

Minutes of the discussion with FHWP representatives on 15th December, 2022

A discussion was held with the Foundation of Healthcare and Wellness Promotion (FHWP), Delhi representatives on 15th December 2022. FHWP was formed in 2018 as a non-profit organisation and registered under Societies Act. It has member units operating in medical value travel sector and hospitals. It has 150-member units in NCR areas which includes 25 hospitals. More than 90% of the member units fall under MSME category. The units generate significant amount of foreign exchange as most of the units fetch their customers (patients who look for good treatment at affordable cost) from outside India (Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, Oman, African countries).

This discussion was a part of development of a proposal on growth of service sectors in Delhi and held to get inputs from the association on challenges faced by the service enterprises and suggestions.

Members Present –

1. Dalip Kumar Chopra, President, Foundation of Healthcare & Wellness
2. Anijit Bhattacharya, SIDBI PMU (GT)
3. Sandeep Sharma, SIDBI PMU (GT)

During the Discussion, following points were discussed: -

- **Business process:** Medical value added travel enterprises offer end to end services to its customers starting from identification of required treatment talking to doctors and patients in overseas; getting treatment plan, protocol, profile of doctors, estimates and visa invitation letter from reputed hospitals in Delhi; connects patient and associates with selected hospitals; facilitates budget wise safe and secure accommodations; sends them back to their country and follows up for some period during recovery stage. The turn around time for this business process takes 3-4 months. The travel enterprises have offices in overseas countries with highly educated and skilled manpower as they are the first point of physical contacts for patients and their associates.
- **Recognition:** Medical value travel operators are different than luxurious travel and tour operators. It requires strong network with reputed hospitals, safe and secure accommodation providers, healthcare service providers, understanding of treatment plan, protocol etc. Unfortunately, these enterprises are not recognised as a separate service enterprises. They are treated as either travel agents or health consultancy organisations. The State Government may take initiatives to determine criteria for medical value travel services/ service providers and recognise such organisations based on the determined criteria.
- **Certification:** Only 21 medical value travel facilitators (enterprises) are certified under MVTF provided by National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH). There is a lack of awareness on the certification programme as well as UDYAM registration been observed during interaction with association. Awareness programme at regular interval could be organised to overcome it.
- **Promotional activity:** This service sector is very promising as India is one of the demanded medical value travel destinations because of availability of advance equipment and medical expert at affordable price, reputation of age-old medicines and therapies, cost-effective and qualitative advance healthcare, large number of tourist places and tourist attractions, less waiting period for treatment etc. There is a need for intensive involvement in promotion and advertisement of Delhi as one of the important destinations in India. The State Government may organise at least two international seminars/ workshops every year in the countries viz. Iran,

Oman, Turkey, Africa etc. to promote this sector. Marketing assistance scheme of MOMSME, GOI can be leveraged for this purpose.

- **Incentive:** Turkey, Thailand and some other countries have incentive schemes for medical value travel facilitators and they receive incentives for opening of overseas offices to source customers/ patients. There are no such incentives for travel facilitators in our country. Running overseas offices require significant amount of investment. At present the travel facilitators are investing their own funds as banks are also not supporting the facilitators. Fiscal incentives for opening and running overseas office could help the travel facilitators.
- **Suggestions:** The association representatives suggested followings –
 - Delhi should be made and promoted as medical value travel destination. GNCT of Delhi may form a taskforce/ committee/ division to prepare policy, strategy, guidelines, implementation plan, parameters etc. for this sector.
 - GNCT of Delhi may develop activity plan for organising awareness programmes, seminars/ exhibitions, credit linkages, developing international connects through discussion with high commission office or embassy to support the sector.
 - Draft a policy for medical value tourism and develop an incentive mechanism for the stakeholders.
 - The State should participate and advertise its world class services in international platform.
 - GNCT of Delhi may develop an empanelment/ registration system to recognise genuine businesses after fulfilling some predetermined criteria/ parameters.

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