

RUBRIC “7 QUESTIONS FROM MINISTRY OF HEALTH ABOUT MEDICAL TOURISM”

To: Acting director of the National Medical Research Center for Endocrinology of the Ministry of Health of Russia, Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor

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1. The federal project "Development of medical services export" of the Ministry of Health of Russian Federation has begun since 2019. What is the place of the international cooperation in your medical organization?

The Research Center of Endocrinology of the Ministry of Health of Russia (hereinafter referred to as the Center) pays great attention to attracting and providing medical assistance to foreign citizens. The center is equipped with the most modern equipment and has innovative methods for the diagnosis and treatment of endocrine and concomitant diseases. Our doctors and nursing staff speak various foreign languages.

The opportunities of medical services export (within the concept of medical tourism) are developed in the system of international scientific and medical relations, which are conducted through all seven institutes of the Center - clinical endocrinology, diabetes, pediatric endocrinology, oncoendocrinology, reproductive endocrinology, personalized medicine, the institute of higher and additional vocational education.

One of the most important segments for building the capacity of medical tourism is the activity of the Russian Society of Young Endocrinologists (ROME), created on the initiative of the Center in 2011. The number of registered members of the ROME is constantly growing. Nowadays the organization is consisted not only of specialists from the Russian Federation, but also from the countries of Europe, Asia and Africa.

2. Does your medical organization have an increase of foreign patients in 2019 compared to 2017, and in your opinion with what factors it can be connected?

There was a significant increase in the number of foreign patients in the Center, as well as an increase in the volume of medical services by 1.5-2 times compared with 2017. The reason for it is the best practices and international status of Russian endocrinology.

3. What medical services in your organization are most in demand by foreign patients?

The Center employs high qualified staff of expert level, and therefore consultations of endocrinologists, diabetologists, neuroendocrinologists, nutritionists, endocrine surgeons, gynecologist-endocrinologists and pediatric endocrinologists are very popular.

In addition, foreign adult patients as well as children are provided with numerous medical services: the installation and monitoring of insulin pump therapy, the diagnosis and treatment of obesity, the diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis and metabolic diseases of the skeleton. Also we provide an expert level of MRI and MSCT, a full range of hormonal studies and functional tests, a multi-steroid blood tests, selective blood sampling from the inferior petrosal sinus, adrenal veins, diagnosis and treatment of growth disorders and puberty in children, radionuclide diagnostic methods and therapy of endocrine diseases, diagnosis and treatment of rare endocrine diseases, as well as molecular genetic diagnosis of endocrine diseases.

In addition to diagnostic and conservative treatment methods, the Center provides surgical treatment to foreign patients, for example, neurosurgical treatment of pituitary adenomas, surgical treatment of adrenal gland neoplasms, surgical treatment of sex development disorders in children, including feminization surgery for congenital dysfunction of the adrenal cortex and masculinization surgery

4. What opportunities can you see for your medical organization in the implementation of the federal project “Development of the medical services export” of the Russian Ministry of Health?

The Center nowadays has a unique clinical base, modern innovative medical technologies, promising methods of early diagnosis, which have no analogues in the world. Our renewed building in 11 D. Ulyanova Street which had been built on the basis of up-to-date standards with comfortable conditions for patient’s hospitalization is the most promising factor for further building of capacity of medical services export in the state of high-quality and high-tech medical care for patients of any country in the world.

5. What features of working with foreign patients could you notice?

Working with foreign patients is not much different from working with compatriots. This is not a problem that exists in our Center. Most doctors speak different languages.

6. Many foreign countries and their clinics spend great amount of resources on advertisement of their own brand. For the first time, in 2019, a federal communication campaign was started in the Russian Federation aimed at popularizing the medical services in Russia. How and why foreign patients choose your organization?

We are a budgetary government organization; therefore we cannot afford great financial expenses. But our professional team has creative ideas and tools of public relations, modern strategic communications, which include well-developed international cooperations - an extensive system of contacts with medical institutions and expert communities in the field of endocrinology and related medical specialties abroad, and knowledge of managing an brand that has already established itself and has its own attractive reputation - Endocrinology Research Center, abbreviated as ENC, and of course, communications with the media and the embassies in Moscow.

In recent months, the number of inquiries from the media has increased to us, because a modern person receives more and more knowledge about the endocrine regulatory functions of the body and endocrine diseases.

We have very well-trained education in the schools of obesity and diabetes, highly qualified nutritionists and diabetologists in our Center.

Recently our specialists have participated in a scientific meeting on the Doctor TV channel highlighted to the development of nuclear medicine - more attention has been paid to this area in recent years, and we are waiting for certain breakthrough ideas and results, especially in matters of metabolic nuclear theranostics. Presstours also help us in promoting our capabilities, one of which was recently organized with the assistance of the Russian Ministry of Health.

Journalists, including foreign ones, are once again convinced that the Center presents advanced technologies of an international level, there is the latest medical equipment from world manufacturers, which allows an individual (personalized) approach to the examination and treatment of each particular patient in accordance with the principles of evidence-based medicine.

Among the advantages of examination and treatment at the Center are modern diagnostics of all endocrine diseases, an exhaustive amount of patient care - laboratory, instrumental and genetic diagnostics, therapeutic and surgical treatment and rehabilitation are concentrated in one medical institution (“under one roof”). Express diagnostics at the Center for all common endocrine diseases takes only 2-3 hours. Continuous monitoring of patients of any age is carried out - from children to the elderly, treatment is held according to international and national protocols. More than 15 thousand people receive inpatient care at our Center.

7. Can you name the most representative case of the medical services provision to a foreign citizen?

One patient from Norway periodically comes to our Center for follow-up examinations - head MRI, hormonal tests, oncological examinations. He had a complex neurosurgical operation some time ago, nowadays he has correction of hormone replacement therapy within our Center. Why does he have a treatment in Russia? Because there is a very long waiting period for receiving an endocrinologist on a free basis in most foreign countries and paid treatment is extremely expensive. And in this case, Russian medicine is becoming more attractive.

