



“An Analytical Study of Medical Tourism in India”

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Abstract

Medical tourism industry is rising industry and has changed the entire concept of tourism industry. India is also one of the favorable destiny for medical tourism because of world class health facilities with affordable price, Skilled Doctors, alternative treatment, personal care and government initiative. In 2020, India's Medical tourism industry's revenue was nearly US\$8 billion, with a compound annual growth rate of 16% percent. India is primarily visited by medical travelers from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Oman, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nigeria, Kenya, and Iraq across these categories. Government is also taken number of measures to attract medical tourism. Traditional medicine and related treatment practices have also been promoted by the government. The Union has just awarded the Ministry of AYUSH INR 2,970 crore for FY 2021-22, compared to INR 2,122 crore for FY 2020-21, allowing the state to use centuries of spiritual philosophy understanding that is unique and unrivalled. Furthermore, the Ministry of Tourism has established a Wellness and Medical Tourism Promotion Committee (WMTPC) with detailed guidelines in order to promote wellness and medical tourism as niche tourism products among international tourists and to make India a holistic tourism destination offering a variety of medical services and techniques. During the study researcher found that medical tourism has a tremendous scope for development. Public private partnership model is successful and government is allowing 100% FDI in medical tourism. Our medical industry has bright future still there is a road ahead.

Index Terms: Medical Tourism, Cost, Health care facilities, Government initiative, AYUSH.

I. Introduction:

The Medical tourism industry is booming all around the world. Medical tourism has drastically transformed the traditional tourism approach. Medical treatment used to be more beneficial in European countries for the wealthy. People in affluent countries are now preferring to seek medical treatment in developing countries such as India, Thailand, and Malaysia etc. The cost of treatment is quite high in wealthy countries, and patients must wait an extremely long time for treatment or surgery. People have begun to consider other viable options as a result of this. Searching for healing in other nations with good medical facilities at a reasonable cost is one of these possibilities. Medical Tourism's growing popularity has piqued the interest of policymakers, scholars, and the media. Today, we're seeing both qualitative and quantitative trends in patient mobility, as people go from more developed to less developed countries in search of health care. India is a popular tourist destination due to its rich cultural heritage, numerous attractions, and beautiful scenery. According to one projection, India's tourism industry will contribute \$512 billion to GDP in 2029. The travel and tourism industry is a fundamental pillar of the Make in India initiative and has emerged as one of the most important

development drivers in the service sector. India is not only known for its tourism attractions, but also for its high-end health-care environment and world-class medical treatment options.

1.1. Medical Tourism is a term used to describe as:

Medical tourism, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), is defined as travel to health spas or resort destinations with the primary goal of improving travelers' physical well-being through a process that includes physical exercises and therapy, dietary control, and medical services related to health maintenance.

Medical tourism is sometimes referred to as health tourism (Hall, 2011), wellness tourism (Visakhi et al. 2017), medical travel (Connell, 2013), and healthcare globalization (Lunt and Carrera, 2010). On the other hand, the term "medical tourism" has become frequently utilized in academic and media sources. While most people feel medical tourism is not a new concept, there is no consensus on how to define it.

1.2 Literature Review:

1.2.1. In his study on Health Care Service Marketing, Bookman & Bookman (2007), an economist and a lawyer, the medical tourism sector is viewed from a multifaceted perspective in medical tourism. They go on to say that Medical Tourism is "an economic activity that involves service commerce and represents the fusion of at least two sectors: medicine and tourism."

1.2.2. According to International Medical Tourism Journal, Medical tourism is described as "systematized medical activity mixed with tourism that entails people travelling across borders to seek healthcare services". This study admits that consumers' primary purpose is to improve their health; tourism activities are included as a result of the use of tourism infrastructure such as transportation and lodging amenities. To avoid the perception that all medical tourists are sick, the term "people" is used instead of "patients." This may not be appealing to potential tourists looking for health screenings, for example. Instead of using the terms overseas or international, the term "across boundaries" is used.

