

The road map to medical tourism success

Services for destinations, tourism associations, healthcare
organisations, hospitals and clinics

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1. Medical tourism..... behind the hype

There are now more than 80 countries that are seeking to become medical tourism destinations. Governments, national tourism organisations and healthcare businesses across the globe are involved in the “medical tourism gold rush”.

But for many the pursuit of medical tourism gold has been in vain.

There are a multitude of reasons why success has proved elusive. But there are some common themes:

- Investment in healthcare facilities and medical tourism services has been made on a “if we build it, they will come” approach.
- National medical tourism strategy has been poorly thought through. Programme leaders have not recognised that success in medical tourism is dependent on:
 - Identifying profitable market segments and market niches that match the nation’s capabilities and those of its healthcare providers.
 - Fully understanding the needs of the target markets.
 - Developing a brand and medical tourism offering to meet those needs.
 - Raising awareness within and effectively communicating the benefits to the target audience.
- Some countries have embarked on the promotion of medical tourism without ensuring their readiness to handle the diverse needs of international patients. They have failed to deliver the brand promise.
- Some countries have quite simply paid a great deal of money for poor advice!

Get your medical tourism strategy on the right track

Intuition’s “Medical Travel Insight” team can help you to get your medical tourism strategy on the right track. And, if you are disillusioned with your progress to date, we’ll put you back on the road to success. We’ll help you to understand the market and identify and exploit the opportunities that are really worth pursuing.

We offer the knowledge, expertise and tools to help you succeed in the medical tourism business.

Stand out from the crowd

It’s a very busy medical tourism marketplace. Many countries and many healthcare providers just believe it’s a case of opening their doors and international patients will come flooding in. It’s not that easy. The market is growing but not at the exponential rates that are hyped by some industry participants. Nevertheless, there are opportunities for you to grow your international patient business if you can get the right message across to the right audience through the right media.

That’s where we come in. We’ll help you to attract and engage with medical tourists through better content and communication... online, on screen, on mobile or in print.

What makes us different?

Since the publication of the Deloitte and McKinsey reports in 2007 and 2008, there has been a stampede to take advantage of the alleged market potential in “medical tourism”. These reports were almost entirely speculative and have since been methodically proven incorrect by many in the sector. Yet the dreams of economic and social benefits associated with international medical travel continue to spur governments, providers and others to spend unwisely and make predictions and commitments which cannot be fulfilled.

The “hype” about the potential growth of international medical travel has also attracted opportunists and profiteers. Many of these are individuals and organisations with little or no experience in any of the related disciplines - healthcare, wellness, tourism, communications, branding and marketing. Among the more extraordinarily wasteful activities are the conferences and trade shows occurring around the world that routinely promise much more than they can deliver!

Our clients include disappointed organisations that turn to us for real solutions to their challenges

We differentiate ourselves from this crowd of cheerleaders and pretenders by understanding how markets move, how decisions are made, how to reach bona fide potential customers and how to convert them into loyal patients and customers.

2. How can we help?

Whether you are new to the medical tourism sector or you're "once bitten, twice shy", we offer a comprehensive range of services to support a medical tourism initiative.

Understanding markets, understanding customers

Healthcare doesn't stand still....nor does medical travel. The medical tourism sector is a complex, immature but growing market; few have grasped how to exploit the opportunities that it offers. And there are few people around the industry who really "get it". The sector has experienced a gold rush in which hospitals, clinics and destination countries have entered the market in pursuit of medical tourism gold.

Identifying the market opportunities is one of the biggest challenges.

- Where should you target your efforts?
- What opportunities are there within your target markets to grow market share?
- Are there new, emerging markets where your expertise could prove to be a winner?
- How do you know what your prospective customers want and at what price?
- Is there a fit between what you have to offer and what the market wants?

Understanding the market requires insight from people who really do understand the market – leading thinkers and experts in medical tourism who can provide an independent and honest view of the market sector, your market position and the opportunities available.

A critical component to medical tourism success is identifying channel partners to help build a sustainable stream of referrals. In the medical tourism enterprise, these channel partners might be medical tourism agencies, academic medical centers, high profile doctors and dentists, leading surgeons as well as institutions, universities and companies with high profiles in the service segments that you wish to penetrate.

