

Medical Tourism in Kerala

**Dr. R. Muthu ., Assistant Professor, Department of History,
M. V. Muthiah Govt . Arts College For Women,
Dindigul, Tamil Nadu.**

Tourism is a rapidly growing industry in India and has become increasingly competitive in the global Market place. The tourism industry comprises many different sectors, including transportation lodging and entertainment . One of the evolving sectors in the field of tourism is Medical Tourism. The Southern most state of India, Kerala is one of the most popular medical tourism destinations in the world . Medical tourism involves travel for the purpose of receiving medical, Dental (or) surgical care and represents a rapidly growing niche Market with in the Healthcare, tourism and hospitality industries. Multiple factors contribute to the growth of the medical tourism industry and suggest a continuing trend toward growth in the future.

Medical Tourism

Medical tourism (or Health Tourism) is a term initially coined by travel agencies and the mass media to describe the rapidly – growing practice of travelling to another country to obtain Healthcare.

Medical Tourism in India

India is a huge magnet for attracting foreign patients for medical treatments. With general tourism on the rise, it is estimated that the volume of medical tourists world wide could reach up to 5 million by 2017, attracting additional visitors to the country. Medical tourism, more broadly health and wellness tourism, refers to the industry in which people from across the global travel to other countries to get medical, dental and Surgical care, and at the same time, visit the local attractions of that country. India hosts about 1.27 million tourists from countries such as the USA, UK and Canada in addition to visitors from neighboring countries like china & SriLanka. Most of the states in India are promoting medical tourism at a Light level.

Medical Tourism in Kerala

Kerala, God's Own Country is one of the most sought after tourist destinations in Asia. Kerala is a narrow strip of land Wedged between the Western Ghats on the East and the Arabian Sea in the West. It is the only Indian state having all types of tourism products. Secluded beaches, palm fringed back waters, mist clad hill stations, lush tropical forests, waterfalls, exotic wildlife, monuments, art forms and festivals give it a distinctive charm. Apart from being a tourist destination, Kerala is India's number one state with 100 percent literate people, world – class healthcare systems, lowest infant mortality and highest life expectancy rates, highest physical quality of life and best law and order conditions. It is India's most affluent, peaceful and cleanest state also.

Kerala has established itself as a prominent Destination of world leisure tourism for its natural beauty and cultural assets. The growth of Tourism in Kerala has been induced by the buyer driven factors. The scenario of Medical Tourism is also not much different from leisure tourism. Medical tourism in Kerala grew without much willful collective effort. It was recognized as an opportunity by some sectors, particularly the Ayurveda sector who took some collective effort to convert Kerala as source for Ayurveda treatment, then the Dentistry and Modern Medicine.

The year 2006 was declared the medical tourism year in Kerala. The medical tourism industry in the country and especially in the state is being marketed in a big way for the cost effective healthcare it offers in the form of attractive medical – cum – leisure packages in peaceful and picturesque medical – cum – leisure packages in peaceful and picturesque destinations nestled in the green lap of nature. The medical packages comprise treatment, surgery and recuperation phases at various state-of-the – art hospital and medical centers spread throughout the state.

Healthcare facilities in Kerala can be categorized into short term and long term versions and travelers can opt for the package of their choice from a wide range of health and wellness/travel packages the services of which are available at the several resorts, beach destinations and hill spots dotting the length and breadth of the state. These packages contain customized plans including personalized service, stay with food, ticket reservation and related aspects of medical travel. A combination of many factors has led to the increase in popularity of medical tourism in Kerala. Some of the advantages of going to Kerala for Medical tourism are :

- ❖ Internationally accredited medical facilities using the latest technologies
- ❖ Highly qualified physicians / Surgeons and hospital support staff
- ❖ Significant cost savings compared to domestic private healthcare
- ❖ Medical treatment costs in Kerala are lowered by at least 60-80% when compared to similar procedures in other countries
- ❖ No Wait Lists
- ❖ Fluent English speaking staff
- ❖ options for private room, translator, private chef, dedicated staff during your stay many other tailor- made services
- ❖ Offer eco friendly environment
- ❖ NRIs all over the world function as ambassadors for Kerala
- ❖ Some US NRIs function as Entrepreneurs facilitating Medical Tourism to India & Kerala

Medical Treatments in Kerala

The medical treatments at Kerala are well organized so as to meet the diverse needs of patients coming from different parts of the world. With the best infrastructure, the best possible Medical facilities, accompanied with the most competitive Medical Tourism Package, one can get the below treatment don't at the state at the lowest price.

- General Surgery
- Cardiac Care
- Neurosurgery
- Dental Care
- Fertility Treatment
- Transplant Surgery
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopedic
- Cosmetic Surgery
- Cancer Treatment
- Bariatric (Weight Loss)
- Multi Organ Transplant
- Above all Alternative medicines

Hospitals in Kerala

In recent years the hospitals in Kerala have invested heavily in infrastructure to make it globally competitive, particularly eyeing India elite class and foreign patients. Government,

Kerala has the best qualified professionals in each field and for this reason it has become leader in Dental, Oncology, Orthopaedics, Dialysis and Kidney transplant treatments and so on.

Some of the major players in Medical Tourism industry in Kerala are Lakeshore Hospital, Medical Trust Hospital, Jubilee Hospital, Amrita Hospital, Kerala Institute of Medical Science, lifeline Hospital, Malabar Institute of Medical Sciences, Ayurvedic Centre of Kerala and many more. These hospitals have been accredited by national and international hospital accreditation bodies and provide modern treatment backed by cutting edge medical expertise in cardiology, neurology, spine and joint replacements pediatric specialties. Kerala benefits from specialists of a particularly high quality, cheaper prices than many other countries, and the attraction of next-day appointments as opposed to lengthy waiting lists.

The streamlined efforts of the major hospitals, health insurance companies, policy-makers, tourism promotion boards, hotels and resorts, health, travel and tour operators is a key factor that lead to the surge in the medical tourism sector. Major healthcare centers have undergone extreme makeovers to give the ideal setting for surgery, recovery and relaxation. These internationally accredited hospitals in the state treat roughly 4,000 foreign patients a year and results a high growth in the field of medical tourism in the state.

The Indian tourism industry has outperformed the global tourism scenario in terms of growth, revenue and the volume of international tourist visits. Kerala, the southernmost part of India, has enormous potential to emerge as one of the world's best medical tourism destinations. The medical tourism industry offers high potential for Kerala primarily because of its inherent advantages in terms of cost primarily because of its inherent advantages in terms of cost and quality. Kerala is emerging as an attractive, affordable for healthcare & but there are some challenges that the state has to overcome to become a tourist destination with competent health care industry. Kerala is having a lot of hospitals providing medical tourism facilities. To promote medical tourism in Kerala Government can adopt suitable strategies after analyzing the present conditions in the industry.

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