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HOW IS MEDICAL TOURISM DEVELOPING IN OUR COUNTRY?

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Abstract

The article discusses the practical work being carried out by relevant ministries, committees, agencies, associations, departments, state and non-governmental organizations on the further development of medical and health tourism in accordance with the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-335 dated September 23, 2024 "On additional measures for the further development of medical and health tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan". The results of additional measures aimed at state support and increasing the export potential of business entities in operating medical institutions are analyzed. In accordance with it, the service program in the field of medical tourism, as well as the results of monitoring the quality of services provided by medical institutions and sanatoriums and boarding houses, the activities of medical tourism clusters, the results achieved in developing and constantly promoting the medical and health tourism brand, the establishment of sanatoriums of the category (star) hotel type and the introduction of a system of their certification, and other issues planned to be implemented within the framework of state programs are analyzed.

Keywords: Uzbekistan, medicine, tourism, medical and health tourism, health care, foreign patients, quality of services, export activities, financial assistance, sanatorium-resort zones, mountainous, healing mud layers, healing waters, sanitation, water (thermal water), sanatorium-resort zones;



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INTRODUCTION

Medical tourism is one of the leading directions of the global tourism industry. The need for high-quality and affordable medical services is growing worldwide. Recently, Uzbekistan has also become an attractive destination for tourists with its competitive prices, modern clinics, quality of medical procedures, and highly qualified specialists.

According to the National Statistics Committee, a total of 75,666 foreign citizens came to Uzbekistan for treatment in January-October 2025.

According to the Tourism Committee, in 2024, about 110,000 foreign tourists came to Uzbekistan for treatment, and medical tourism exports amounted to 174 million US dollars. This figure is 40 percent higher than in 2023.

Today, 80 percent of foreigners coming to use medical services come from neighboring countries. In particular, citizens of Afghanistan and Tajikistan are being treated at a modern medical complex established in the area adjacent to the Ayrat border post in Termez. The majority of tourists come to our country for treatment of serious surgical procedures, cardiology, urology, diabetes, and other diseases.

Various medical procedures are offered by republican medical centers, private medical institutions, and clinics of scientific research institutes that accept tourists. The range of services is wide: dentistry, plastic surgery, cardiology, orthopedics, rehabilitation, comprehensive medical examinations, laboratory tests, and visual diagnostics...

— According to officials of the Republican Specialized Scientific and Practical Medical Center for Traumatology and Orthopedics, in 2024, 2,824 foreign citizens came to the center for treatment, while in the first five months of this year, 1,196 foreign patients applied to the center. At the same time, the center actively participates in international and republican exhibitions dedicated to the development of medical tourism, demonstrating high-tech operations, equipment of departments, as well as diagnostic and rehabilitation capabilities.

Most of the patients come from Central Asian countries, which indicates that we have a high level of traumatology and orthopedics services. This can also be seen



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from the comments of citizens of neighboring countries who visit our country for treatment.

Such examples can be cited again. Although travel involves exciting adventures, in some cases it is impossible to exclude the possibility of encountering health problems. The prompt and high-quality provision of necessary medical care increases the confidence of tourists in the country. The center focuses on these aspects.

— The qualified service provided in this direction not only improves health, but also raises the tourist prestige of the country to a higher level.

Analysis of the work carried out on the further development of medical and health tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan

It is known that on September 23, 2024, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan adopted Resolution No. PQ-335 "On additional measures for the further development of medical and health tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan".

According to this resolution, the implementation of the "Medical service hospitality" program was envisaged. Also, a system for monitoring the quality of services provided by state and private medical institutions, as well as sanatoriums and boarding houses;

- establishing and introducing mechanisms for stimulating the activities of medical tourism clusters that jointly provide consulting - diagnostics - treatment - tour operator - transport - medical interpreter services;
- developing and constantly promoting the medical and health tourism brand of the Republic of Uzbekistan under the name "Avicenna";
- to establish the activities of sanatoriums of the category (star) hotel type and introduce a system of their certification;
- to organize sanatorium-resort zones in mountainous areas with healing mud layers and water objects (thermal water) of sanitary and health value, which are included in the list of healing waters;
- until April 1, 2025, work will be carried out to exempt private medical and health institutions connected to the automated special electronic program for recording



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residents via the Internet (E-mehmon) from paying the first six months of subscription fees.

