

GUJARAT: A GLOBAL HEALTH DESTINATION PROMOTING MEDICAL TOURISM

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ABSTRACT:

The medical tourism industry offers high potential for India primarily because of its inherent advantages in terms of cost and quality. Medical tourism covers primarily and mostly biomedical procedures, shared with travel and tourism. India surfacing as the preferred Global healthcare destination particularly Gujarat is estimated to contribute 25-31% of the industry earnings of one hundred thousand crores. Since Gujarat is an attractive tourist destination and also has some of the best equipped hospitals and treatment centers, medical treatment combined with tourism is gaining momentum here in recent years. Exploiting the religious, cultural and wild life tourism potential of the Gujarat and collaboration with the tourism industry can complement the growth of medical tourism. This research paper explores the status of NRI, GNRI's patients reaching to India for affordable better cost in comparison with other countries. This paper analyses and concludes the main reasons why the Gujarat attracts foreign tourists for the medical cure.

KEYWORDS: *Medical Tourism, Tourist Management, Tourist destination, Cost effectiveness, Medical treatment*

INTRODUCTION:

Medical tourism is a new structure of a niche tourism market which has been speedily growing in the recent years. India receives thousands of tourists that come in to the country to endure medical treatments, then leaving the country and going back home. It is called "Medical Tourism" and it is a flowering global industry as India has become a main medical tourism hub. India's healthcare segment has made impressive strides in recent years and the country is increasingly projected as a 'healthcare hub'. Several features have positioned India as an ideal healthcare destination, like cost effective healthcare solutions, accessibility of skilled healthcare professionals, reputation for successful treatment in advanced healthcare segments, increasing popularity of India's traditional wellness systems and rapid paces made in information technology. Medical tourism is directly and indirectly affected on different areas of Indian economy.

As we know very well that Gujarat is the best state in India after South Region where better medical services are existing with the best art of technology. Moreover, paper is trying to focus that government hospitals also going for NABH & NABL certification which is the very important aspect of Healthcare services in Government Healthcare system. Before this NABH & NABL certification people could observe & see in corporate hospitals only like Apollo, Sterling Group of hospitals, Max healthcare, Fortis etc. According to a rough guesstimate, about 1,200 to 1,500 NRI's, NRG's and a small percentage of foreigners come every year for different medical treatments, the majority being cardiac patients and a good number of patients coming for joint replacement, plastic surgery and In-vitro fertilization. Apart from low cost and best world class medical facilities, the hospitals are offering pick and drop facility, ambulance facility etc. Such health services are attracting the patients from Africa, America and the UK where waiting the standard period is between 6 to 18 months. Apollo Hospitals, Ahmadabad receives high number of foreign tourists for all types of surgeries and health checkups. People are now aware of the health facilities being provided in Gujarat and knowledge of English language is another major advantage, along with a zero waiting period.

MEDICAL TOURISM OF WORLD

In the last decade the medical tourism industry has become huge. The healthcare industry is the world's one of the largest industry with global revenues estimated at US \$ 2.8 trillion. The Indian Healthcare Delivery market is estimated at US \$ 18.7 billion, of which nearly 65 per cent has been captured by the private segment. The industry is growing at about 13 percent annually and is projected to grow at 15 percent over the next four to five years.

COST COMPARISON OF MEDICAL TREATMENTS: INDIA VS THE WORLD

Treatment Cost Comparison							
Procedures	US (\$)	Costa Rica (\$)	India (\$)	Korea (\$)	Mexico (\$)	Thailand (\$)	Malaysia (\$)
Heart Bypass	144,000	25,000	5,200	28,900	27,000	15,121	11,430
Angioplasty	57,000	13,000	3,300	15,200	12,500	3,788	5,430
Heart Valve Replacement	170,000	30,000	5,500	43,500	18,000	21,212	10,580
Hip Replacement	50,000	12,500	7,000	14,120	13,000	7,879	7,500
Hip Resurfacing	50,000	12,500	7,000	15,600	15,000	15,152	12,350
Knee Replacement	50,000	11,500	6,200	19,800	12,000	12,297	7,000
Spinal Fusion	100,000	11,500	6,500	15,400	12,000	9,091	6,000

Dental Implant	2,800	900	1,000	4,200	1,800	3,636	345
Lap Band	30,000	8,500	3,000	N/A	6,500	11,515	N/A
Breast Implants	10,000	3,800	3,500	12,500	3,500	2,727	N/A
Rhinoplasty	8,000	4,500	4,000	5,000	3,500	3,901	1,293
Face Lift	15,000	6,000	4,000	15,300	4,900	3,697	3,440
Hysterectomy	15,000	5,700	2,500	11,000	5,800	2,727	5,250
Gastric Sleeve	28,700	10,500	5,000	N/A	9,995	13,636	N/A
Gastric Bypass	32,972	12,500	5,000	N/A	10,950	16,667	9,450
Liposuction	9,000	3,900	2,800	N/A	2,800	2,303	2,299
Tummy Tuck	9,750	5,300	3,000	N/A	4,025	5,000	N/A
Lasik (both eyes)	4,400	1,800	500	6,000	1,995	1,818	477
Cornea (both eyes)	N/A	4,200	N/A	7,000	N/A	1,800	N/A
Retina	N/A	4,500	850	10,200	3,500	4,242	3,000
IVF Treatment	N/A	2,800	3,250	2,180	3,950	9,091	3,819

