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HEALTH TOURISM IN UKRAINE

Health and medical tourism is one of the most persistent species tourism markets in Ukraine and priority areas, but it most needs support and coordinated development. Available and potential reserves of medical resources, taking into account their qualitative and quantitative characteristics, should at the moment become the stimulus of public practices in restoring human health, extending the active longevity period, and introducing a healthy lifestyle.

Today, healthcare tourism is developing practically in all regions of the world and is one of the most popular tourist destinations. In our country, this kind of tourism also takes a rather significant place due to favorable climatic conditions, the proximity of the sea and the mountains. In Ukraine, the Carpathian region and the Black Sea region are the most desirable places for recreation. One of the most popular among the fans of health tourism in the regions of Ukraine is the Transcarpathian region.

The Transcarpathian region has a favorable geographical location and has a rich natural-resource potential, which allows developing all types of tourism in the region. In addition, the Transcarpathian region is bordered by four European countries, which contributes to the development and improvement of international tourism in the region.

The essence and content of health and medical tourism is determined on the basis of the principle of its division into four main components: only medical or treatment component based on conducting clinical exploring with subsequent surgical treatment – the clinical sphere, rehabilitation (after treatment or surgical intervention), health improving (or, as it is otherwise called, valeologic) and recreational. The first three components, are directly related to medical care, and the fourth is a complex of leisure and entertainment activities. According to the purpose of travelling of health tourists scientists distinguish different types. For example, Tourism Research and Marketing proposed types which is presented in figure 1.

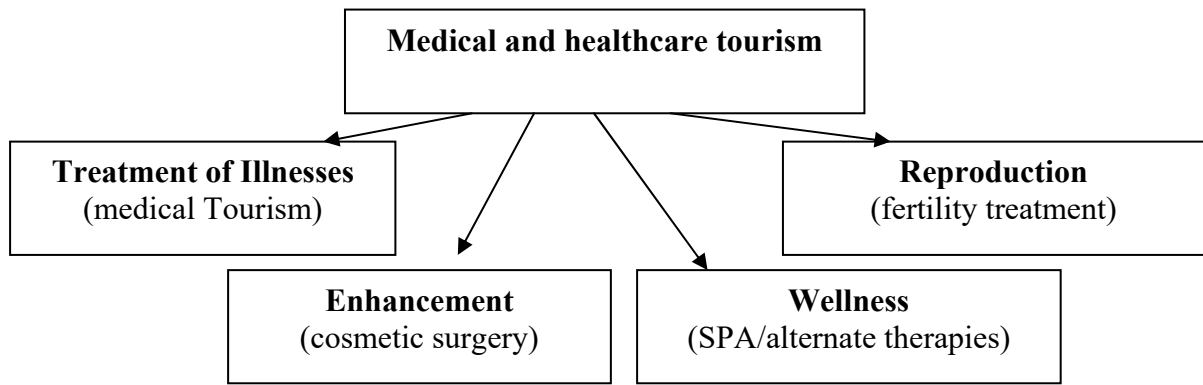


Figure 1. Types of health and medical tourism [1]

The growth of healthcare tourism is driven by various factors, such as the rapid life tempo, a lot of stressful situations, the relatively high costs of medical operations in developed countries, the increase in reasonably priced international travel options, increasing quality standards in developing countries, increasing demand for cosmetic and dental operations, increased sophistication of medical tourism operations, government support and the rise of information and communication technologies. In general, all these factors are presented in figure below.

