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MEDICAL TOURISM – A RAPIDLY DEVELOPING, PROMISING INDUSTRY

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Abstract: Medical tourism, both domestic and inbound, is rapidly developing in Russia. To keep the pace, it is necessary to improve its service, infrastructure, introduce modern achievements of science and technology in medicine, and improve the pricing policy. To help the development of medical tourism in Russia, the Russian Medical Tourism Association was established. The aim of this association is to provide patients with medical tourism programs with high-quality treatment at the level of world standards, using the capabilities of both public health care and the potential of private Russian and foreign clinics. In Russia, there is a tendency in the organization and development of the creation of regional tourist recreational clusters with a specialization in medical tourism. At present, the living standard of the population of the Russian Federation has decreased, therefore, only wealthy segments of the population can use these services. To attract more tourists, it is necessary to constantly improve and advance the entire system of the health resort complex. It is necessary to pursue a competent pricing policy so that prices for medical tourism services do not grow faster than the income of potential consumers of these services.

Keywords: Medical tourism, medical tourism association, medical service, tourist and recreational clusters.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an economic phenomenon of the world economy of our century. In many countries of the world, tourism plays a leading role in the formation of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), is a source of financial revenues and economic

development of the state, its subjects and municipalities. Tourism is one of the three leading sectors of the world economy after the oil and automotive industries. The development of tourism is influenced by many factors, such as demographic, natural-geographical, socio-economic, historical, religious, political, legal, etc. Over the past decade, tourism has reached a certain level of development, which at the moment has a tendency for its intensive development and is focused on increasing the quality of life of people.

One of the types of tourism aimed at this is medical tourism. The term has many definitions. We adhere to the definition given by the Swiss tourism specialist S. Caspar - "medical tourism as a set of connections and phenomena that arise when people change their permanent place of residence in order to improve, stabilize and restore physical, mental and social health under the influence of prescribed health and of a medical nature, for which the place where they are at the same time is not a permanent place of residence and work" (15). Medical tourism is, first, health travel, the main part of a tourist's time is spent on receiving medical care. Medical tourism of a sanatorium-resort orientation provides medical services to a tourist for the preventive purpose of maintaining his/her body in a healthy state or for the purpose of treatment in sanatorium-resort institutions using natural resources (mineral water, mud, etc.).

METHODS

The world market for medical tourism has been constantly growing in recent years. In 2017, its growth outpaced the development of the global economy, according to experts of Euromonitor International, and amounted to 4% (compared to world GDP - 3.5%). Medical tourism revenues in 2017 were \$15 billion, and Euromonitor International predicts these figures to be increase by 30% by 2022 (8) The world leaders in the number of medical tourists are Thailand and Singapore. Most of all, in 2017, tourists left China for medical help. This trend will continue, and China will become the largest source of demand for outbound medical tourism services. According to the WHO, there is an increase in the life expectancy of people in the world, the reason for this, according to experts of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, is that more people have begun to lead a healthy lifestyle, and in countries there is an increase in the level of income and education of the population.

Medical tourism in Russia is also growing. In this regard, the Federation Council on January 18, 2018, at a working meeting where issues related to the problems and prospects for the development of medical tourism in Russia were discussed, proposed to include a block of issues related to medical tourism in the Health Development Strategy until 2025. Senator Dmitry Shostokhin noted that the Russian Federation is developing opportunities to provide high-level medical services to both residents of Russia and foreign citizens in cardiovascular surgery, traumatology, orthopedics, ophthalmology, dentistry, urology, gynecology, plastic surgery and other areas of medicine.

To promote the development of medical tourism in Russia, the Russian Medical Tourism Association was established. The task of this association is to provide patients with medical tourism programs with high-quality global-standard treatment using the capabilities of both public health care and the potential of private Russian and foreign clinics. The official name of the association is the of International Medical Tourism Association (IMTA). According to the IMTA, in 2016, about 20,000 people from various countries came to Russia for medical services (10). President of the IMTA Konstantin

Onishchenko noted an increase in the number of foreign tourists, given that in 2017 the number of such tourists was already 110,000 people. The reason for the growth was the attractive price of the provided medical services and their quality. This makes it possible to predict an increase in the number of tourists visiting Russia to receive medical care. In addition, the high level of medical specialists in Russia has contributed to the fact that many tourists visit Russia for medical care and consultations with specific specialists.