Source: <http://www.indiaprofile.com/medical-tourism/cost-comparison.html>

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Rana S. & Bhayani S. (2015) have focused on significance and emerging era of medical tourism in Gujarat. He has enlightened the aspect of employment and foreign exchange revenue through medical tourism which will help in the growth of Gujarat.

Udapa A, G. Kotreshwar (200) have studied on Market Segmentation, Target Marketing and Product Positioning Strategy for Medical Tourism in Bangalore.

G.V.R.K. Acharyulu, B. Krishna Reddy (2005), said that India is undergoing a healthcare revolution and is emerging as the global destination for medical tourists. They highlight the significance of logistics and supply chain of a hospital for an international patient and show that provision of both contemporary and conventional system of medicine is an exclusive gain for India.

India has majority of the pharmaceutical units. India is expert in the large production of drugs and also exports it to 180 countries and above (George, Nedelea, 2008).

Venkatesh A N (2012) has studied that medical tourism has enabled the hospitals to earn more revenue and contributed to the improvement in the medical facilities, infrastructure and economy of the nation.

According to Nagarajan G. (2004), the medical tourism industry offers high potential for India primarily because of its inherent advantages in terms of cost and quality. The government should step in the role of a regulator and a facilitator of private investment in healthcare. An apex body for the industry needs to be formed to promote the India brand abroad and aid intersectional coordination. Joint ventures with overseas partners and establishment of MEDICITIES will help in India building a significant advantage and leadership position in the industry.

Joshi N. et.al. (2011) found that NRI patients come to Gujarat as they have relatives and friends to attend them during medical treatments, which gives moral support to them. Bhattacharya M. (2008) has presented her views on the opportunities with Gujarat for the growth in medical tourism and the challenges ahead to overcome.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An analytical & descriptive study has been carried out to meet the research. Secondary sources have been used to collect data.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To find out the factors that why NRIs and foreigners are attracted towards taking medical treatment from Gujarat.
- To find out which kind of medical treatment is mostly preferred by the NRIs to take in Gujarat.

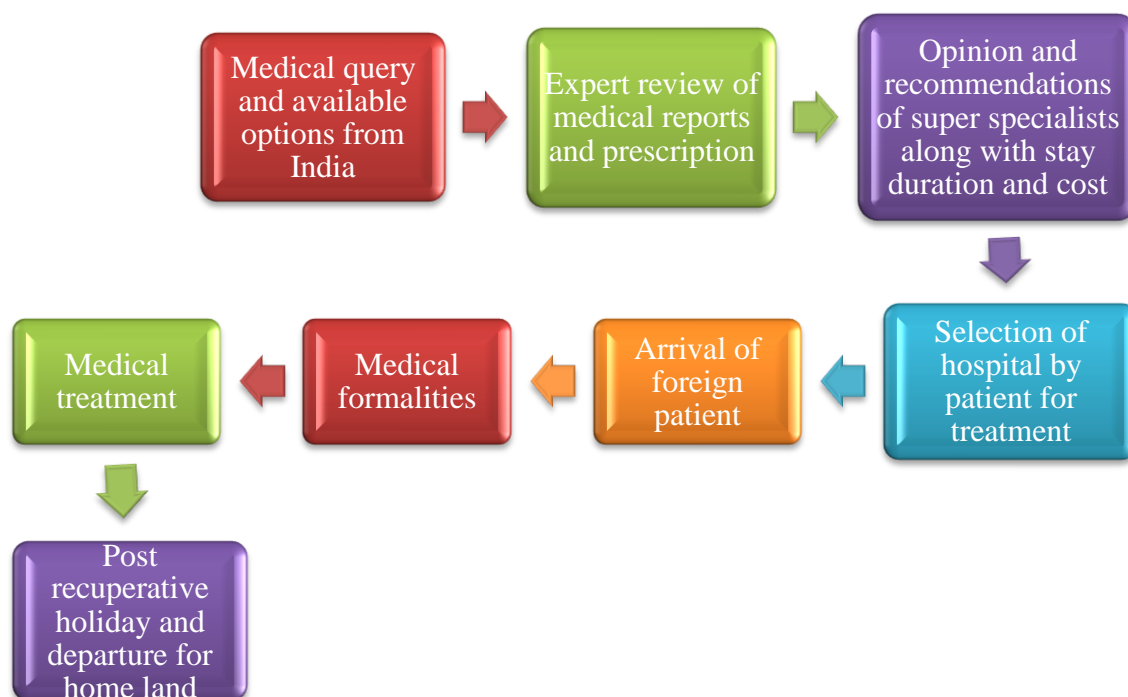
COST COMPARISONS ON SOME MAJOR PROCEDURE BETWEEN INDIA AND U.S.

