
**Tourism and related services —
Medical tourism — Service
requirements**

*Tourisme et services connexes — Tourisme médical — Exigences de
service*



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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 228, *Tourism and related services*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

The number of people travelling from one country to another searching for healthcare has quickly increased in recent years. Some of the reasons for this are the competitive prices that certain countries offer, the unavailability of treatment in medical tourists' home countries and the desire of medical tourists to skip long waiting lists. Furthermore, the growing demand within this global market has benefited from the ease and affordability of international travel as well as technological progress and the possibilities that the internet offers. Treatments include cosmetic surgery, dentistry, laser surgery for eyes, spinal disc replacement, brain surgery (e.g. cerebral valve adaptation), oncologic surgery (e.g. tumorexeresis or complete organ removal), bariatric surgery (e.g. gastric bypass) and cardiac bypass surgery.

Multiple stakeholders are involved in the medical tourism value chain, including facilitators, healthcare providers (e.g. clinics and hospitals), professionals (e.g. doctors) and other interested parties (e.g. insurance companies and consulates). The development of medical tourism faces many challenges, such as simplifying the administrative tasks, enhancing and adapting healthcare procedures and post-treatment care, and coordinating travel arrangements. These might present some difficulties for healthcare providers in meeting medical tourists' expectations.

There is an obvious need, therefore, to define, at an international level, the minimum quality requirements for providing medical tourism services, considering the different stakeholders involved, in order to meet the expectations of medical tourists.

Tourism and related services — Medical tourism — Service requirements

1 Scope

This document establishes the requirements and recommendations for facilitators and healthcare providers in medical tourism.

This document intends to ensure quality service provision for tourists in order to meet the expectations of tourists travelling for medical reasons as a primary motivation.

This document does not apply to thalassotherapy centres, medical spas or wellness spas.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1

concierge service

service provided by the *facilitator* (3.2), the *healthcare provider* (3.4) or both to enhance the medical tourist's experience

EXAMPLE Pick-up or return to the airport, medical and leisure activity escort, parking services, translation services, babysitting, cleaning staff, drivers, 24-h personal attention, accommodation rental.

3.2

facilitator

medical-tourism-specialized intermediary which aids the medical tourist in the process of contracting medical services

Note 1 to entry: Some facilitators also completely or partly arrange concierge services, flights or accommodation for the medical tourist.

EXAMPLE Travel agency, medical cluster, the international department of a healthcare provider.

3.3

healthcare

activities to maintain and improve the health of individuals or the general population

[SOURCE: ISO 22886:2020, 3.11.2]