

**Ministry of Tourism
Government of India
(Niche Tourism Division)**

MINUTES OF THE 1ST MEETING OF THE NATIONAL MEDICAL & WELLNESS TOURISM BOARD HELD ON 13TH JANUARY 2016 AT 12 NOON UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF HON'BLE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM & CULTURE WITH INDEPENDENT CHARGE AND MINISTER OF STATE FOR CIVIL AVIATION

List of participants is at Annexure I.

2. The Joint Secretary (Tourism) welcomed all members of the Board to its first Meeting of the National Medical and Wellness Tourism Board. Giving a brief introduction on the background, the Joint Secretary mentioned that India has world class health facilities and healthcare systems that include Ayurveda and Yoga which are a boon to the mankind of which the full potential has not been exploited as yet. These holistic healthcare systems also need to be showcased to the world in an organized manner and driven as an engine for growth. This is one of the fastest growing sectors in India. The idea of setting up the Board is to cover the entire spectrum from "Illness to Wellness" with the help of best minds in the Industry and also to formulate a cogent strategy to address quality, accreditation, medical insurance and marketing. Synergy needs to be created to develop this segment of Tourism.

2. The Chairman welcomed all the Board Members and stated that the Government of India has decided to give a boost to this sector and take it forward with the help of the National Medical and Wellness Tourism Board. He reiterated that in spite of having globally acclaimed medical and wellness systems, best of medical professionals, medical infrastructure and service providers we have not been able to promote and develop this niche segment of Tourism. This segment is especially driven by private sector and Government will act as a 'Facilitator'. He assured that the suggestions that emerge out of today's deliberations will be taken up in 'Mission Mode'. He urged the members to discuss the strength and weaknesses of our resources and come up with concrete action plan. The Chairman opened the floor for discussions.

3. Dr. Naresh Trehan, renowned Cardiovascular and Cardiothoracic Surgeon informed that India's healthcare system has rapidly developed over the years; it is high quality treatment at affordable price. Comparing it with Medical Tourism being promoted by other neighboring nations, he added that traditionally India has been catering to the SAARC countries and has helped some of the SAARC nations to develop their own basic healthcare systems. While doing so, India has not only retained the edge but has also moved ahead in super specializations. Similarly, India has often been in the news for wrong reasons and those negative factors have also started getting neutralized. He also added that India has specifically to target three market segments namely SAARC countries, Middle East, Africa, CIS countries, and parts of South East Asia; thirdly Europe and America. However, he stressed that Africa and Middle East have started looking East particularly to India for affordable healthcare as the economic reality has enhanced the spending capacity of general public.

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4. The need of the hour is to tackle the uneven delivery system to prevent it from becoming an unorganized sector. Basically Government needs to make single point source for required information about accredited medical facilities (by NABH, JCI), approved travel service providers etc. We need to establish linkages between multiple agencies such as Government, Foreign Ministry, doctors, hospital owners, Travel Agents etc.

5. Acharya Balkrishanji of Patanjali Yoga Ashram emphasized that one portal for information related to treatment of all recognized/accredited services be made available through Government site. This will help people to take a decision in regard to undertaking trip for emergency treatment and long term preventive treatment involving wellness services such as Ayurveda, Yoga etc. Govt. could consider classifying medical services on the lines of Hotel classifications.

6. Dr. S. S. Aggarwal of Indian Medical Association (IMA) expressed his concern over inadequate medical infrastructure in the country and stressed the need for also mapping skilled manpower in the medical industry in the country. It was also indicated that the Government should keep in mind the needs of people traveling within India for medical facilities and treatment including Ayurveda, Yoga etc.

7. Dr. Devi Prasad Shetty, leading cardiac Surgeon, presented his views stating that India aggressively needs to market its medical potential. However, he emphasized that one of the major deterrent is the difficulties in procuring Medical Visa by a patient and that the Government authorities should have a fresh look to ease the procedure for obtaining Medical Visa to India including introducing of 'Medical Visa on Arrival'. Similarly, the formality of registration for people travelling on Medical Visa with Foreigners Regional Registration Office may be reconsidered. In regard to upgrading of cutting edge skills, he suggested that the adoption of new medical procedures in the country should be made easier. Organ Transplant Act also needs to be looked into by the Government to ease procedures.

