United Arab Emirates as a Global Medical Tourism Destination: An Explorative Study

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ABSTRACT

UAE is also known as the fastest-growing medical tourism hub due to its most advanced medical technology, affordable treatments cost, and highly specialized doctors with world-class healthcare services. In this context, the Dubai Health Experience (DXH) is developed by Dubai Health Authority as a brand name for global healthcare and medical tourism, which aims to build up Dubai as a medical tourism hub. Dubai Health Experience (DXH) the United Arab Emirates is also widening its opportunity for the medical tourism market in the Gulf Cooperation Council is a political and economic alliance of six countries in the Arabian Peninsula where UAE is itself member country. In this continuation, Dubai Tourism Strategy 2020 is also a strategic roadmap with the target of attracting 20 million visitors per year by 2020. This chapter will reveal the emerging medical tourism and healthcare trends, healthcare policy of UAE, investment in healthcare and medical tourism, government initiatives, public-private partnership, and key initiatives to achieving sustainable development goals.

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INTRODUCTION

Healthy people make healthy nation. Public healthcare is an inclusive social welfare concerned to everyone for essential primary and endemic diseases. In this context, every country always tries its best to provide accessible quality healthcare to the people with all sort of facilities. Only an effective health policy can create an efficient mechanism deliver inclusive healthcare which covers all stakeholders to achieve sustainable development goals. The rapid developments world class infrastructure is the most significant move to revival of health and medical sector in UAE. The health sector has opened a new opportunities to multi-stakeholders for state-of-the-art infrastructure of hospitals, affordable treatment to deliver patients, application of new edge technology for healthcare and medical services throughout the world. United Arab Emirates (UAE) has transformed health care system into cutting-edge global medical care destination in Middle East. The UAE continues to associate its reputation as a popular destination for medical tourism. In medical tourism, the UAE expects to see a significant rise in the number of visitors seeking treatments ranging from simple surgeries to sophisticated specialized treatments in areas of dentistry, physical therapy, rehabilitation, major surgeries and cosmetic procedures. Now medical tourists are experiencing healthcare services with world-class hospital and multi specialized team of doctors. UAE is an emerging, attractive, most appealing place to seek quality healthcare and treatments at affordable price, compared to similar healthcare access in the West. In 2019, the UAE healthcare industry is expected to focus more on artificial intelligence, machine learning, robotics and other cutting edge technologies, patient-centric services, and precision medicine.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a constitutional federation of seven emirates i.e., Abu Dhabi Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm Al Quwain. Abu Dhabi is the capital of the UAE. These seven emirates have diverse mosaic, each with its own character and allure. According to the Medical Tourism Index, UAE is the 31st largest economy by nominal GDP with more than 9.4 million populations. UAE is now considered to be the world’s most vibrant tourism destination with marvelous luxurious tourism& hospitality services and contributing major share in the economy. UAE is also known as fastest growing medical tourism hub due to its most advance medical technology, affordable treatments cost, and highly specialized doctors with the following specializations: orthopedic, oncology, ophthalmology, urology, dental, dermatology, preventive medicine care, plastic surgery, vascular surgery, normal surgery, sports medicine and world-class healthcare services in the recent years. The government is infusing more funds to develop this sector. In this regard Dubai government launched its medical tourism vision in 2014, to attract half a million medical tourists by 2020. According to the Medical Tourism Index (MTI) which is a new type of country-based performance measure to assess the