Health tourism

This consists of a trip to another city or country by a patient for medical services such as diagnosis or medical care (surgery, treatment and/or rehabilitation) and wellness services (well-being or aesthetic) while visiting the place and doing touristic activities.

Health tourism falls can be split into different levels. The first, largely technical, is the provision of medical and wellness services. The second regards the provision of services. The third, and last, includes intermediary services between the patient, medical centres and tourism enterprises, among which activities related to advice (choice of doctors and hospitals and recreational activities for companions) and logistics (transport, choice of accommodation, currency exchanges) of international patients.

Health tourism is emerging in Europe but is strongly developed in the US. In both cases it arises because part of the population cannot access fully or partially certain treatments in their countries and prefer to hire cheaper treatment outside its borders.

In relation to strategies and policies, the Comprehensive National Tourism Plan (2012-2015), includes health as a usable resource within the country and that can contribute to the promotion and improvement of international tourism in Spain.

The ageing of the baby boom generation on the main markets in Spain, together with its need to consume quality health services at a reasonable cost and good tourist complementary services make Spain a favourite destination.

For countries like Germany, Austria or Australia, Spain is a favourite destination for fertility treatments because Spain was the first country that had an Assisted Reproduction Law in 1988 and in which there are the most advanced assisted reproductive technologies.

The opportunity lies in the commercialisation link. Brokering activities, logistics, medical and tourist services at the destination stand out. Medical services and tourist centres can attract international patients by adapting their working processes to the language and culture of international patients. While there are figures like the tour operator, the figure of the facilitator becomes important because doctors advise international patients in critical areas such as the choice of medical facilities and full organisation of the stay.

Creating medical facilitators give high added value with two direct benefits to healthcare companies. The first is the connection between medical supply and patients. The second relates to the user experience, simplification of the steps and avoidance of misunderstandings with healthcare centres and tourist companies. It is a key aspect for patients who are under stress by being away from home.

Health tourism is unthinkable without attracting international patients. Therefore, health centres must transform their operations to improve international online positioning, create a network of prescribers in the countries of origin and care for patients in their native language.

Opening new markets requires combining traditional service delivery with daily needs and entertainment during the post-operative stage.

Health tourism is a business opportunity in Spain in two areas: welfare and job safety.

First, improving the welfare and quality of life for patients worldwide.

The second lies in the direct creation of new businesses and jobs as a result of the entry of new players and indirectly increasing customers for existing tourism businesses.

Social healthcare tourism began as niche but it is growing (20% annually) as an industry. Market consolidation depends on the introduction of the medical facilitator figure to create a satisfying user experience and strengthening of private healthcare to attract international patients and adapt their internal processes (web, questionnaires, contracts, etc.) to new languages.

Medical tourism is not reserved exclusively for large hospitals. Specialisation and personalised service are the two competitive advantages of SMEs that define the success of medical facilitator.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SECTOR (1)

Suppliers
- Number of hospitals
- Number of beds

Accessibility to private health (days)

- Between diagnosis and treatment of…
- Average waiting time surgery
- Medical care in emergency
- Assistance "Triage" in emergency
- Citación para especialistas en…
- Appointment for specialists in Trauma
- Appointment for specialists in…
- Delivering CT scan reports
- Delivering MRIs reports
- Delivering mammography reports
- Waiting for appointments - MRI’s
- Waiting for appointments - CT scan
- Waiting for appointments - MRIs

Demand
- The OECD report states that health tourism annually generates globally in countries receiving medical tourists more than $7.4 billion dollars (6.5235 million euros) of which 51% is in America and 42% in Europe.
- In Spain it is estimated that the market volume will reach $277 million euros in 2015 and 600 million by 2019.

Success stories
- The Instituto Bernabeu is a specialist institute in fertility and gynaecology that has changed its corporate structure to assist and provide services to international couples, mainly from countries like Germany and Austria, where the law of assisted reproduction is very restrictive and prevents them from more advanced receiving treatment.
- Part of the success lies in transferring trust and security to international patients regarding the medicine that is practised. To do this, the company obtained ISO 9001, SEP (excellent private health) and EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) quality certificates.
- The Spaincares platform was introduced with the intention of projecting a booming sector. There are 55 Spanish hospitals under the brand and insurance companies Asisa and Sanitas. Apart from spas and dependency centres, solutions for accommodation and other complementary tourist activities aimed at meeting the needs of international patients during their stay in Spain.
- The Spanish Tourism Health Cluster (Spaincares) and EOI signed an agreement to invest 2.7 million euros for the development of programmes to promote and attract foreign visitors, training plans or the organisation of conferences to raise awareness of this type of leisure, among others.
- The IVI Group is the largest assisted reproduction treatment or fertility organisation in Spain (with 14 locations). In 2011, only 20% of their patients came from abroad.
- In the past 25 years it has helped 100,000 children to be born and achieved the cumulated pregnancy rate across its centres of 90 percent.
- Among the stand out achievements of IVI is world’s first pregnancy with frozen sperm from the testicular tissue of the father, some of the first laparoscopic myomectomies in Spain and the first babies from vitrified eggs in Europe.