These and a host of other relevant questions can be examined and answered to provide specific, reliable recommendations and guidelines for the targeting of your medical tourism strategy.

Developing your medical tourism strategy

Many countries have seen the potential of international medical travel, and are investing significant resources, attempting to realise the economic and social benefits of the sector. **Few are succeeding.**

Destinations enter the sector with little thought or planning of where they want to be and how to get there. **Very few have got it right.**

A country's initiatives around medical travel are often uncoordinated, haphazard and lack clear direction. A tourism board, a health department or individual hospitals and healthcare facilities takes initiatives to develop international patient departments and to promote themselves on a regional and international scale. Yet, these initiatives **fail to deliver a sustainable return** on investment.

Developing an effective medical tourism strategy involves:

- Understanding the market (see above).
- Quantifying the market - The goal must be to quantify the size of the consumer and business markets for your services.
- Identifying need – which source countries have sustainable demand for what you have to offer.
- Meeting that need - Matching the needs of the target market with the competencies of your country and its participating hospitals and clinics.
- Understanding consumer perceptions - Do they know about you already? If so, what do they think of you now?
- Identifying competitive advantage - What are the motivators / inhibitors to travel for treatment? Is the market interested in what you have to offer? And why should they choose you?

Our Medical Travel Insight team works with you to develop your strategy for medical tourism by conducting the necessary market analysis and research, and facilitating a strategic process through in-country workshops which involve your key industry participants and gets their buy-in to the adopted strategy.

Brand development

Defining and understanding your brand identity – the unique essence of your product or service – is essential before engaging in any marketing, promotion or advertising. Working closely with your management team, our brand experts formulate and refine your organization’s vision, values and positioning so that it can be communicated to the world. Branding services include:

- Brand development and positioning for destinations and healthcare providers.
- Brand audit of all brand touch points in your destination, facilities and services.
- Focus groups and consumer market research within target markets.
- Familiarity trips for decision makers
- Attitude and opinion surveys

The medical tourism audit

Are your healthcare providers and healthcare facilities ready for medical tourism?

Redi4Patients™ is the first-of-its-kind systematic and thorough business tool to evaluate and measure the medical tourist experience. Redi4Patients™ offers:

- An evaluation of the effectiveness of your web site, telephone and email customer service systems, as well as marketing materials.
- An on-site assessment of your patient experience from arrival to departure, and everything in between.
- A comprehensive report pinpointing what needs improvement, what is working well and

suggested next steps to enhance services.

Redi4Patients™ was created by our business partners, Medical Tourism Training, Inc., a training and consulting company dedicated to the health travel sector. Our experts conduct an independent assessment of the total patient experience offered by your organization.

Implementing best practice

The common areas of complaint in medical travel include:

- Poor coordination of patient care between source and destination country.
- Poor communication with and lack of appropriate information for the medical tourist through the patient journey.
- Confusion over billing.
- Lack of contact following treatment.

We'll help you to implement best practices in medical tourism by working with your local healthcare providers to adopt a consistent approach to the delivery of services to the international patient. Our "Code of Practice for Medical Tourism" could be a good starting point. We'll help you to develop a communication protocol/good practice which is adopted by all providers of services to international patients. This could embrace:

- Frequency and nature of communication with both patients and referring doctors.
- Standards for provision of pre-treatment and post discharge information.
- Standards for follow up communication with patients after their return home.

Medical tourism conferences and workshops

If you're considering a national or international event with a focus on medical tourism, then we can help to deliver one that works.

The event may be part of a larger medical tourism initiative. You may be aiming to enhance the skills and knowledge of your healthcare providers and industry participants. You may be hoping to put your destination on the medical travel map. We'll help you to define some clear objectives. Our event planning and management team will ensure that your programme is well thought through and that your conference or workshop is marketed effectively, on a global basis, if appropriate.

Through our B2B journal, International Medical Travel Journal, we are in contact with over 15,000 people worldwide who are involved in medical travel. We can identify the key issues to be addressed and the key opinion leaders and speakers to be invited.