By resolution:

- Program of measures for the further development of medical and health tourism;
- List of districts and cities in which it is planned to organize sanatorium-resort zones based on modern requirements;
- Programs of measures for the organization of sanatorium-resort zones in Andijan, Namangan, Jizzakh, Surkhandarya, Kashkadarya, Fergana and Tashkent regions in 2025-2026 based on modern requirements;
- List of foreign countries whose expenses related to the organization of free medical diagnostic services by doctors of medical and health institutions will be reimbursed;
- Target indicators for the further development of medical and health tourism in 2024-2027 have been approved.

50 percent of the costs of accreditation of the first 30 private medical institutions accredited by the Joint Commission International will be reimbursed from the extra-budgetary funds of the Ministry of Health. At the same time, this privilege will not be provided to persons affiliated with a private medical institution that has used the privilege;

Water (thermal water) facilities included in the list of healing waters and of sanitary and health-improving importance are used by medical institutions, sanatoriums and boarding houses on an equal and general basis.

The Tourism Committee shall, by March 1, 2025:

- create an electronic platform for rating the quality of services of medical institutions, sanatoriums and tour operators providing services in the field of medical tourism;
- launch a unified register of medical and health-improving institutions in the state language and foreign languages.

From January 1, 2025 to January 1, 2028, the costs of participation of medical and health-improving institutions included in the Unified Register with their services and products in international tourism fairs and exhibitions will be



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covered by the funds of the State Trust Fund for the Development of Medicine under the Ministry of Health.

The Tourism Committee is the authorized body in the field of regulating the possibilities of medical and health tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan.

A number of works are being carried out to implement the decision. In particular: St. Petersburg and Uzbekistan will exchange experience in the field of medical tourism. Doctors from major medical centers of St. Petersburg and Uzbekistan and specialists in the organization of medical tourism met in Tashkent on November 23-26, 2024 at the main specialized event "Medical tourism - a unique symbol of cooperation". This was reported by the St. Petersburg Medical Tourism Agency.

The event was organized by the Tourism Development Committee and the St. Petersburg Medical Tourism Agency within the framework of the implementation of the national projects "Tourism and Hospitality Industry" and "Export of Medical Services".

Its goal is to promote the Northern capital as a leading destination for medical tourism, expand the horizons of international cooperation and exchange experience in this regard.

The program consists of two parts: a series of roundtable discussions on the most popular areas among medical tourists (ophthalmology, oncology, surgery, neurosurgery, urology) and presentations of leading clinics in St. Petersburg were held.

The events held on site were attended by well-known medical centers of the Northern capital: the V.A. Almazov National Medical Research Center, the S.N. Fedorov Branch of the National Medical Research Center of the Inter-branch Scientific and Technical Complex "Eye Microsurgery", St. Petersburg State Pediatric Medical University of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation, the Raisa Gorbacheva Institute of Pediatric Oncology, Hematology and Transplantology, St. Luke Clinical Hospital, City Hospital No. 31.

The participation of Uzbek doctors and potential partners in this event will play an important role in the exchange of experience and knowledge.



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The meeting is aimed not only at creating a basis for cooperation and deepening mutual understanding between specialists, but also at improving the quality of medical services and contributing to maintaining high standards of treatment in both countries.

For information, in the first nine months of 2023, about 80 thousand guests were treated and rehabilitated in the Northern capital. The demand for medical tourism is growing. St. Petersburg was the first in Russia to consolidate the concept of "medical tourism" at the legislative level and created a medical tourism agency.

Promotional brand "Avicenna"

We cannot deny that the coronavirus pandemic has left its mark on human health. In addition, new diseases arising due to environmental and other reasons are increasing the need for medical services. This creates the need to further improve the quality of services and introduce the most advanced practices into the industry.

The resolution of the Head of our state dated September 23, 2024 "On additional measures for the further development of medical and health tourism in the Republic of Uzbekistan" provides for the implementation of the "Medical service hospitality" program. According to the resolution, a brand of medical and health tourism of Uzbekistan under the name "Avicenna" is being developed, and promotional campaigns are being launched in foreign countries. The activities of sanatoriums and clinics are being monitored within the framework of this brand. Currently, sanatoriums of the category (star) hotel type are being given the "five-star" category. For example, the "Tashthermal" and "Tashmineralsuv" sanatoriums located in the Tashkent region are among them.

