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MANAGEMENT OF GEOMEDICAL TOURISM

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Abstract: A special innovative tourism product including medical rehabilitation in forest environment, healthy walking, Geo Wellness /eco SPA and additional touristic services under medical control are presented. The key elements for creation of Geomedical destinations as duration of destination, seasonal conditionality, Geo medical information/ clients' health risk information, accessibility to the site, logistic information, accommodation information- wild and traditional type, recreation services information and additional touristic services information are described. The management of Geomedical tourism is connecting to logic framework, including an analysis of client's interest, resources potential and additional touristic services; planning with identification of target groups, touristic routes and touristic benefits; marketing-description of generating market and market allocation chart. The core of creation is Geomedical environmental assessment. Some management problems were outlined- management of HR, contractors and touristic infrastructures. The creation of market strategy has to be in line with brand positioning and product's positioning strategy including implementation of HSE certification.

Keywords: management, Geomedical tourism, HR, marketing, HSE certification

МЕНИДЖМЪНТ НА ГЕОМЕДИЦИНСКИЯ ТУРИЗЪМ Доц. д-р Красимира Станева

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Абстракт: Представя се иновативен специализиран туристически продукт, който включва медицинска рехабилитация в природна среда, здравословно ходене, Geo Wellness, еко SPA и допълнителни туристически услуги, провеждани под медицински контрол. Основните елементи, необходими за разработване на такава дестинация като продължителност, сезонна предопределеност, геомедицинска информация за здравословния риск, достъпност до средата, данни за типа на базата за нощуване, рекреационните и допълнителните туристически услуги, които се предлагат на туристите са описани. Мениджмънтът на геомедицинския туризъм е свързан с логическа рамка, която включва анализ на средата и ресурсния потенциял, планиране на дейностите с идентификация на целевите групи туристи, маршрутите и ползите за участващите страни и маркетингова позиционираща стратегия. Същността на продукта е геомедицинската оценка на средата и изработване на индивидулен рекреационен план за клиентите. Разгледани са някои проблеми, свързани с организирането и предлагането на туристическия продукт, като са предложени решения, свързани с управление на персонала, контракторите и въвеждането на стандарти за HSE.

INTRODUCTION

Geomedical tourism is complicated system of different services of tourism, medical rehabilitation and entertainment's areas [1] The complex consists of tourism destination modeling, health tourism in natural environment, individual medical rehabilitation, geomedical assessment of outdoor and indoor environment, additional touristic services from alternative tourism range, tourist animation and Wellbeing industry elements: Geo Wellness, eco SPA [2], Wellment services [3], healing food and individual management of leisure time.

Geomedical recreation is balanced process joined clients to maintain their physical, psychoemotional and social function.

The core of Geomedical tourism is to consider the destination as a whole and general living system having its specific and distinguishing features that make it unique compared to the other rest. Geomedical tourism use interdisciplinary database from different areas of knowledge: Geosciences, Geomedicine (in sensu stricto), Landscape architecture, Climatology, Biodiversity, Medical rehabilitation, Public health, Management of tourism (fig. 1).



Fig. 1 Geomedical tourism and Interdisciplinary database

The Geomedical recreation is balanced process joined clients to maintain their physical, psychoemotional and social function. As an element of Wellbeing has a positive impact on people it could be brought to the special place in health prevention and quality of life [4]. On the basis of existing experience [5, 6, 1P, 2P, 3P] a new recreation geomedical concept is presented. It is aligned multi-dimensional model aimed at influencing the physical, spiritual, emotional and mental health. Based on a holistic approach integrating body and soul, geomedical touristic culture can describe as a special approach for improving of quality of life of population.

METHODS OF INVESTIGATIONS

- References review
- Comparing touristic products to geomedical tourism services
- Market research and assessment;
- Studying environmental and geological conditions
- Evaluation of prerequisites for development of Geomedical tourism destination;
- Developing/modeling of geomedical tourism destinations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Comparing Geomedical tourism to other touristic services as medical tourism, health tourism [7] and Forest medicine, we obtained the clear differences: the presented innovative product is aimed at a wide range of people which need to improve their quality of life. The main techniques are a combination of medical care and typical travel services. This is the main advantage of new touristic product. On the other hand, in Japan, the forest bathing trip, called "Shinrinyoku" with natural 2-3 days aromatherapy is the focus of Forest medicine [8, 9]. Obviously geomedical tourism contents similar elements of mentioned types of tourism, but it is combined touristic product of fascinated landscape, medical care/rehabilitation, health food and very new geomedical healing culture. In additional, our product is suitable for children with special education needs [10].

"Health tourism is more encompassing. Aside from medical tourism, it refers to people traveling to other countries for preventive and rehabilitative care. In fact, all forms of proactive and reactive healthcare including wellness initiatives are part of health tourism" [7].

<u>Market's assessment</u>

The changes of healthcare globally are challenges for healthcare tourism development. Tourists' needs motivate the professionals to create suitable and attractive health care services.

The main generating market for Balkan countries 2015-2016 (fig.2). Challenges after some political, economic and natural crisis provoked all professionals to manage very new tourism product with respect to changed clients' interests, needs and possibility to invest in their health.

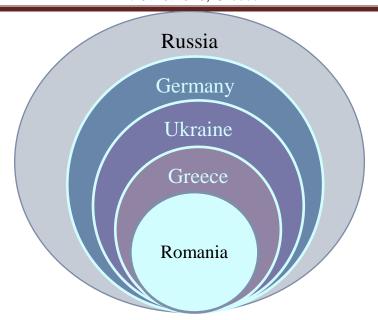


Fig. 2 Main generating tourism market for Balkan countries 2015-2016 (according to Bulgarian Association of Geomedicine and Geotherapy data)

More of Balkan respondents, joined to "KTIA_AIK_12-1-2013-004 Balkan Wellbeing Concept" prefer mountains, forests and natural treatment for remediation (fig.3). A good climate and thermal baths give them better treatment conditions.

