

Addressing the Gaps: The Philippines as an Emerging Health Tourism Destination

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RECOMMENDATION



Issue a Joint Administrative Order to guide the national health tourism program and to strengthen the National Technical Working Group of the program.

OVERVIEW

Health Tourism is the availment of services aimed to improve the health of individuals who avail such services outside their country

Medical Tourism is the availment of medical services by foreign patients

Wellness Tourism is the availment of duly approved wellness services by foreign clients

The rise of health tourism in the Philippines can bring about considerable benefits to the country's health system and economic growth. However, there are gaps in policy and governance that needs to be addressed to ensure the development of the Philippine Medical Travel and Wellness Tourism Program

KEY MESSAGES

1 The health tourism program of the Philippines is still on its early stage of development. Although the national government has already taken initial efforts to develop the program since mid-2000s, much has to be done to catch up with its competitors.



2 The Philippines has strong features that it should maximize to be more competitive in health tourism. These include its culture of hospitality, large pool of English-speaking professionals, competitive price advantage on health services, and quality of education and skills of health professionals, among others.



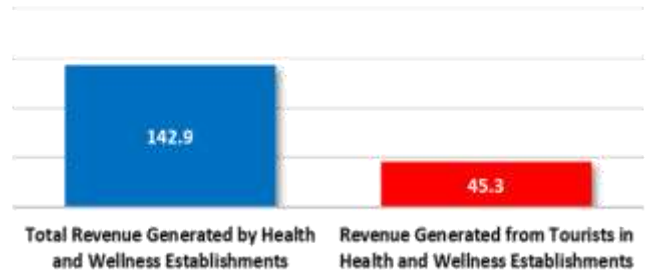
3 A national health tourism program requires a whole-of-government and multi-sectoral approach. This will streamline the government efforts in operationalizing the health tourism program.

BENEFITS OF MEDICAL TOURISM IN THE PHILIPPINES

1 Health tourism may provide additional funds to augment the financing gap of the Universal Health Care



PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF REVENUE
GENERATED IN HEALTH AND WELLNESS
ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE PHILIPPINES, 2014
(IN BILLIONS)



2 Medical tourism may help in the retention of human resources for health (HRH)

THE GAPS IN POLICY AND GOVERNANCE



1 Governance: Fragmented and unconcerted government efforts to develop the health tourism program



3 Operational Issues: Lack of clear regulations on health tourism establishments, lack of reliable data and uniform definition on health tourism



2 Health-related issues: potential equity issues on the distribution and provision of health care resources, and minimal number of competitive health tourism facilities



4 Others: inadequate branding and promotional strategies, and insurance portability

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