International cooperation

Increasing international competitiveness, jointly developing common programs and strategies for medical tourism requires strong integration and dialogue between organizations. When the state, private sector, international partners, and scientific communities work together, the medical tourism sector will develop and bring significant economic and social benefits. To this end, in December



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2024, an infotour was organized to major medical and sanatorium-resort facilities in Belarus with the participation of 16 business entities operating in this area. In February 2025, cooperation with Slovakia began. Experience is being exchanged in the field of health improvement organized in such resort areas of Slovakia as "Boynice", "Nimnitsa", "Shtos", as well as in national parks such as "Slovensky Raj", "Piyenap", "Polonini". To this end, it is planned that the tourist organizations of the two countries will work together and actively attract tourists to our country.

— In order for tourists to have quick information about the available medical and health care facilities in our country, a unified register of medical and health care facilities in Uzbek, Russian and English was formed in cooperation with the Ministry of Health. The services of medical facilities included in this register are being evaluated based on the opinions of tourists.

An electronic platform has been developed and launched on a trial basis to assess the quality of services of medical institutions, sanatoriums, boarding houses and tour operators providing services in the field of medical tourism.

A tourist traveling to another country, first of all, searches for information about that country on the Internet. It is very important to increase the level of awareness of the foreign audience about the opportunities offered by the country.

— This year, the tourism potential of our country, including the possibilities of medical tourism, was promoted at international tourism exhibitions and fairs held in Madrid, Lyon, New York, Delhi, Budapest, Berlin, Moscow, Minsk, Dubai, and Guangzhou, — says Doston Mominjonov, a responsible employee of the Tourism Committee. — The Russian Channel One TV channel showed work in the field of medical tourism in Bukhara. The British news portal London Post published an article dedicated to the Sangardak waterfall and the village of Omonkhona in the Surkhandarya region.

Tashkent hosted the III International Conference on Medical Tourism

On November 11-12, 2025, the III International Scientific and Practical Conference "Medical Tourism in the 21st Century: Sustainable Models and Latest Practices" was held in Tashkent.



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The conference was organized by the Research Institute for Tourism Development with the support of the Tourism Committee. The forum was attended by the Tashkent branch of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations and leading experts, scientists and representatives of the tourism industry from more than 10 countries, including India, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Malta, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkey and other countries.

The participants focused on innovative technologies, telemedicine, personalized medicine, environmental standards of the sanatorium and resort sector and international personnel training.

The main goal of the forum is to exchange experiences, develop practical solutions, and create sustainable models for the development of medical and ecotourism.

The event also included a specialized exhibition "Medical Tourism: Innovations and Trends". Participants will get acquainted with the sections on sanatoriums, traditional medicine, oriental cosmetics, innovations and types of wellness - all for health and harmony. The program included plenary sessions, master classes, B2B meetings, as well as round tables.

On the first day of the conference, memorandums of cooperation were signed between the Research Institute for Tourism Development under the Tourism Committee and the Tashkent branch of the Association of Medical and Academic Tourism of the Russian Federation - Moscow State Institute of International Relations.

According to the press service of the Tourism Committee, a traveling program was held on the final day of the forum, during which participants visited the leading sanatorium-resort complexes of the Tashkent region and got acquainted with their natural potential and modern methods of wellness.

There is still a lot of work to be done

The development of medical tourism also has a positive impact on the development of other sectors. That is, a tourist who comes for treatment stays in the country for a certain period of time, which stimulates demand for hotel services and restaurants. Tourists, along with treatment, will undoubtedly enjoy



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interesting excursion programs and get acquainted with the rich cultural and historical heritage of Uzbekistan.

The private sector is playing an important role in activating the direction. The medical tourism infrastructure is expanding.

— But there is still a lot of work to be done. It is necessary to improve the quality of services related to the reception of foreign patients in the country, including the introduction of multilingual services, improve transport infrastructure and create additional benefits for tourists.

Medical tourism in Uzbekistan is a promising and rapidly developing sector that not only contributes to the country's economic growth, but also positively shapes its image in the international arena.

Complex offers that combine treatment with cultural acquaintance will undoubtedly be attractive to foreign patients. Our country has all the opportunities for this. Taking a strong position in this rapidly developing industry in the world will contribute not only to economic growth, but also to a significant improvement in the level of medical care provided to the population.

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