Above all, we aim to deliver a return on your event investment.

Training in medical tourism

Healthcare consumers demand great service, great medical care and great experiences. But is your destination or healthcare organisation ready to meet their expectations? Our team of trainers and educators are experienced in healthcare and international medical travel, offering their knowledge and skills to help your organization succeed.

Training services include:

- On-line and on-site courses
- Blended learning options (on-site, on-line, virtual)
- Workshop, seminars, and presentations
- Topics to improve the quality of services
- Team or one-on-one coaching

We can help you to achieve measurable results in return on investment and improved customer satisfaction - results that are essential to your success in medical tourism. We can deliver both online and offline courses covering topics such as:

- Introduction to Medical Tourism
- Telephone Skills for the Medical Tourism Professional
- Through Your Patient's Eyes: Cross Cultural Training for Healthcare Professionals.
- Welcoming the World: Building an Outstanding International Patient Department

Marketing and promoting your medical tourism offering

The quality of promotional activity in the medical tourism sector is a major shortcoming of the industry. Marketing and promotion of medical travel to a destination is uncoordinated, and may convey conflicting messages.... and sometimes the wrong message. i.e. "Come to XXXXX because it's cheap" (implying low standards, and poor quality).

Destinations and healthcare providers must develop a coordinated approach to marketing, promotion and PR in target markets so that:

- A well considered and consistent message is communicated.
- The benefits of the destination or healthcare provider are clearly identified and communicated.
- A pro-active and positive message is developed.
- The message is not just about low cost (i.e. cheap) but about the brand.

The delivery of the message should consider all media – online, print, advertising and PR.

Our input can answer questions such as:

- What message should you "broadcast" about your destination or services?
- How should that message be delivered in terms of the creative approach?
- Which patients should you target and what is the best way to target them?
- What media should you use - online or offline? Pay Per Click? Press or radio? Which web sites, newspapers, magazines would be the best place to advertise?
- How can you measure your success?

Creation and distribution of a Destination Guide

An online or printed Destination Guide can be a vital tool in promoting a destination within a target country. It enables the destination to tell its story and clearly outline the services and facilities available within the destination.

It can also promote additional services and resources that support the medical tourism experience – insurance, concierge services and so on. A Destination Guide can be used as a:

- An interest generator for the press and media.
- A promotional tool for health professionals and health related organisations in the target country.
- A promotional tool for patients, distributed through waiting areas in hospitals and clinics in the target country or region.
- A follow up promotion (by mail) to enquirers.
- A fulfilment item for responding to online and offline campaigns.
- A promotional item for increasing awareness of the destination’s health services for business and vacation visitors.

The destination guide can take several forms:

- Printed book/booklet.
- Multi language (based on target countries)
- “Short form” publication for wider distribution.

Presenting a positive impression to native English speakers

Good communication with medical tourists is a vital element of the services provided by the doctor, dentist, hospital or clinic in the destination country. For many medical travellers, the first point of contact with a destination, a hospital or clinic is the web site. And for many of them, communication in the English language is an important factor in patient choice. A destination, a hospital or clinic web site that has been written in poor English reflects badly on you and the service that you offer and can discourage potential patients

Our “Perfect English” service is for healthcare destinations and providers who want to improve web sites targeted at US and UK medical tourists, and other English language speakers. Our “Perfect English” team provides a review of the English version of destination or provider web sites and provides a version re-written in “perfect English”.

MT Eye - Medical Tourism Intelligence

So, you have determined your strategy....

You have identified the opportunities...

You have invested in a promotional plan to exploit those opportunities...

But **how will you measure your success?**

Intuition can provide the solution. We are developing a data gathering and benchmarking tool for medical tourism that will overcome the problem of measuring success in medical tourism.

MTEye - Medical Tourism Intelligence is a market intelligence system that aims to capture and provide independent, standardised, and verifiable data on medical tourism performance across multiple destinations, and healthcare providers.

Currently, destinations, tourism boards, hospitals, clinics and healthcare providers around the world are unable to measure their success and benchmark their performance. The lack of a central system for collecting and sharing regional, national or international data makes it difficult to identify market opportunities and measure return on investment in the medical tourism sector.