1.2.3. The word healthcare is used instead of medical care to underline that the focus in the investigation are "the services rendered by members of the health professions" (American Heritage Medical, 2011) and not only "the portion of care under a physician's direction" (or medical care) (Medical Dictionary, 2009). Defining Medical Tourism is positioned to describe what this study finds about this phenomenon. Making such a distinction supports understanding the subsequent discussion about the catalysts, barriers, and operationalization of Medical Tourism in a European Market as well as it.. Medical tourism which began as a niche business, has grown into a multibillion-dollar phenomenon with yearly growth of 20% predicted (Visakhi et al., 2017). The expanding popularity of the medical tourism sector suggests that healthcare services are being accepted as a product on a global scale. Patients' movement is frequently fueled by quick access to medical treatment (Turner, 2011), improved technology (Ehrbeck et al., 2008), or higher quality care, as well as service affordability (Connell, 2006). The MT has grown into a global sector that entices nations, particularly those commencing for development and reforestation, thanks to adequate information on the internet and low transit costs while taking advantage of tourism infrastructure.

1.2.4. If we concentrate on India, the highly qualified medical fraternity that is fluent in English has been the primary engine of medical tourism growth (Crooks et al., 2011). Over time, India has established itself as the epicenter of medical tourism, which is the merging of the tourist and health industries (Shanker, 2019). This falls under the area of service exports, and it has helped the country earn foreign currency and create a large number of jobs. Given that the primary goal of medical tourists is to obtain high-quality medical care at an affordable price, the outer focus must be on competition, while the internal focus must be on operational excellence.

1.2.5. Ganguli and Ebrahim (2017) defined medical tourism competitiveness as "the ability to strategically plan, set viable policy goals, establish effective multi-stakeholder partnerships, maintain an attractive environment, and ensure that all of these capabilities are harmonized to optimize the delivery of medical services that rank high on patient satisfaction surveys."

1.2.6. Mathur et al. (2017) suggested that telemedicine can be an effective tool for medical tourists and the rural population section who reside in far-flung areas. The effective role of telemedicine during the COVID-19 pandemic period was highlighted by Garg et al. (2020) where routine check-ups, follow-up care were possible for many in a populous, developing country like India where social distancing is difficult to maintain.

II. Research Methodology:

2.1 Data Collection: The entire study is based on secondary data. However researcher has tried to collect the data through authentic sources, especially Government reports and international reports and research reports.

2.2 Objectives of the Study:

- 1) To overview of the Medical Tourism at a glance.
- 2) To discuss the India's medical tourism scenario.
- 3) To discuss why India is emerging as a hub of medical tourism industry.
- 4) To discuss the various measures taken by Governments for promotion of Medical Tourism.
- 5) To suggest some remedies for promotion of Medical Tourism.

III. Results and Discussion of the Study:

3.1 Medical Tourism at a Glance:

Globalization has resulted in an increase in the number of independent businesses. As a result of globalization, an increasing number of people are travelling to other nations in order to receive quality treatment at a reasonable cost. Another crucial component for Medical Tourism is health care attention, which includes both surgical and non-surgical procedures. At a cumulative annual rate of growth (CAGR) of 10.8%, the global medical tourism industry is expected to rise \$21.93 billion in 2021. The expansion is mostly due to enterprises resuming operations and adapting to the new normal while recovering from the impact of COVID-19, which had previously resulted in stringent confinement measures such as social separation, remote working, and even the suspension of operations.