Procedure	US (\$) approx.	India (\$) approx.
Bone Marrow Transplant	\$2,50,000	\$69,200
Liver Transplant	\$3,00,000	\$69,350
Heart Surgery	\$30,000	\$8,700
Orthopedic Surgery	\$20,000	\$6,300
Cataract Surgery	\$2,000	\$1,350
Smile Designing	\$8,000	\$1,100
Metal Free Bridge	\$5,500	\$600
Dental Implants	\$3,500	\$900
Porcelain Metal Bridge	\$3,000	\$600
Porcelain Metal Crown	\$1,000	\$100
Tooth Impactions	\$2,000	\$125
Root Canal Treatment	\$1,000	\$110
Tooth Whitening	\$800	\$125
Tooth Colored Composite	\$500	\$30
Fillings / Tooth Cleaning	\$300	\$90
Breast:		
Mastopexy	\$7,500	\$2,800
Reduction Mammoplasty	\$8,000	\$3,300
Mammoplasty Augmentation	\$8,000	\$2,750
Replacement Of Implants	\$6,500	\$3,000
Face:		
Blepheroplasty (Upper & Lower)	\$6,000	\$2,000
Facelift	\$6,500	\$2,800
Dermabrasion Total face)	\$5,500	\$2,150
Canthopexy w/Orbicularis suspension	\$6,000	\$2,200
Hair Transplant	\$50 Per graft	\$3 Per graft
Endoscopic Brow lift	\$5,800	\$2,300
Neck lift	\$6,100	\$2,400
Otoplasty(For prominent Ears)	\$4,700	\$1,500
Nose:		
Primary Rhinoplasty	\$7,300	\$2,900
Tip Rhynoplasty	\$6,300	\$1,300
Body Contouring:		

Abdominoplasty	\$7,700	\$3,200
Thigh Lift (Bilateral)	\$7,200	\$3,150
Total Lower Body Lift(Belt Lipectomy)	\$9,500	\$6,000
Liposuction (One Region)	\$6,100	\$1,750
Non – Surgical Procedures:		
Laser Hair Removal	\$550	\$225
Laser Resurfacing/ Wrinkle Reduction	\$550	\$225
Laser Acne Treatment	\$575	\$230
Laser Scar Treatment	\$500	\$210
Botox	\$70 Per Unit	\$8 Per Unit

Source: <http://www.indian-medical-tourism.com/medical-tourism-india-price-benefits.html>

MEDICAL PROCESS FLOWCHART OF MEDICAL TOUR CONSULTANT



Source: <http://www.medicalindiatourism.com/medical-process-flowchart.html>

MEDICAL TOURISM IN GUJARAT

Gujarat faces the rise in the field of Medical tourism which is most potential sector for the growth. Gujarat's heritage metro city, Ahmedabad is a famous place for medical tour or medical treatments spot. Ahmedabad, with world class health facilities, minimum delay time and affordable costs, is a preferred medical tourism spot across the world. The ambitious project 'The 108 Service' won the heart of public and famous as 'Medical at doorstep'.

As part of its Navratri Celebration 2004, the Government of Gujarat took the opportunity to promote its World –class medical facilities and medical expertise making Gujarat as a destination for medical tourism for Non Resident Indians. There were two major events organized during the nine days of Navratri; an exhibition on medical tourism where leading hospital of the state had an opportunity to show their facilities and service packages, and a seminar for discussing issues and concerns related to medical tourism in India and Gujarat

MEDICAL TOURISM POLICY IN GUJARAT

Government of Gujarat declared its Medical Tourism Policy in December, 2006 through official notification issued by the Information Department. According to it, for planned implementation of the policy, Gujarat Medical Tourism Council (GMTC) will be set up. The policy is intended at making Gujarat as the most favorite destination for the patient world over. It is noted that the number of tourists who rendered the medical facility in Gujarat state is 33 percent while country's growth is of 13 percent in less as compare to Gujarat i.e. 20 percent.

The government aims at bringing a favorable atmosphere for the medical tourist, the medical agencies, hospitals and the staff. The government is also committed to develop a medicity in Gujarat. The policy aims at developing international standards of treatment facilities in the state. The other aspects of the policy include safe and convenient travelling of the patients in the most affordable manner. The latest government policy is helpful to the insurance companies to develop different kind of packages with international standards. The policy also covers public-private partnership to avail world-class medical facilities which will boost up the easy certification for hospitals and motivate entrepreneurs for the start ups in the field of medical tourism.