The development of medical tourism is facilitated by the most serious, attentive attitude of the country's leadership to the development of the entire tourism industry. It was noted above that the rate of tourism development, both in the world and in our country, is ahead of the GDP growth rate. Today tourism in Russia forms more than 3.4% of the country's GDP (9). In recent years, domestic and inbound tourism has developed greatly thanks to the implementation of the Federal Target Program (hereinafter the Program) "Development of domestic and inbound tourism in the Russian Federation (2011-2018) as amended on February 7, 2018". This Program was drawn up considering the development of the entire national economy of the Russian Federation and meeting the need for high-quality tourist services of our and foreign citizens.

The Program is aimed at restoring working capacity, maintaining and strengthening people's health, improving their quality of life. For the 2011-2018 Program, total funding allocated was 120.7 billion rubles, of which: the federal budget - 26.7 billion rubles (22.1%); the consolidated budgets of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation - 8.4 billion rubles (7.0%); extra-budgetary sources - 85.6 billion rubles (70.9%) (6). The new idea of this Program is to create regional clusters, which are a set of interconnected recreational and cultural facilities, equipped with the necessary infrastructure. One such example is the creation of Eco-resort Kavmin Vody, a tourist and recreational cluster in the Stavropol Territory, aimed at improving the health of people. For the organization and creation of this cluster, funding was allocated in the amount of 1573.5 million rubles, of which 355.7 million from the federal budget rubles (22.6%), from the budgets of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and local budgets - 79.5 million rubles (5.05%), from non-budgetary sources - 1138.3 million rubles (72.3%) (Federal Target Program "Development of domestic and inbound tourism in the Russian Federation for 2011-2018). The main funding (72.3%) comes from extra-budgetary sources, only 22.6% - from the budget of the entity. Another example is the creation of Sviyazhsk, the tourist and recreational cluster, the Republic of Tatarstan. The entire budget of the cluster consists of 415 million rubles. Of these, 41.8 million rubles (10.07%) was allocated from the Federal budget.

The budget of the constituent entity of the Russian Federation and local budgets allocated 71.2 million rubles (17.16%), and extra-budgetary sources - 302 million rubles (72.77%) (Federal Target Program "Development of domestic and inbound tourism in the Russian Federation for 2011-2018). Belokurikha, the tourist and recreational cluster of the Altai Territory can serve as a similar example, aimed at improving the health of people. The purpose of its creation is to expand the use of the potential of the sanatorium-resort complex of the Altai Territory, to form new proposals for sanatorium-resort and tourist-recreational services. Before the start of the construction of this cluster in the region, a marketing study was carried out, which showed that there is an unsatisfactory demand for a quality health-improving tourist product. For a more efficient development of the territory of the tourist cluster, it was planned to create a recreation zone, which included construction a number of tourist complexes for various

purposes on an area of 7.7 thousand hectares in 2011-2016 (2). The resort has a unique natural resource - a curative radon water spring (2).

The Belokurikha project is being implemented according to the principle of public-private partnership. The construction of external infrastructure is carried out at the expense of the state, and the construction of tourist industry facilities is at the expense of private investors. The total cost of construction of Belokurikha, the tourist and recreational cluster, is 7739.4 million rubles. Commencement of construction – 2011 (6). The tourist infrastructure of this cluster includes 12 hotels for 1300 beds, five sanatorium complexes for 1300 beds, 170 mini-hotels for 1100 beds and other facilities. The commissioning of this cluster will increase the number of tourists who use the services of collective accommodation facilities from 1205 thousand people in 2016 to 2000 people by 2030 (8).

Different owners are involved in the creation of the Belokurikha cluster: the state, state funding from the federal budget in the amount of 1812.3 million rubles, which is 23.42% of the total funding; regional administration and municipal authorities - their funding amounted to 391.1 million rubles, or 5.05% of it, "off-budget" organizations from their budgets finance the project in the amount of 55.0 million rubles, i.e. - 71.53% of total funding (6). Another feature of Belokurikha is its location in a unique place of the Altai Territory, which has a number of advantages: before the construction of this cluster, a tourist flow had already been formed in the region, which was mainly directed to medical services; the region possesses unique radon-containing mineral waters; a multi-profile climatic resort was created here earlier. The examples given relate to the federal target program "Development of domestic and inbound tourism in the Russian Federation for 2011-2018, which is ending this year.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On August 14, 2017, the Federal Agency for Tourism provided the Government of Russia with a draft Concept of the Federal Target Program "Development of domestic and inbound tourism in the Russian Federation for 2019-2025", which was approved by the government (2). The Program notes that today tourism, as mentioned above, forms more than 3.4% of the country's GDP, directly or indirectly affects 53 related industries, while the creation of one job in the tourism sector entails the creation of up to five jobs in these industries (9). This Program is aimed at sustainable socio-economic development of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and improving the quality of life of people. The program provides for that one ruble of the invested budgetary funds can attract 2.2 rubles of off-budget investment (2).