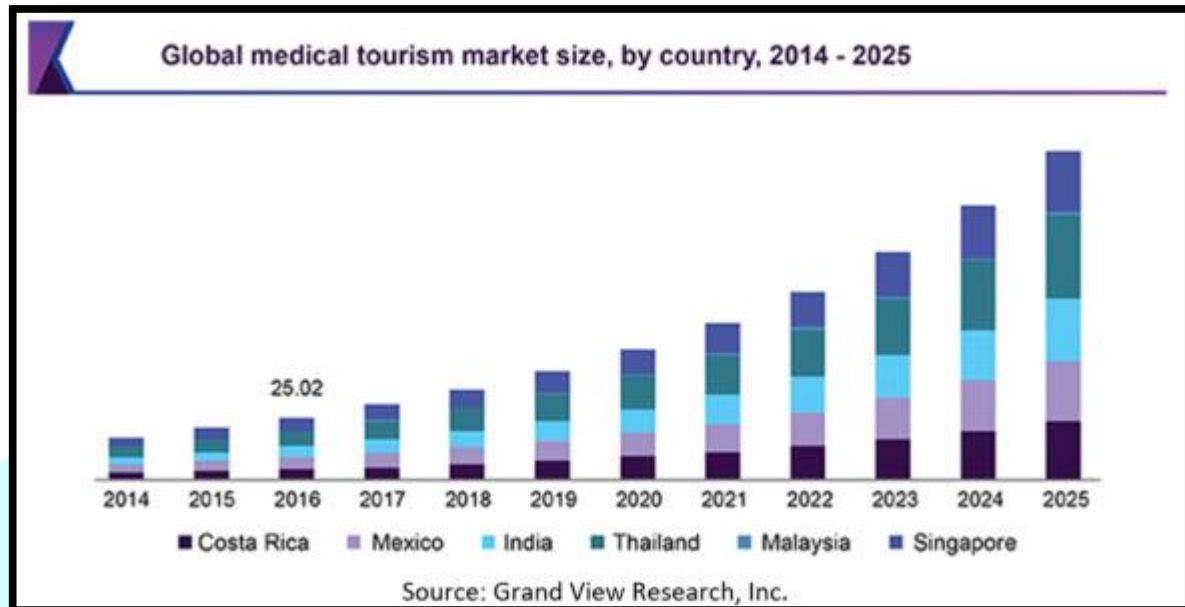
3.2 .1 Market Share & Segments:

- Cosmetic surgery accounted for 18.15% of the global medical tourism market share in 2020. Medicinal tourism is expanding on a worldwide basis, with patients seeking cosmetic surgery in countries abroad.
- Cardiovascular surgeries abroad are increasing in demand with the growing obesity rates and rise in healthcare costs. The global market for cardiac surgery will grow at a CAGR of 29.40% during the forecast period.
- Around 5-6 million Americans travel to several countries in Europe and Asia every year to undergo orthopedic procedures
- Women from countries such as the US and the UK may travel for IVF treatment and medications to save money. Some countries, such as the US, Canada, Greece, Ukraine, and Russia, are popular foreign surrogacy destinations. The global medical tourism market by fertility treatment is expected to reach USD 20.55 billion by 2026.
- Organ transplant is fast-growing, to adopt new techniques and newer destinations. The global market for organ transplants is expected to reach USD 14.85 billion by 2026.

3.2.2 Country Wise Medical Tourism Industry:

3.2.2.1 Medical Tourism industry has changed the entire scenario of traditional medical tourism. Due to various reasons people are travelling from developed country to developing countries. In 2014 Costa, India, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore had very little contribution in global medical tourism but recent trends showing that these countries performance is constantly increasing. Following chart predicate that these countries would be hub of medical tourism in 2025.

Fig; 1 global medical tourism market size by country



3.2.2.2 APAC: Prominent centers for medical tourism in APAC include Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, India, Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea. Private hospital chains and investors perceive APAC as an attractive business opportunity investing in infrastructure, equipment, staff, and services. The region has a large pool of healthcare facilities that offer medical tourism services. The India medical tourism market was valued at USD 2.89 billion in 2020 and is expected to reach USD 13.42 billion by 2026

3.2.2.3 Middle East & Africa: In 2020, the Middle East and Africa accounted for 25.00% of the market. The Middle East is one of the regions that host many potential health tourism powerhouses. Middle East countries are quickly gaining popularity as medicinal tourism destinations due to their low costs, English-speaking staff, and virtually nonexistent queues for treatment.

3.2.2.4 Latin America: Latin American countries offer health care facilities that cost around 50% less than that available in the US or Europe. Popular medical travel destinations in Latin America include Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and Costa Rica.