POSITIVE FACTORS FOR INVESTING IN SPAIN

Favourable factors for the development of the opportunity

World economy prepared for tourism

According to the 2015 Competitiveness Report from the prestigious magazine "Travel & Tourism"\(^1\), Spain is the third most popular tourist destination, behind France and the US, after finishing 2014 with about 64 million foreign visitors. The World Economic Forum backs up Spain's leading position placing it first in world in terms of cultural wealth.

Sustained growth in the number of hotels and private centres

The number of hotels increased by 13.6% during the crisis years, going from 6,900 establishments in 2007 to a total of 7,840 hotels by 2014. (2) The percentage of private hospitals in Spain has grown from 51% in 2012 to 55% in 2014, expanding provision of private healthcare services.

Experience in healthcare and health leisure

The Spanish healthcare sector stands out for offering key medical specialities, among which are: assisted reproduction, cosmetic and plastic surgery, cardiology, oncology, urology, orthopaedics, ophthalmology, dentistry and wellness centres like Incosol Medical & SPA in Marbella, SHA Wellness Clinic.

Social factors and habits

The forecasts of the Spanish population by age reveals a progressive and continued ageing of the population. According to the INE (Spanish Statistical Office), the percentage of population over 65 years old currently stands at 18.2% and will become 24.9% in 2029 and 38.7% in 2064. This projection places the Spanish population as a market with great potential in terms of healthcare. (3)

Favourable factors for the sector in Spain

Macroeconomic situation

For weight of the sector in GDP (sales of companies using biotechnology respect to national GDP), the ratio continues to grow another year and reached 9.07% of GDP at constant prices (compared with 7.61% in 2012 and the low 2.91% in 2008). 88% of companies carried out some international activity, mainly in Europe and North America. (4)

Labour market

The average productivity per employee in the chemicals sector is 91,400 euros per year. Their average individual remuneration is 51,300 euros per year. The Unit Labour Cost accounts for 56.1% of the ratio between the remuneration per employee and the individual productivity (productivity defined as value added per employee). (5)

Incentives

The Centre for the Development of Industrial Technology (CDTI) finances R+D projects in four categories: Individual R+D projects, National Cooperation R+D projects, International Technological Cooperation Projects and specific announced R+D projects. Furthermore, there are other cross-sectional programmes such as the línea Directa de Innovación, the línea de Innovación Global, Innvierte and FEDER (ERDF) Intnerconecta. Also, the ICEX-IIS Technology Fund funded by the ERDF and ICEX offers companies with foreign capital aid of up to 75% of the project to carry out new R+D+i in Spain.

I+D+I

The Spanish biotechnology companies involved in R+D+i are small: 84% of companies have fewer than 100 employees, 68% no more than 25 employees and 38% have less than 10 employees (micro), mostly spin-offs. (6)

Suppliers, Supplies, Raw materials

The medical facilitator is one of the key figures, their functions are attracting patients from their countries of origin and addressing the needs that may arise for international patients during their stay in the country. In Spain, the facilitators are identified and the newly formed Medical Group Stay, Medical Care Spain, Intermedical Solutions and Sphera Healthcare stand out.

Geographic location

Spain is within reach of three main regions: the European region, the Mediterranean region and the Atlantic region. Spain is considered to be the gateway between North Africa and Europe, and a key link to Latin America, not only because of its geographical location but also because of its strong historical and cultural ties with the region. In Spain the Canary Islands play a key role with regards to maritime traffic with West Africa.

Technological and research infrastructure

The Healthcare Reputation Monitor (MRS) establishes the best public and private hospitals based on indicators such as human and material resources, number of beds, availability of basic and high-tech equipment, total admissions and average time of stay, and satisfaction with the service. The top five public hospitals are La Paz, Hospital Clinic i Provincial de Barcelona, the Gregorio Maranon, Vall d’Hebron Hospital and 12 de Octubre. The five best private centres are the Navarra University Hospital, the HM Montepríncep, the HM Sanchinarro, the Quirón de Madrid and the Hospital Ruber Internacional. (7)

Transport infrastructure and logistics networks

There are 250 airlines operating in Spain in its 47 airports; its high-speed rail network is the 2nd best in the world and the best in Europe; it is ranked 1st in the EU for its motorway network; and it has excellent sea connections to its 46 ports distributed along the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts. (8)

Graph created using data from the Sectoral Presentation: chemicals sector. April 2015: Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism

Graph created using the results of the Health Reputation Monitor