In the implementation of the concept of the new Program, the cluster approach remains, which differs from the previous Program 2011-2018 in the creation of clusters guided by tourist destinations and interregional routes, rather than carried out within one region. The main objective of the new Program is to grow tourist services, outstripping the growth of the Russian economy by two times, so that the share of tourism in Russia's GDP grows from 3.4% to 5.0% in 2025 (10). For the implementation of the new Program, it is planned to allocate according to the optimal variant a total of 615.11 billion rubles. This is 5.1 times more than was allocated for the implementation of the previous Program 2011-2018 (2). By 2025, it is planned to increase the tourist flow by 28% (2). Implementation of the new Program should consider the mistakes made in the implementation of the Program for 2011-2018, and clearly specify the

incentives for investors.

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for the development of the concept of the new Program for 2019-2025, which created an interdepartmental structure that includes Rostourism, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Finance, and the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. An important role in the development of medical tourism is played by the "Draft State Strategy for the Development of the Sanatorium and Resort Complex of the Russian Federation" (hereinafter the Project). Project materials were published on April 7, 2017, updated on January 22, 2018. The Project emphasizes "that comprehensive health-improving and preventive measures increase the health level of people who have undergone treatment by 1.7 times. The use of the medical resources of the sanatorium-resort complex and low-cost effective medical technologies increases the efficiency of citizens' health improvement by 25-30% and reduces the cost of treatment in hospitals and clinics by 10-15%. Injured people pay off threefold, and patients who have been treated after a heart attack – sevenfold, "the number of patients with various exacerbations is reduced by 2-6 times" (6). The sanatorium-resort complex affects the level of economic development of the country, since the costs of health care are significantly reduced, helps to restore the working capacity of the working population, and improves the quality of life of people.

The goal of the Project is "the creation and development of a modern sanatorium-resort complex for the effective use of natural, medicinal resources for the purposeful use of vacationers as needed" (3). For this purpose, it is proposed to create medical scientific and educational "sanatorium-resort" clusters that could carry out research, educational and medical activities. The implementation of the strategy for the development of the sanatorium-resort complex of the Russian Federation will promote the growth of the level of medical tourism, both domestic and inbound, increasing the provision of sanatorium-resort treatment for people who need it up to 45%, improving the awareness of both the population of the country and doctors about all the possibilities sanatorium-resort complex of the Russian Federation, on the introduction of new medical and health-improving technologies (3).

SUMMARY

The activities of the sanatorium-resort complex in medical tourism are aimed at therapeutic and prophylactic measures that are of great importance in medical rehabilitation, which strengthen human health and improve the quality of life of people. At present, the living standard of the population of the Russian Federation has decreased, therefore, only wealthy segments of the population can use these services. To attract more tourists, it is necessary to constantly improve and advance the entire system of the health resort complex. It is necessary to pursue a competent pricing policy so that prices for medical tourism services do not grow faster than the income of potential consumers of these services. Currently, there is growing demand for the consumption of health resort services, mainly due to the wealthiest strata of the population and foreigners.

CONCLUSIONS

Russia has a colossal potential of a sanatorium-resort complex, modern state and

private medical clinics and centers. All this should contribute to the rapid development of medical tourism in Russia, both domestic and inbound. Its further rise requires eliminating the shortage of qualified medical workers able to communicate with patients in foreign languages, increasing the low level of service, and updating the outdated sanatorium and resort material and technical base. It is necessary to pay attention to the absence of the category of "medical visa" in Russian consular practice, so that it would be possible, on the basis of medical documents, to obtain a visa in an accelerated mode, a flexible schedule for foreign tourists to stay in Russia in case of their treatment in Russia.

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