



INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT ON MEDICAL TRAVEL, WELLNESS & RETIREMENT

12 - 15 October 2010 • Makati Shangri-La Hotel, Philippines

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (for BUSINESS SECTION)

Medical Tourism to Drive Philippine Economy

*DoT expects total revenue of US \$3 billion
from 1 mn foreign patients by 2015*

Medical tourism in the Philippines continues to grow, with the number of overseas patients and clients rising from 60,000 foreign patients in 2007 to about 100,000 foreign patients in 2008 and gross revenues estimated to be at US\$350mn since the program was launched in 2006.¹

In light of this booming phenomenon, the Department of Tourism expects the Philippines to corner a total of US\$3bn of the global medical tourism industry by 2015, with 200,000 foreign patients arriving annually.

“The Philippines is well-positioned to become a leading international healthcare destination. Our country has distinct advantages compared to other countries—we have a large pool of very competent healthcare professionals with excellent English communication skills. There’s the innate hospitality and optimism of the Filipino people, as well as the country’s pleasant, tropical weather. Furthermore, the Philippines boasts of reasonably priced healthcare services and a favorable business environment,” said Undersecretary Cynthia Carrion, who heads the DOT’s Office for Sports and Wellness.

Among the core healthcare services and treatments identified by the DoT to be the most in-demand among foreigners visiting the Philippines are: Executive Check-ups, Cardiovascular Care, Cancer Care and Stem Cell Therapy, Joint Replacement Surgery, Multi-Disciplinary Weight Management Care, Eye Care and Sight Restoration, Dental Care, Aesthetic and Dermatological Surgery, Spa Wellness Treatments, and Long-Term Care/Retirement.

“We encourage our healthcare providers to constantly upgrade their facilities for them to be at par with world-class standards. This is part of the roadmap we have developed for medical tourism, with the public and private sectors forging partnerships towards the common goal of capturing global markets and offering the best in health and wellness,” said Dr. Joven Cuanang, President of HEAL Philippines.

Producer



Host



Knowledge Partners



Carrion shared that as proof of the Philippines actively promoting medical tourism, the country will be hosting the **International Summit on Medical Travel, Wellness and Retirement** (IMWell Summit) on October 12-15, 2010 at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

Staged in collaboration with Asian players that include India, Thailand, Malaysia, Korea, Taiwan and Singapore, the IMWell Summit is envisioned to be a forum for different countries to hold multilateral dialogues and discuss how they can cooperate for the region to further develop medical tourism.

"The IMWell Summit demonstrates that the Philippines is at the forefront of this 'sunrise' industry, which has been a key driver in our economic growth. As a pioneering initiative, it also establishes our pro-active stance in cooperating with our neighboring countries and making them partners in medical tourism," said Joyce Alumno, Conference Director.

The four-day event features a full agenda that includes plenary sessions on Industry Perspectives, Opportunities and Risks; Regional Presentation of Best Practices; Global Opportunities in the Retirement Industry; Marketing and Branding for Global Markets; Quality Management and the Continuity of Care; and the Future of Medical Tourism and Healthcare Travel Industry.

The IMWell Summit also includes Executive Workshops about Balanced Score Card in Healthcare Organization and Effective Leadership Styles in Healthcare Organization. Four break-out conference tracks will be presented: Quality in Healthcare, Marketing, Investment and Capacity Building, and Retirement, giving an in-depth look at each specific aspect of medical and wellness tourism.

"Medical and wellness tourism, as well as retirement, opens a new frontier for investment opportunities and revenue generation. The IMWell Summit is an excellent avenue for CEOs, investors, entrepreneurs and business-minded people to explore possibilities in this booming industry, as the event gathers the region's leading policy makers, decision makers and solution providers," said Dr. Sanjiv Malik, a renowned international guru in medical tourism, who sits as the Conference Honorary Chairman.

"Aside from our complete agenda that covers the extensive terrain of medical tourism, what makes the IMWell Summit truly exceptional is the fact that it's a pioneering event in regional cooperation. It is the first of its kind to present the global state of healthcare, explore current and future opportunities in medical tourism, and map out a strategy for the growth of the entire industry," added Alumno.

The IMWell Summit is produced and organized by HIM Communications, in collaboration with the Department of Tourism as Host, and supported by the Department of Health, Department of Trade and Industry, Retirement and Healthcare Coalition, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Spa Association of the Philippines, with HealthCORE and Asian Academy for Healthcare Executives as Knowledge Partners.

For more information about the event, please visit www.IMWellSummit.com, or call (63 2) 910.8030 or 468.9999, or email imwellsummit@himcommunications.com.

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Honors Integrated Marketing (HIM) Communications Inc. is a full-service marketing communications firm that provides a complete suite of integrated marketing solutions for a wide range of high-profile clients.

HIM is a staunch advocate of Philippine medical tourism and has been instrumental in the grand launch of this program in the country, organizing the international congress and expo that put the spotlight on the Philippines as a haven of health and wellness. Because of this, the Public Relations Society of the Philippines has honored HIM with the Anvil Award of Merit under Institutional and Corporate PR Programs – Public Affairs, Tourism category.

The fast-rising integrated marketing communications firm also services clients in various industries, including real estate, wellness, healthcare, among others. With a core staff of versatile and experienced marketing communications professionals, HIM Communications is dedicated to making your message work for you.

¹ Figures for 2009 are still being compiled and finalized, but it is expected to be over and above the figure for the past recorded year.