

MEDICAL TOURISM IN INDIA BOOMING



Medical tourism is a big and fast growing business in India. The country has managed to adopt various new technologies. The boom of information technologies was among them and this sector is an important contributor to India's Gross Domestic Product. Medical tourism is also becoming more and more important for the country's economy. It is always the same story. A patient travels abroad to have surgery done because one of these reasons: healthcare in their home country is too expensive (e.g. in the US), the waiting times are too long (e.g. in the UK), or the quality of medical care is low. A heart bypass surgery cost £20,000 in the United Kingdom in 2004 and only £4,400 in Indian Wockhardt Hospitals.

Patients can choose from a wide offer throughout the world. If you are a medical tourist in need of cardiac surgery, cosmetic surgery, oncology, organ transplants, bone marrow transplants, joint replacements, eye surgery and in-vitro fertilization you can travel abroad and have it done there. Countries known for its medical tourism are for example India, South American countries, South Africa, Israel or Singapore.

As the number of medical tourists rises up so does the number of private hospitals offering services to these patients. There were approximately 750,000 American medical tourists in 2007 and the number is expected to grow over 6 million by 2010. Another thing that is important for such a hospital is a quality "certificate". Some of these obtain accreditations from bodies that provide them for hospitals in the US. Interestingly some of the hospitals have even higher quality services than the hospitals in the US.

The medical tourism industry is already one of the largest service-sector industries in India and it earns vast sums of money. In the future it is expected to earn even more. By 2010 its contribution to the Indian GDP should account for 5 %.

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