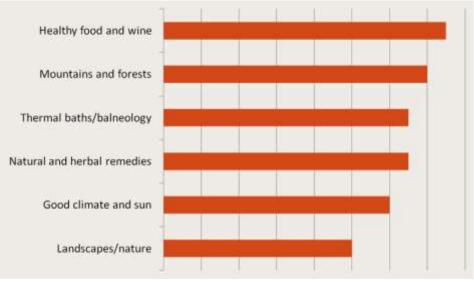


Fig. 3 Europa Tourism Market Allocation Chart (according to Wellbeing Concept 2013-2015)

Prerequisites for development of Geomedical touristic destination

The suitable combination between landscape, attractive geological view, mineral waters and heritage is the basement for geomedical destination development. There are touristic recourses which we can describe as main preconditions for development of successful geomedical tourism. (fig. 4). Specific integrity of medical rehabilitation and touristic services is main principle of the modeling. The complex interaction of different kind services aiming to recreation on body and psycho emotional level of clients obtain the synergy of each structural elements of geomedical tourism architectonics.

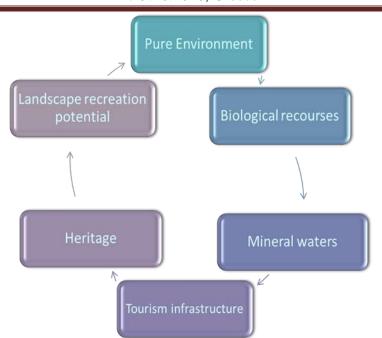


Fig. 4 Some preconditions for development of geomedical tourism destinations

But some outlined benefits of outdoor recreation including geopathic stress analysis and Applied Kinesiology test (AK) [1-5] can use as an additional key for Geomedical tourism destination's creation.

The core of preliminary research for creation of Geomedical tourism destination is a geomedical environment assessment. Resumed our experience (2007-2016), [10] we choose the following elements for those evaluation:

- Climate;
- Landscape recreation assessment;
- Environment assessment;
- Geopathic stress evaluation;
- Biological resources- herbs, woods, lichens;
- Geological places assessment
- Biomedical assessment of natural resources;
- Psycho emotional assessment of mountain environment;
- Wellbeing effect

Management of Geomedical tourism destinations (GMT)

Sequence of organizing elements Steps of modeling

The steps of modeling include some different types of analysis and evaluation of obtained results as analysis of clients' interests and resources in generally. When we try to describe the modeling process, we have to focus on "analysis of clients' profile, environmental resources, touristic infrastructure, touristic facilities and an additional helpful touristic information" (fig.5).



Fig. 5 Logic framework of modeling

Next step of creation is "Planning of GMT destination". Our attention is in line with identification of touristic routes, target groups, offered services-basic and additional, clients' and touristic company's benefits. An individual rehabilitation/SPA program is the key of working with clients. Our attention is directed to the physical condition of each client and its specific needs and expectations for treatment. To achieve the Wellbeing effect we focus on additional tourism services as eco SPA, cultural events, healthy food, green energy relax, attractions and creation tourism. Special attention we paid on "geopathic stress free zone"[11] for touristic infrastructure and environment also. Some of Bulgarian hotels obtained the certificate for healing outdoor and indoor environment.

The Geomedical program depends on client's interests, physical conditions and motivation for outdoor recreation. The focus of geomedical recreational programs is leisure activities outdoor. The geomedical programs are planned and organized according client's health condition and interests to develop better social skills and new relationships with other people for stress's reducing.

The third step of modeling is "Management of advertising program, positioning and branding". We need to obtain the synergy effect of every construction elements as:

- Creation of promotional materials. Vision (logo)
- Maintaining of advertising environment
- Management of commercial interests
- Management of social importance of Geo medical tourism
- Creation of multi-functional impact on tourists

Comparing this step of the three most significant actions of destination modelling, we can make a list with attributes of management. The relationship between Geomedical and Forest tourism was explored by our research: healthy treatment in forest environment. But the big advances of new Geomedical tourism product is its special focus on combination/mix of different healing activities under medical control in line with an individual physiological condition of clients (fig. 5).

An identification of some management problems

The more often problems are in line with management of personnel. The lack of professional expertise, work experience, motivation and team's Wellbeing culture are real prerequisites for lack of success. Using group interventions for basic recreation, we can lost the individual client's-trainer connection. A detailed overview of physical condition and additional information about client's interests can be gathered in very basic recreation level to ignore negative outcomes.

The implementation of HSE assessment risk analysis and ergonomic audit of work environment according to ISO standards was described as main solution for solving the problems. As additional solutions we outlined the management of HR, contractors and touristic infrastructure.

CONCLUSION

The core of Geomedical Tourism is to consider the destination as a whole and general living system having its specific and distinguishing features that make it unique compared to the other rest. The holistic approach of Geomedical tourism based on synergy of different areas of knowledge. Geomedical recreation consists various specific techniques for recreation practice as well as interdisciplinary methods. Applying the "holistic model of health (from "patient" to "partner") as well as greater emphasis on quality of life as the unifying focus for all health and human services professionals" [12], geomedical tourism is a new approach in the area of public health and tourism also.

Resuming our experience and client's feedback we can conclude that Geomedical product is a highly efficient "anti-stress" product and effective for different target groups. It is a successful element of Wellbeing tourism with special focus on natural recreation of clients' health condition and improving of their quality of life [13].

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