

Berlin: Popular Destination for Medical Tourists

visitBerlin survey of Berlin hospitals: more than 9,200 medical tourists come to Berlin each year

Berlin, 21 October 2013 As part of the first Berlin Health Week (21–27 October) and the World Health Summit (20–22 October), bringing medical experts from all over the world to Berlin for the fifth time, *visitBerlin* has compiled numbers on medical tourism in Germany's capital. Just the seven Berlin hospitals with the largest numbers of international patients registered 9,271 international patients last year.

Burkhard Kieker, CEO of *visitBerlin*, remarks: "Together with our network of partners, we have been successful in drawing the attention of international guests looking for quality medical care to the German capital and its unique variety of hospitals. Berlin and its top-ranked clinics are catching up with Munich's historical draw as the top destination for medical tourism in Germany. Particularly guests from Russia and the Arab-speaking world are increasingly choosing to entrust their healthcare to Berlin's leading doctors. Medical tourists are a target group that will benefit Berlin more than average."

visitBerlin has been actively marketing medical tourism for more than three years with international partners, with a focus on the Russian- and Arabic-speaking countries. The strategic direction was chosen in coordination with a network of clinics, tourism services and Tourism-Marketing Brandenburg, Health Capital Berlin-Brandenburg, World Health Summit Berlin, Berlin Partner for Business and Technology and the Senate Department for Economics, Technology and Research.

More foreign patients opting for Berlin

From check-ups to heart or knee surgeries, more and more visitors to Berlin are coming to the German capital to take care of their health. The international patients come primarily from the Russian- and Arabic-speaking countries. Especially popular are the departments of oncology, neurosurgery and cardiology, but patients are coming for preventative visits as well. These medical tourists usually stay in the deluxe suites at the hospitals or receive outpatient treatment and stay in nearby hotels. While regular visitors to Berlin spend an average of 2.3 days in the city, visitors coming here for health treatments tend to stay for 10–14 days.

To monitor the growth of medical tourism in Berlin, *visitBerlin* has identified a benchmark group of hospitals that has, for the first time, released figures on the number of outpatient and inpatient stays registered through their international patient relations offices. The participating hospitals include the following Berlin institutions: Charité International, the Deutsches Herzzentrum Berlin, Helios Healthcare International, Paul Gerhardt Diakonie International, MEOCLINIC, Schlosspark Klinik and Vivantes International Medicine. The figures will continue to be collected and published annually to keep better track of countries of origin and trends in international patient registrations. This new monitoring effort is complemented by the official hospital statistics maintained by the Office of Statistics, which however only counts inpatient admissions of foreign residents and thus does not fully represent the volume of medical tourists.

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Press Release



Joint marketing of Berlin as an international health destination

The website health.visitBerlin.com gives information about the services offered in German, English, Russian and Arabic. *visitBerlin* has been working with Brandenburg to market the capital region as a destination for medical tourism at international trade fairs such as the ITB and Arab Health.

visitBerlin has invited international press representatives from Russia and the Middle East to come to the city for Berlin Health Week. Together with Lufthansa, partner hospitals and the World Health Summit, this campaign is designed to shed light on Berlin's healthcare industry and its deep layers of expertise.

Germany is number four in the world for medical tourism

Medical tourism is growing for Germany as a whole: Germany is ranked fourth among the world's leading medical tourism destinations, after India, Thailand and the United States. This was confirmed in the current "Market study of international patients in German hospitals" by the Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences (2013). 87.9 per cent of the hospitals surveyed indicated that the number of foreign patients had increased over the past three years.

For more information:

health.visitBerlin.com

berlinhealthweek.com

worldhealthsummit.org

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visitBerlin

"We know Berlin". This is the slogan that Berlin Tourismus & Kongress GmbH, operating under the trade name *visitBerlin*, has been using since 1993 to advertise Berlin globally as a travel destination. The *visitBerlin* Berlin Convention Office markets the German capital as a convention destination. After London and Paris, Berlin is third-most popular European city for tourism, with 24.9 million overnight stays in the German capital during 2012. Berlin is also one of the most popular destinations for conventions and meetings and is likewise ranked third. As a tour operator, *visitBerlin* offers a wide range of travel packages and also issues the official tourist ticket, the Berlin WelcomeCard. The company operates five Berlin Tourist Infos. The Berlin Service Center (Tel. +49(0)30-25 00 25) provides information on the complete spectrum of tourist services in Berlin. Information about the German capital is available in 13 different languages at visitBerlin.com.

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