Intuition is inviting founding partners to work together on the pilot project which will agree a definition and taxonomy to replace the current confusion in the industry over defining the sector. Terms such as medical tourism, medical travel, wellness tourism and the international patient market are used by different people to describe different and overlapping market sectors. The pilot project will also examine methods of data collection and how to count the number of people who cross national borders for treatment.

3. Get advice from people “in the know”

We have brought together some of the best brains in the medical tourism business. People who have worked in strategy, marketing and operations in the healthcare and medical travel sectors for many years. They have helped destinations, healthcare companies and individual hospitals and clinics navigate their way to success. They are part of the Medical Travel Insight team.

The team has put their knowledge and experience to work providing practical solutions to governments, healthcare providers, healthcare insurance companies, and economic development agencies globally. Our extensive list of medical travel clients (available on request) and our professional profiles, illustrate the depth of knowledge and trust we have built in our careers.

Keith Pollard

Keith Pollard is the Managing Director of Intuition Communication. Keith is one of Europe’s leading experts on medical tourism and is a regular speaker, writer and commentator on this developing business sector. Intuition owns and operates a network of Internet portals & web sites that provide advice and information for patients in the UK and overseas who are seeking treatment and healthcare services. Mr. Pollard is an informative, entertaining and experienced speaker addressing issues such as internet marketing in the UK private healthcare sector as well as in the international healthcare, medical tourism and health tourism sectors.



Ilan Geva

A distinguished ad agency veteran and professor at the University of Chicago and DePaul University, Ilan Geva shares his knowledge of branding, marketing, advertising, and consumer behavior to his consulting clients as well as his students. Mr. Geva assists medical travel clients to brand destinations, corporations, organizations and small businesses as well as offering solutions to internal/external branding strategy and implementation. Great brands are in your company’s DNA. Ilan will discover your organization’s genetic code to build the best brand possible.



Irving Stackpole

As President of Stackpole & Associates, a leading healthcare market research, marketing and organizational development consultancy, Irving Stackpole brings more than 35 years of experience in all facets of the healthcare sector. With clients around the world, Mr. Stackpole has helped international healthcare & medical travel organizations in the US, Central America, South America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia succeed in the medical tourism sector. The breadth and depth of Irving’s knowledge about research and marketing generate unexpected connections for extraordinary results.



Elizabeth Ziemba

Elizabeth Ziemba is the Founder and President of Medical Tourism Training, the first and only company dedicated solely to delivering on-line and on-site skills and education designed for the international healthcare travel sector. With a focus on improving the patient experience, Medical Tourism Training offers clients the knowledge to build customer service systems and international patient departments that are effective and customer-centered. As a consultant in the private and public health care sectors, Ms. Ziemba works with clients to pinpoint problems and develop research-driven solutions. Elizabeth can find the formula for success for your organization



Sue Smith

Sue Smith has held many hospital leadership positions in the UK. Sue has served as the executive leader of 3 UK hospitals most recently serving as Chief Executive Officer of the Princess Grace Hospital in London. Her executive responsibilities included close collaboration with the senior management of HCA International and all key stakeholders within the medical community building and enhancing relationships. She was responsible for the development and integration of strategic objectives for the hospital and additionally had oversight for the operational organisation including budgeting, governance, marketing, compliance and accreditation, risk management and patient safety.



Elizabeth Boulton

Elizabeth has been involved in the UK healthcare industry for over 20 years and has extensive experience in all aspects of hospital management, international healthcare, medical tourism and in the creation of International Patient Centres for the facilitation of patients travelling for treatment. Elizabeth held three general management positions within some of London's premier university hospitals: - Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital , Moorfields Eye Hospital, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (UCLH). Elizabeth has been involved in the development & maintenance of patient flows from international sources to for 15 years, most recently as Head of International Business at HCA International Hospitals based in central London. Elizabeth has also worked for BUPA and PPP – the two main private healthcare insurers in the UK. Elizabeth was the "Women in Business in the Arab World" award winner in 2002



4. Contact details

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