

Wellness Meets Value: India Rises as a Global Medical Travel Destination

Policy-driven initiatives, including the Ayush Visa and Ayush Quality Mark, are advancing India's leadership in affordable, quality-assured wellness care

प्रविष्टि तिथि: 22 JAN 2026 12:56PM by PIB Delhi

India is emerging as one of the fastest-growing destinations for Medical Value Travel (MVT), combining world-class medical infrastructure, highly skilled healthcare professionals and cost-effective treatment with the country's unique strength in traditional systems of medicine and holistic wellness.

From complex surgical procedures to long-term wellness therapies, India today offers an integrated healthcare ecosystem that is increasingly attracting international patients seeking quality, affordability and trust. Cost-effective treatments are delivered in India at globally benchmarked hospitals by renowned specialists, while traditional Ayush systems add a distinctive preventive and wellness dimension to the country's medical tourism appeal.

Highlighting the significance of Medical Value Travel for global health, during his address at One Earth One Health – Advantage Healthcare India 2023, the hon'ble Prime Minister had said, "India sees medical value travel and health workforce mobility as important for a healthy planet." The Hon'ble PM had further said, "For thousands of years, India's outlook towards health has been holistic. We have a great tradition of preventive and promotive health. Systems such as Yoga and meditation have now become global movements. They are ancient India's gifts to the modern world. Similarly, our Ayurveda system is a complete discipline of wellness. It takes care of the physical and mental aspects of health. The world is looking for solutions to stress and lifestyle diseases. India's traditional healthcare systems hold a lot of answers. Our traditional diet, which consists of millets, can also help with food security and nutrition."

As part of the efforts to reinforce global confidence and quality assurance, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi recently launched the 'Ayush Quality Mark' on 19 December 2025 at Bharat Mandapam during the Second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine. The Ayush Quality Mark provides an internationally aligned assurance framework for Ayush products and services, further strengthening trust among international seekers of authentic and standardised care.

Reinforcing India's integrated approach to Medical Value Travel that combines conventional medicine with traditional healthcare systems, Shri Prataprao Jadhav, Union Minister of State (IC), Ministry of Ayush, underscored that India's strength lies in its integrated healthcare approach. "Medical Value Travel is not only about affordability, but about trust, quality and outcomes. India's Ayush systems offer time-tested, evidence-based solutions that complement conventional medicine and respond to global demand for holistic health and wellness," said the Minister.

Highlighting the importance of credibility and standardisation in attracting global patients, Secretary, Ministry of Ayush, Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, emphasised that credibility and standardisation are key to sustaining global growth. “With growing international interest in traditional and wellness-based care, India is strengthening its Medical Value Travel framework through quality assurance, digital facilitation and international standards. This integrated approach is positioning India as a reliable global healthcare destination,” the Secretary said.

Data reflects this growing momentum. The number of international patients visiting India increased from **1,82,945** in 2020 to **6,44,387** in 2024. In recent years, Yoga, Ayurveda, and wellness-based therapies have emerged as major contributors to this growth, positioning India as a preferred destination for holistic, evidence-based care.

A strong public–private partnership model has played a critical role in advancing India’s national Medical Value Travel roadmap. Policy interventions such as 100 per cent foreign direct investment in medical infrastructure, fiscal incentives for medical service exports, and targeted global outreach have helped create a globally competitive healthcare ecosystem.

The Ministry of Ayush has placed particular emphasis on strengthening Ayush Medical Value Travel, recognising the global demand for natural, preventive and integrative healthcare solutions. India’s traditional systems—Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy—are increasingly being chosen by international patients for the management of chronic diseases, lifestyle disorders, rehabilitation, and wellness programmes.

To facilitate seamless access, the Government of India introduced a dedicated Ayush Visa on 27 July 2023 for foreign nationals and their attendants seeking treatment under Ayush systems of medicine.

The Ministry of Ayush, focusing on Medical Value Travel, is increasingly aligned with international quality and regulatory benchmarks. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has adopted ISO 22525, a global standard for Medical Value Travel, to facilitate standardised and credible healthcare and wellness services. Insurance coverage is also expanding, with about 27 insurance companies offering coverage for Ayush treatments, further boosting international patient confidence.

Medical Value Travel has remained a central theme across major Ayush platforms, including the “Global Synergy in Ayush: Transforming Health and Wellness through Medical Value Travel” Summit, held in Mumbai in 2024 and Chennai in May 2025. The Ministry has also engaged with organisations such as ITDC to promote Ayush-based wellness services as part of India’s broader tourism and healthcare brand.

Capacity building and global outreach are reinforcing India’s Ayush-led Medical Value Travel ecosystem. The Health Sector Skill Council (HSSC) established a dedicated Sub-Council for Ayush in 2018 to strengthen skill development and employability, and since 2021, over 37,000 individuals have been certified across Ayush roles nationwide, enhancing service quality. Global awareness of Ayush and the dedicated Ayush Visa has been strengthened through a film showcased at the Second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine, reaching participants from over 100 countries. Regular Know India Programme visits and the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025, featuring Ayush initiatives under the National Ayush Mission, have further expanded international and public outreach.

With policy support, visa facilitation, insurance coverage and quality benchmarks converging, India’s Medical Value Travel story is steadily evolving—from cost advantage to global trust in integrated, holistic and evidence-based healthcare.

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