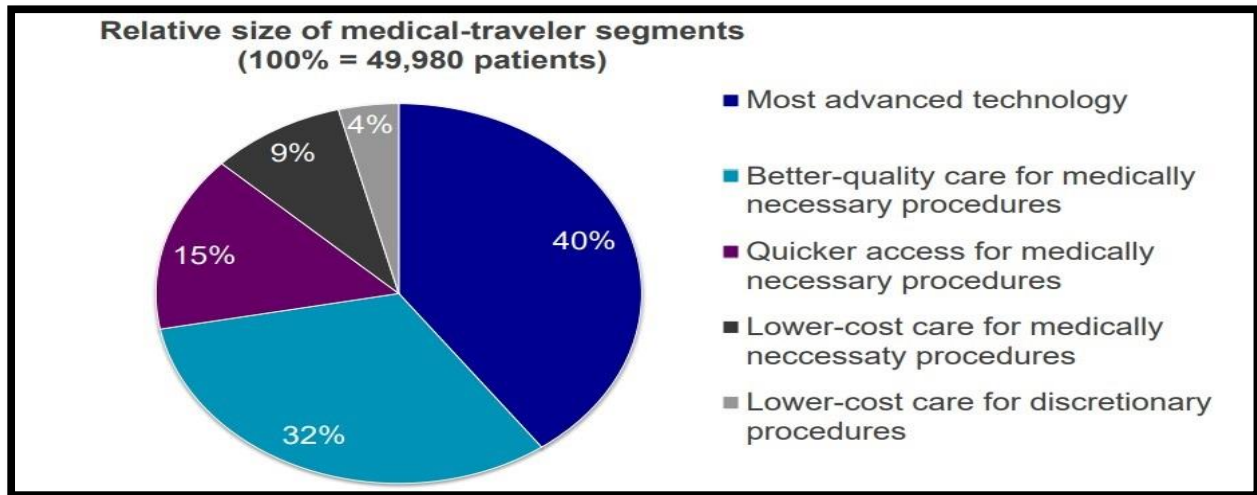
3.2.2.5 Europe: For decades, Europe has been known as a distinguished medical tourism hub. Over 90% of EU citizens currently undergo health treatment in their own country. 53% of the total population is willing to utilize medicinal services provided in other EU countries as it offers an excellent and comprehensive portfolio of opportunities at competitive prices.

3.2.2.6 North America: North America is relatively expensive in healthcare, but tourists still seek healthcare assistance in these countries because of the high reputation. It is well-known that healthcare in the US and Canada are recognized as universal and ranked among the best in the world.

3.3 Reasons for travelling in another countries:

Medical Tourism is now very common phenomenon. Patients are travelling from own country to another countries for many reasons such as advance technology, better care, less expenditure and immediate treatment and so on .Following Chart is representing various reasons for increasing medical tourism.

fig:2 relative size of medical traveler segments.



Above the figure expressing that 40% medical tourist travel for advance Technology and 32% for better quality care. Only 9% medical tourist were travel for lower cost treatment.

3.4 India's Medical tourism at a Glance:

3.4.1: In India, healthcare services are largely categorized into three broad categories:

- **Medical Treatment:** This includes cardiac care, organ transplantation, orthopedics, neurosciences, oncology, and bariatric surgery, among other things.
- **Wellness and Rejuvenation:** Services such as Rhytidoplasty, Stress alleviation, Spa treatments, and other procedures aimed at rejuvenation or aesthetic purposes.
- **Alternative Medicine:** AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) services are being sought.

3.4.2 India is mushrooming exponentially in international medical tourism industry, otherwise known as Medical Value Travel (MVT). In 2020, India's MVT industry's revenue was nearly US\$8 billion, with a compound annual growth rate of 16% percent.

A growing number of tourists are flocking to India for the superlative medical treatment that is being provided by skilled doctors. This has made India grow for medical tourists every year. Expat patients choose their medical tourist destination based on price, availability of knowledge, proximity, and ease of obtaining proper paperwork

The prime reason being the cost of medical treatment in India being cheaper when compared to Western Europe, North America and some Southeast Asian countries. India has been getting a good revenue turnover from its medical tourism from the past 4 to 6 years. Following Figure indicate the flow of medical tourist arrived in India among 2012-2018.



Fig: 3 Indian medical tourist arrival (2012-2018)

Source: Government of India, Health Ministry Report-2019

India is primarily visited by medical travelers from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Oman, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nigeria, Kenya, and Iraq across these categories. A small number of people also come from so-called bubble countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. According to data, around 697,453 foreign tourists came for medical treatment in India in the year 2019. Because of the coronavirus pandemic, following which lockdowns were imposed and flights were abruptly cancelled between various Asian and African countries, this number saw a dip. But the total tourist inflow can be seen picking up gradually now. With the removal of lockdowns and travel restrictions across borders globally, Indian medical tourism seeks progress in a number of critical cases like organ transplants and other severe cases. Hospitals and diagnostic centers in Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities such as Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Chandigarh, Jaipur, and others are popular medical tourism destinations in India.