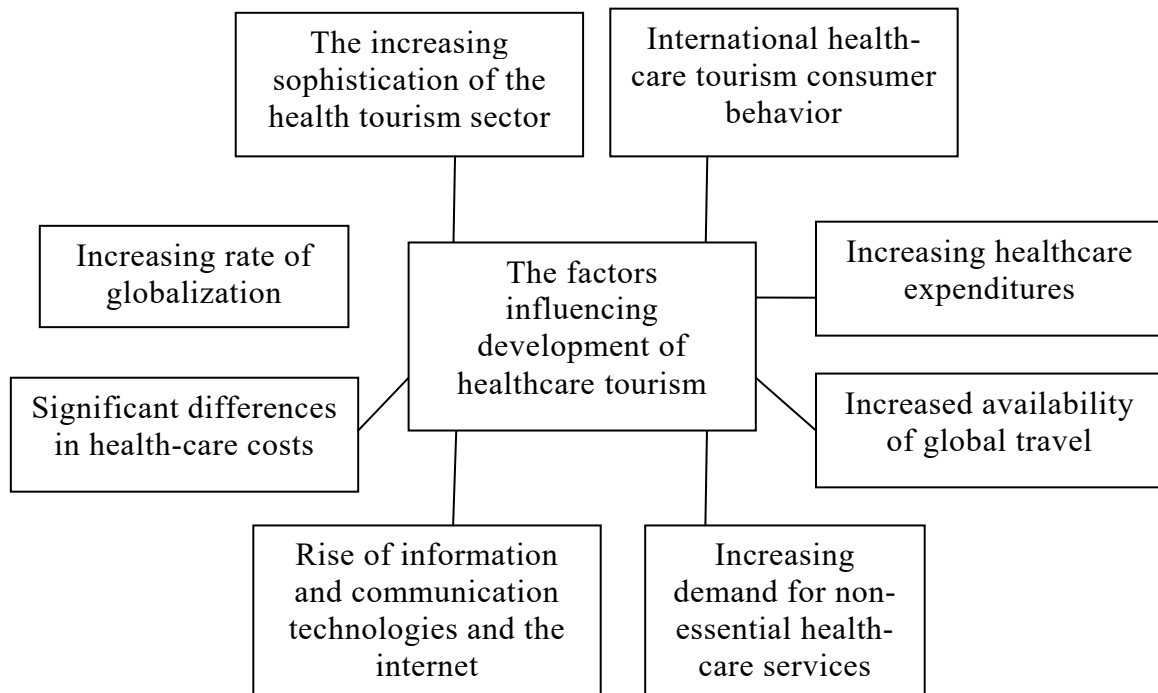


Figure 2. The factors influencing development of healthcare tourism

On the other hand the development of healthcare recreational zones of Transcarpathia (for exp.) has always potential threats to the effective development of the spa resort area of Zakarpattia, we suggest to note:

- 1) high competition with a powerful neighboring resort in Lviv region;
- 2) the need for major repairs of the local transport infrastructure (in case of an increase in passenger traffic possible emergency situations);
- 3) reduced access to investment and credit resources;
- 4) changes in the needs and preferences of potential consumers of resort services, as a consequence – loss of customers;
- 5) outflow of skilled personnel in the field of tourism – most of skilled students leave region and move to work in capital or go to work to another countries.

In order to achieve the sustainable development of health tourism in the Transcarpathian region, the Government is developing the Tourism and Resorts Development Program in the Transcarpathian region for duration of 5 years, and thus, this Program in Transcarpathia region for 2016-2020 is currently in operation.

Table 1

Expected results from the implementation of the Tourism and Resorts Development Program in Transcarpathian region for 2016–2020

Name of task	Name of indicators	Unit	Indicator values over the years				
			2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Economic	Number of tourists served	thousand people	390	450	550	610	680
	The volume of services rendered	million UAH	360	420	490	550	610
	Revenues to budgets of all levels	million UAH	35	38	37	38	40
Social	Number of people employed in the sphere of tourism and activities of resorts	thousand people	5	6,5	6	7	8

Source : [2]

Implementation of the measures will promote the creation of conditions for the implementation of effective marketing and information policy to support the regional and domestic tourism product in the

domestic and international tourist markets, increase tourist flows and increase revenues from tourism activities to the budgets of all levels. The development of tourism in the region will stimulate economic activity, develop small and medium-sized businesses, and will help create new jobs in different sectors of the economy. Creation of a high-quality tourist and recreational product and the formation of a tourism and recreational services market, which is competitive on the domestic and world markets, will provide integrated development of the territory, will contribute to the formation of the region as a center for promotional activity of the tourism industry. Expected results from the implementation of the Tourism and Resorts Development Program in Transcarpathia region are presented in the table below.

Refference

1. TRAM. Medical tourism: a global analysis. A report by Tourism Research and Marketing (TRAM), ATLAS, 2006.
2. Державна служба статистики України [Електронний ресурс]. – Режим доступу : <http://www.ukrstat.gov.ua/>