Conceptual Model of Health Tourism Systems

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Abstract

Health Tourism(also called medical tourism, health travel or global healthcare) is a term initially coined by travel agencies and the mass media to describe the rapidly growing practice of travelling across international borders to obtain healthcare. It also refers pejoratively to the practice of healthcare providers travelling internationally to deliver healthcare. According to world Tourism Organization, health is one of the goals that motivates tourist to travel. Health Tourism is a kind of tourism that is accomplished in order to preservation, improvement and physical/mental recovery for more than twenty-four hours and not more than one consecutive year. Factors such as the changes of consumer’s values, older population and sanitary services needs are the main factors of the emersion of health tourism. All these factors made health tourism as one of the rapidly growing kind of tourism. Over 50 countries have identified medical tourism as a national industry. However, accreditation and other measures of quality vary widely across the globe, and there are risks and ethical issues that make this method of accessing medical care controversial. Also, some destinations may become hazardous or even dangerous for medical tourists. Health tourism is divided to three kinds: Wellness tourism, Tourism curative and Medical tourism. Since this kind of industry can make money, increases welfare and also helps the local development of countries, in this article we study health tourism systems and at the end we present a conceptual model of these systems.

Key words: health tourism, the management of health systems, conceptual model