3.4.3 .1 Cost comparisons of Medical Expenses:

Due to high medical expenses of various medical treatment specially developed countries people are preferring developing countries for quality and cheap medical facilities'. Following chart indicating the medical treatment expense of various countries.

Table-1 comparative cost treatment chart of various countries (in usa \$)

Medical Procedure	India	Thailand	Malasiya	Singapore	Turkey	South Koria
Heart Bypass	7900	15000	12100	17200	13900	26000
Angioplasty	5700	4200	8000	13400	4800	17700
Heart Valve Replacement	9500	17200	13500	16900	17200	39900
Hip Replacement	7200	17000	8000	13900	13900	21000
Hip Resurfing	9700	13500	12500	16350	10100	19500
Knee Replacement	6600	14000	7700	16000	10400	17500
Spinal Fusion	10300	9500	6000	12800	16800	16900
Dental Implant	900	1720	1500	2700	1100	1350
Lap Band	7300	11500	8150	9200	8600	10200
Gastric Sleeve	6000	9900	8400	11500	12900	9950
Gastric Bypass	7000	16800	9900	13700	13800	10900
Hysterectomy	3200	3650	4200	10400	7000	10400
Breast Implants	3000	3500	3800	8400	4500	3800
Rhinoplasty	2400	3300	2200	2200	3100	3980
Rhytidectomy	3500	3950	3550	440	6700	6000
Liposuction	2800	2500	2500	2900	3000	2900
Abdominoplasty	3500	5300	3900	4650	4000	5000
Lasik (both eyes)	1000	2310	3450	3800	1700	1700
IVF Treatment	2500	4100	6900	14900	5200	7900

 = Low Price,

 = Medium Price,

 = High Price

Source: Medical Tourism Association 2019.

Above chart indicating that compared to other countries India has less medical expenses except Angioplasty, Spinal Fusion, and Lap band, Rhinoplasty, Rhytidectomy and Liposuction. According to a study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 0.75 -1.6 million people from the USA travel out of the country for medical care to avoid high treatment cost. For instance, a hip replacement surgery in the USA costs approximately \$39,299 while the same surgery in India, Costa Rica or other developing countries would cost between \$7000 and \$15,000 including logistics. India is favorable medical destination in the world. With the developed countries finding themselves over burdened with the task of providing cost effective healthcare, India has emerged as a popular global Health Tourism destination.

3.4.3.2 Several underlying elements contribute to India's popularity as a medical tourism destination. The following are some of them:

1) Infrastructure and Digital Enablement: From eye, heart, and kidney problems to organ transplantation, orthopedics, and cancer, the Indian healthcare ecosystem is providing world-class care and treatment at reduced rates (almost 20 percent less for major surgical treatments as compared to those of developed equipped with internationally recognized facilities). India now has 37 Joint Commission International (JCI) and 513 Accreditation Board for Facilities and Healthcare Providers (NABH) recognized hospitals that deliver care that meets or exceeds worldwide quality standards and benchmarks. A number of the forerunners can also be found in India.

2) Trained Manpower: India is home to a number of the world's most known and revered doctors, who are pioneers in their fields of specialization and clinical skill. The country boasts the largest pool of doctors and paramedical professionals in South Asia, with over 1.2 million allopathic doctors, 0.17 million dentists, 2 million nurses, and 0.8 million formally educated Ayurvedic doctors. The majority of the country's doctors

have received training and experience at some of the world's most prominent medical institutions in the United States, the United Kingdom, and other developed countries, making them highly qualified and capable in their fields.

3) Alternative Medicine and Therapeutic Treatments: India has positioned itself as the center of AYUSH, naturopathy, Vedanta, and meditation techniques, which have been curated and restored from the oldest of sciences and humanities. India has a plethora of web sites and settings for retreating, recharging, and rejuvenating, ranging from yoga ashrams to spas and health centers that offer holistic therapy. Patients from all over the world are flocking to India because of the government's strong branding of AYUSH. Several companies, like Apollo and the Manipal Group, are opening wellness facilities with traditional medical treatments.

