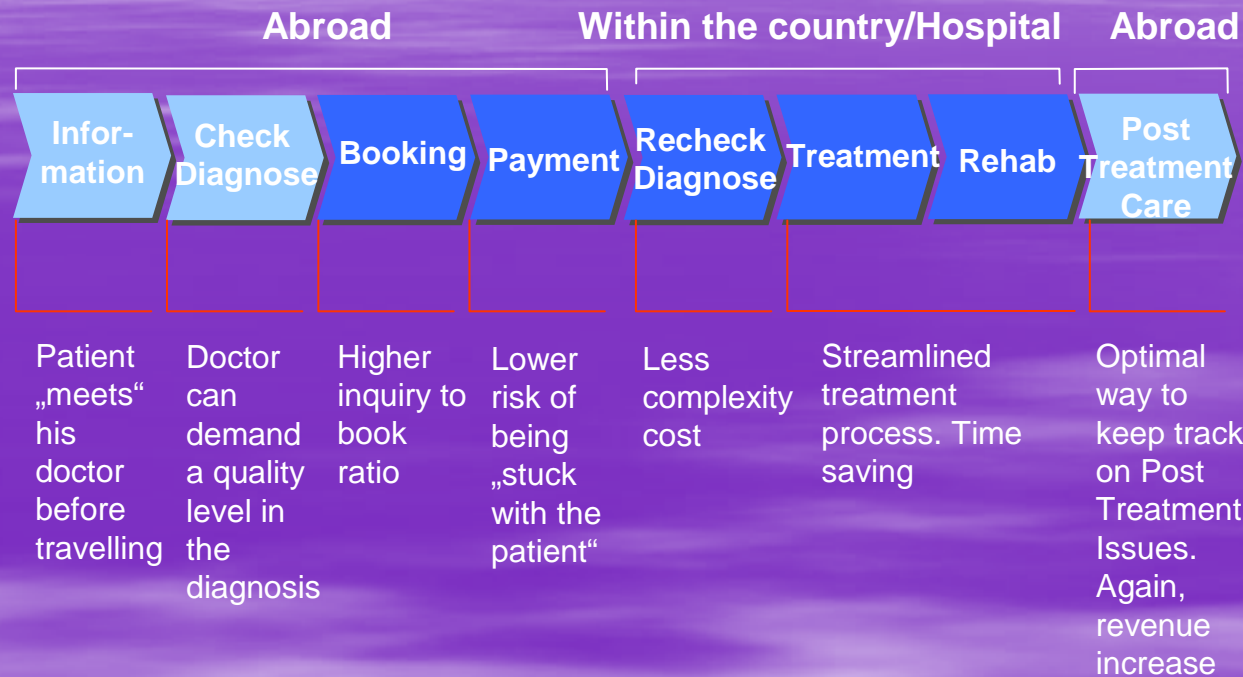
International Patient Services Call Centre Model

- **Obtaining Medical Visa:** The citizens of many countries must have an entry visa before departing for Turkey. This is also true for those who travel to Turkey for medical reasons and it must be done in advance. Generally speaking, Turkish embassies issue such visas with a minimum of bureaucracy, provided that several basic requirements have been fulfilled. So the Call Centre can help the patient by obtaining invitation letter from hospital and medical records confirming the diagnosis. The Call Centre staff will work closely with foreign embassies or consulates to help extend or replace visas, passports or resolve related issues.

International Patient Services Call Centre Model

- **Interpreter and Cultural Specialists:** These specialists are available to accompany international patients to medical appointments and assist them in communicating with employees throughout the Clinic. Interpreters are invaluable in explaining important medical information, such as doctors' instructions, what to expect from surgery and how to take medications. The services of an interpreter can be requested at the time the appointment is made.

Benefits of Patients and Medical Center



Products of Medical Tourism

- Medical Treatment
- Second Opinion before and after the treatment
- Telemedicine before and after the treatment
- Training programs for medical staff and doctors of countries which need assistance
- Consultancy for medical centres abroad

THANK YOU

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