

Medical Tourism in Hungary

Hungary has ancient traditions, outstanding facilities and internationally acknowledged achievements in the field of medical tourism due to the wide range of natural treasures and heritages possessed by the country.

Uniquely great supply of springs ensures the continuous operation of a world-wide well-known service system providing complex therapies – covering the whole spectrum of treatments – especially in case of locomotor disorders and certain gynaecological diseases.

Based on the medicinal springs of Hungary:

- 13 qualified health sites and spa locations: Balf, Bük, Kékestető, Lillafüred, Balatonfüred, Debrecen, Eger, Gyula, Hajdúszoboszló, Harkány, Hévíz, Parádszabolcs, Zalakaros,
- 385 settlements offering the experience of thermal baths
- amongst which 66 are certified medicinal baths,
- 54 health spa resorts (14.240 beds) and 89 wellness hotels (13.219 beds);
- in addition, further facilities such as medicinal caves, sites of therapeutic mud and mofettes (dry baths) guarantee the success of recreation and medical treatments.

Recreation seekers can enjoy the dynamically widening wellness opportunities in a great variety of health resorts and exclusive spa hotels.

However, besides the above detailed natural element based traditional branches of medical tourism, Hungary can also assure professional medical services since the country has acquired significant international reputation in the field of high-quality health care due to outstanding scientists such as Semmelweis and Szentgyörgyi. Additionally, in respect to medical equipment, applied methods and training, the country has positioned itself as one of the market leaders in Europe. In the field of innovative rehabilitation, Pető Institute brought significant reputation and acknowledgement for Hungary all over the world.

The role of tourism based on medical services is continuously growing: Hungarian dentists and aesthetic surgeons are regarded as market leaders in the EU, providing services for an increasing number of foreigners as well. The group of sending countries has been expanding; although the majority of patients are coming from the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland, visits by Italian, Dutch, Russian patients and clients from overseas countries proves to be more and more frequent. The most important pull factor is the extremely good price-value rate guaranteed by the country, which means that for half or one-third of the Western European prices the same high standard of medical service is ensured.

In Hungary, the fields of dental, aesthetical and ophthalmologic interventions, demanding special technology are dominated by private providers; whilst rehabilitation, joint surgery, ophthalmologic operations (crystalline lens and eye ground operations), treatment of cancerous and autoimmune patients and in vitro fertilization are provided mainly by public institutions.

The most popular services amongst non-Hungarian patients are ophthalmologic operations, spine surgeries and gynaecologic interventions. Foreigners with diseases of skeletal muscles and connective tissue most frequently take part in persistent treatment such as medical bath-based rehabilitation.

A significant proportion of foreign patients – especially who are suffering from locomotor diseases – arrive with family members, thus enhancing not only medical but also leisure tourism. Furthermore, in this manner, the importance of MICE and Business Tourism is also augmenting.

In conclusion, the special feature of Hungarian medical tourism comes from its wide range of supplies that varies from recreation and wellness services through thermal-based rehabilitation to medical services based on up-to-date high quality treatments, and create a complex product, which is complemented by quality leisure tourism.

Options for cooperation

Tourism of Hungary can offer the following possibilities for medical collaboration:

- In spas and medical hotels, family and group offers are available including recreation based on modern medical fitness and rehabilitation.
- Modern dental care and aesthetic surgery, accompanied by outstanding quality of hotel and travel services, have extremely favourable price-value rate.
- University clinics and national institutes can ensure the up-to-date treatment of special diseases for only a fraction of the European price, combined with superb accommodation opportunities.