4) Care Quality: In addition to being the most affordable and accessible destination for clinical care and wellness treatment, India has emerged as a leader in providing care that is inclusive, personal, and compassionate, really embodying the "Athithi Devo Bhava" philosophy (Guest is such as God). Medical workers in India seek to maintain the highest standards by prioritizing the needs and interests of patients and listening to them empathetically and compassionately.

IV. Promotion of Medical Tourism Initiative by the Government:

To position India as a medical tourism hub, the Indian government has taken significant initiatives and interventions to reduce waiting times and ensure that medical patients and their attendants have a smooth travel, stay, and treatment experience. Among the most important initiatives are the following:

1) E-Medical and Medical Attendant Visas: The e-tourist visa, which was first introduced in 2014, has been expanded to include medical visits and medical attendant visas in order to simplify, ease, and expedite the travel procedures and protocols for allowing Medical Tourists to enter multiple times and stay for long periods of time. In addition, at major Indian airports, separate immigration counters and facilitation desks have been established to provide end-to-end help and facilitation. Because of these facilities and logistical support systems, the number of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) on medical visas in India has increased to 697,000 in 2019, up from 495,056 in 2017.

2) The National Medical and Wellness Tourism Board: The National Medical and Wellness Tourism Board, chaired by the Minister of Tourism, was established to develop an enthralled and comprehensive institutional framework to market and enhance Medical Tourism, including the Indian system of drugs covered by AYUSH. With representatives from the Ministry of AYUSH, the Quality Council of India (QCI), and the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers, the Board serves as the umbrella organization that controls and promotes Medical Tourism.

3) Digital Enablement: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as well as the Services Export Promotion Council (SEPC), have built a healthcare portal for medical tourists from across the world that serves as a complete, one-stop shop for hospital and travel-related information on India. The internet portal provides access to 124 accredited medical facilities, including 93 medical centres, 30 Ayurveda and wellness institutes, and 1 special facility.

4) Fiscal and non-financial initiatives: The Ministry of Tourism wants to provide resources to approved Wellness Tourism Service Providers (WSTPs) and Medical Tourism Service Providers (MTSPs) under the Marketing Development Assistance Scheme in order to stimulate Medical Tourism within the country (MDA). The government has also made a concerted effort to promote traditional medicine and related treatment techniques. The Union has just given INR 2,970 Crore to the Ministry of AYUSH for FY 2021-22, compared to INR 2,122 Crore for FY 2020-21, allowing it to leverage centuries of spiritual philosophy understanding that is unique and unrivalled to the state. In addition, the Ministry of Tourism has established a Wellness and Medical Tourism Promotion Committee (WMTPC) with detailed guidelines to promote wellness and medical tourism as niche tourism products among international tourists and to make India a holistic tourism destination offering a variety of medical services and techniques for a period of twelve months.

The government's growth drivers and initiatives attest to India's status as the world's leading healthcare destination, inviting the world to "Heal in India."

V. Suggestions:

- 1) India has to develop more super multispecialty hospital at small town which helps to reduce staying and lodging expenses.
- 2) More research in medical field to develop cheap and easy accessible treatment.
- 3) Promotes measures to attract more medical tourism.
- 4) More advertisement and collaborations with foreign tour agencies would be help to medical tourism.
- 5) Promotes our Ayurvedic and Traditional Medical treatment.
- 6) E- Visa, visa on arrival and easy process of visa will help to attract more medical tourist.

VI Conclusion:

India's medical tourism Industry is a sun shine industry. Medical tourism industry is generating foreign exchange as well as job opportunities. Medical tourism industry generated 167,000 job opportunities in 2020 and revenue was 8 billion \$. India is also most favarouble destiny because of skilled doctors and excellent health care facilities. Indian government is also promoting traditional treatment 'AYUSH'. Central and state governments are taking various efforts to attract medical tourist. Globally there is tough competitions in medical tourism industry, still India's performance is quite good. Due to public private partnership and FDI our medical tourism industry is growing 16% CGR in 2020. During the pandemic period medical tourism adversely effected because of international travelling restrictions. Once the world overcome from this pandemic definitely India will have win-win situation.

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