8. Padmashri Dr. K. K. Aggarwal of IMA informed that the Government could Promote Medical and Wellness Tourism through IMA taking advantage of their global linkages. He suggested that the Medical Service providers may be advised to develop all inclusive packages which also address the complication Insurance charges. He added that issue of rehabilitation through Yoga and Ayurveda could be taken care of by all hospitals. Such facilities could also be termed as 'Medical Tourism Friendly Facilities'. The service providers may be sensitized towards varied cultural practices of tourists. The Board may promote research by Medical professionals. Board may advise every major tourism related conference hosted India to include a session on Medical Tourism.

9. Dr. Bhavdeep Singh, CEO Fortis Healthcare advised that certification is a must for building 'Brand India'.

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10. Dr. P. M. Varrier of Kottakal Arya Vaidyashala, Kerala stated that the Ayurveda treatment may be brought under the ambit of Medical Treatment for obtaining Medical Visa. He suggested that the standardization and accreditation, protocol, masseurs training etc. of Ayurveda Treatment Centers is required to be introduced. Lack of insurance for Ayurveda treatment is also a deterrent for tourists to visit India for treatment.

11. Dr. Vinay Agarwal, IMA suggested that the Board may facilitate participation of private sector in Medical conferences abroad.

12. Dr. H. R. Nagendra, Vice Chancellor, S-VYAS suggested that the Board also focuses on people needing long term treatment for Non-Communicable diseases and lifestyle disorders which is on the rise. To arrive at an effective treatment based on common modality, protocol and SOPs, he highlighted the need to support a policy, based on analysis of results to find least side effects, evidence based, cost effective etc. from each of the systems to be highlighted. The tour operators may also develop Heritage Tour Packages to showcase India's heritage and wisdom of ancient healing systems.

13. Mr. Anas Abdul Wazid of Max Super Specialty Hospital indicated that the Board needs to create awareness about Indian medical facilities and systems with cost through an effective mechanism. The Board may also advise Government to take up Medical Tourism issues on bilateral platforms.

14. Mr. Jatin Walia, President of Association of Wellness, Ayurveda and Spas reiterated views opined earlier and added that evaluation of skilled manpower, accreditation, standardization and developing logo to promote standardized practices in Wellness centers, Spas etc.

15. Dr. K. K. Kalra, CEO NABH, informed the Board that NABH has already Introduced accreditation program for Center for Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani. He added that the Wellness Sector is still unorganized and is a challenge to standardize the same. Board may look in to devising certification standards for Facilitators to avoid unethical practices. NABH is also aiming at introducing integrated accreditation of all the system under one roof.

16. Dr. B. K. Rana, Deputy Director, QCI suggested that exclusive Print Media may be strongly explored to target high end medical Tourism to India. It was informed that the Foreign Insurance Companies do not recognize many hospitals in India and patients are refrained from getting treatment in India. Awareness needs to be created about NABH which is on par with JCI for accreditation of facilities in the country. He also apprised the members that Indian Healthcare Portal has already been launched by Government of India consisting of list of accredited hospitals, procedures available and rates for services offered.

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17. Mr. Subhash Goyal, President, IATO suggested that Medical Visa may be brought under E Visa ambit. The IATO members would be happy to develop special Medi-Tourism packages in support of promotion of Medical Tourism.

18. Mr. Amitabh Devendra, Secretary General of FHRAI assured support of hospitality Industry to Medical tourists to give feel good experience to patients and their families by offering suitable packages.

19. Mr. Yogesh Srivastava of PHDCCI assured their full support and cooperation to facilitate major medical and wellness events in India and also assist in disseminating knowledge among the public and to medical and wellness tourism industry personnel through educational programmes.

20. Mr Praveen Kumar Mittal of FICCI informed that there is need for having a Medical Facilitation Center before immigration at the airports. The Government may launch promotional campaign focusing on medical travel value. Similarly, the National Carrier may be advised to announce special fares for medical travel to India with incentives. It was pointed out that patients and families often stay in guest houses attached to the hospitals which may also be brought under the accreditation program.

21. MEA representative informed that issues and suggestions related to Medical Visa have been noted for appropriate action.

22. Mr. Jitendra Sharma, Joint Secretary (AYUSH) stated that Holistic Health Care is the order of the day and all hospitals should have holistic health care systems for which there need to be an integrated accreditation model. He also informed that there is a National Medicinal Plant Board which advises on developing Herbal gardens which are a major resource base of traditional medicines.

