

An Insight into Malaysia's Medical Tourism Industry

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Abstract

The global growth in the flow of patients and health professionals as well as medical technology, capital funding and regulatory regimes across national borders has given rise to new patterns of consumption and production of healthcare services over recent decades. A significant new element of a growing trade in healthcare has involved the movement of patients across borders in the pursuit of medical treatment and health - a phenomenon commonly termed as 'medical tourism'. There has been a shift towards patients from richer, more developed nations travelling to less developed countries to access health services, largely driven by the low-cost treatments available in the latter and helped by cheap flights and internet sources of information.

The research paper provides an insight into Malaysia's medical tourism industry, value network adopted to attract foreign patients, drawing some comparisons mainly with closest regional competitors, Thailand, Singapore and India where relevant. This development is framed in the context of globalization of the healthcare industry, and an increasing trend in the commodification of healthcare and its implications.

Key Words: Medical tourism industry, Commodification, Health care services, Health care Industry, treatments and Health Tourism,

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