Government has released latest tourism policy in Sept.'15 where special focus is given to medical tourism. Under this policy government will create a separate medical tourism portal to provide information relating to world class medical amenities available in the state. Conferences on Medical Tourism will be also organized. A dedicated Medical Tourism Cell would also be set up in consultation with Health & Family Welfare Department, which will act as the Nodal Department for coordinating/promoting medical tourism facilities in the State. A separate GR would be issued for promoting medical tourism initiatives. Government has also planned to launch 1st Medical Policy. Promoting medical tourism is one of the objectives of medical policy.

MEDICAL FACILITIES IN GUJARAT

Most preferred Super-Specialties: Orthopedics, Neuro-Surgery, Infertility treatment, Cardiology, Dental treatment, Eye Surgery and Cosmetic Surgery.

- Gujarat has good medical service facilities and cost effective treatment through various Districts Hospitals, Sub-districts Hospitals and Private Hospitals.
- The most modern hi-tech hospitals provide excellent facilities for Orthopedics, Neuro-Surgery, Infertility treatment, Cardiology, Dental treatment, Eye Surgery
- Other services like Cosmetic surgery and Dental treatment are also offered to international patients.
- Ahmedabad, Baroda and Surat are the medical hospital hub of the Gujarat state.
- In count, for TB, Mental illness and Leprosy across the state, there are state-run hospitals.
- State has Unani, Ayurveda and nature cure kind of traditional hospitals.
- With modern infrastructure, Multi-specialty hospitals exist.
- MOU by the government has signed with the private clinic and hospitals to avail excellent health care facilities.

AHMEDABAD - ULTIMATE MEDICAL TOURISM DESTINATION IN GUJARAT

Ahmedabad is the heart of Gujarat which is also one of the heritage metro cities of India. As compared to other cities, it has the art of the state hospitals with world class medicare facilities at affordable rate which attracts the people across the country. Due to this city has emerged as the favorite medical tourism spot. 'The 108 Service', an ambitious project of the state for the emergency ambulance service overwhelmed by the public which represents its success. The foreigners' footfalls in the state for the treatments are growing each year. Ahmedabad Civil Hospital is the biggest hospital in Asia located at Ahmedabad.

Ahmedabad was famous as prime business hub of Gujarat but now it is transforming into a Medical tourists place of Gujarat. 'Vibrant Gujarat' project made drastic change in the amenities and medical facilities at par with foreign countries.

The reasons like Best treatment with great care, reasonable rate of treatment, latest technology, Best, understanding and caring doctors, Reliable medical staff and facilities, belongingness to the motherland and native language attract the Non-Resident Gujaratis (NRGs) to Ahmedabad city of India.

In Ahmedabad doctors are having high qualification in the area of Urology, Orthodontics, Oncology, Ophthalmology, Embryology and Orthopedics. The hospitals are providing best facilities and equipments similar to other countries. The services also includes pick and drop facilities, ambulance etc. such amenities lures patients from America, Africa and UK. Appolo hospital in Ahmedabad gets more number of patients from abroad. Ahmedabad is already famous for the knee replacement surgery centre. Such hospitals of the city do, on an average 5,000 to 7,000 surgeries per year. Other motives for medical tourism are knowledge of English language, zero waiting periods, and low cost for angiography, cardiac surgery, radiation, joint replacement and other medical services, which is one tenth of costs incurred in foreign countries. Medical Cancer & Research Institute of Ahmedabad receives more inquiries from abroad for treatment of cancer. Most of the patients are from NRI's who cannot afford high costs or lack of enough medical amenities in the country such as Uganda, Chicago, Nigeria and the Middle East. The expense is about 1/20th of the costs incurred in the USA or UK. Gujarati doctors are become more aware about participating in medical conferences across the world which helps them to know about the latest developments in the medical field.

CONCLUSION

Broad literature review on the subject: Medical tourism, its contemporary status in the Global, National and State (Gujarat) level have built up a strong reassurance that Medical tourism is a naturally established new service which has a very promising outlook for future augmentation and escalation. Benefit in Medical tourism for Gujarat mostly based on the huge NRG population the state can boost of. 32% of the total NRIs are Gujarati and they have kept touch with their roots. They prefer to hold on their traditions and come back home for occasions and for requirements which includes availing medical services in Gujarat. Gujarat shares most of its concerns and challenges with those seen at the national level. Manifestly all the restraint towards this end can be overcome by a synergized endeavor of the Government and non-Government Medical service providers. Given the background of industrialization in Gujarat and the whole hearted effort put in by all to make the best over coming all problems, Medical tourism is on the edge to be successful in Gujarat - it's only a substance of time.

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