23. The Chairman concluded the meeting with following remarks:

- (i) The Board will have a single responsible body which is visible, accessible and through which the various medical systems which are interconnected can be reached by all;
- (ii) The Board unanimously agrees that a dedicated and sustained campaign on Medical & Wellness Tourism in the source markets will result in substantially enhance medical tourist arrivals to the country which can be led only by Government interventions;
- (iii) It also agreed on integrating the services under Ayurveda, Yoga and other systems;
- (iv) The Government needs to address the issue of sensitization of service providers, particularly in the field of Wellness & Ayurveda;

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- (v) Healthcare and wellness has become one of the largest sectors of India - both in terms of revenue and employment comprising hospitals, clinical trials, outsourcing, telemedicine, wellness, health insurance and medical tourism etc.;
- (vi) The Indian healthcare sector is growing at a brisk pace due to its cost effectiveness, strengthening coverage, services and increasing expenditure by public as well private players. accredited facilities;
- (vii) This Board will provide leadership of the Government within a framework of prudent and effective measures, thereby enabling promotion and positioning of India as a competent and credible medical and wellness tourism destination; and
- (viii) Based on the deliberations, he directed that three Sub-Committees would be constituted immediately to look into the issues such as (i) Regulatory including Visa; (ii) Accreditation of Hospitals and allied services and (iii) Marketing and Promotion.

Meeting ended with thanks to the Chair.

Government of India
Ministry of Tourism
(Niche Tourism)

Transport Bhawan
Parliament Street
New Delhi-110001

F. No. 7-4(1)/2013-NT

dated 15th February, 2016

To,

All Members of the National Medical and Wellness Tourism Board

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am directed to forward a copy of the Minutes of the first meeting of the National Medical & Wellness Tourism Board, held under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of State for Tourism & Culture (Independent Charge) and Minister of State for Civil Aviation on 13th January, 2016 at 15.00 hours at Hotel Samrat, New Delhi, for information and necessary action.

A line in confirmation of receipt of this will be highly appreciated.

Regards,



(Neela Lad)

Deputy Director General

Tel : 23311237

Mail id neela.lad@nic.in

Enc: As above.

MEMBERS OF THE MEDICAL AND WELLNESS TOURISM BOARD

NO	MEMBER	AFFILIATION	ORGANISATION
1.	Dr. Mahesh Sharma	Chairman	Hon'ble Minister of State for Tourism
2.	Shri Vinod Zutshi	Vice Chairman	Secretary, Government of India Ministry of Tourism
3.	Shri Sanjeev Ranjan	Member	Additional Secretary & Financial Advisor Government of India, Ministry of Tourism
4.	Shri Suman Billa	Member	Joint Secretary, Government of India Ministry of Tourism
5.	Shri Jitendra Sharma	Member	Joint Secretary, Government of India Ministry of AYUSH
6.	Dr. B.K. Rana Deputy Director	Member	Secretary General Quality Council of India
7.	Dr. K.K.Kalra	Member	CEO NABHHS
8.	Shri Subhash Goyal President	Member	Tour Operators Promotion Medical Tourism, IATO
9.	Mr. R. K. Puri,	Member	Secretary General, HAI
10.	Shri Amitabh Devendra, Secretary General	Member	FHRAI
11.	Dr. S. S. Aggarwal Chairman	Member	IMA
12.	Padmashri Dr. K. K. Aggarwal	Member	IMA
13.	Dr. Devi Prasad Shetty	Member	Narayana Health Cardiac Surgeon
14.	Dr. Naresh Trehan	Member	Medanta Group
15.	Dr. H.R. Nagendra ME, PhD	Member	Vice Chancellor S-Vyas, Vivekananda Yoga Aushthan Sanstha
16.	Acharya Balkrishan ji	Member	MD, Patanjali Ayurveda Kendra
17.	Mr Rajesh Parihar Under Secretary	Member	Director, ITP Ministry of External Affairs
18.	Anas Abdul Wazid	Member	MD & CEO Max Super Specialty Hospital
19.	Shri Praveen Kumar Mittal Additional Director President	Member	FICCI

20.	Shri Yogesh Srivastav Director	Member	PHDCCI
21.	Shri Sumit Mazumder President	Member	CII
22.	Shri Jatin Walia President	Member	President , Association of Wellness, Ayurveda & SPA
23.	Dr. P Madhavankutty Varrier	Member	Kotakkal AryaVaidyashala, Kerala
24.	Shri Bhavdeep Singh	Member	CEO Fortis Healthcare
25.	Dr Vinay Aggarwal	Member	IMA
