

Medical Tourism Standard

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1. Standard Scope

- 1.1. This standard sets out the roles and responsibilities of healthcare providers with respect to the provision of care provided to medical tourists.
- 1.2. Set the requirements and eligibility criteria for healthcare facilities to join the Abu Dhabi Medical Tourism Network and/or be considered as a Medical Tourism Featured Partner.
- 1.3. This standard sets out the roles and responsibilities of healthcare providers with respect to the provision of care provided to medical tourists.

2. Definitions and Abbreviations

No.	Term / Abbreviation	Definition
2.1	Companion	In the context of this standard, a companion is a person chosen by the patient to accompany them while seeking treatment abroad, providing support, assistance, and advocacy throughout their journey.
2.2	Data	All that can be stored, processed, generated and transferred such as numbers, letters, symbols, images and the like (including digital and non-digital).
2.3	Data standards	Is a technical specification that describes how data should be stored or exchanged for the consistent collection and interoperability of that data across different systems, sources, and users including all Standards related to Data as following: Abu Dhabi - Healthcare Information and Cyber Security Standard and DoH Standard for Medical Record, Health Information Retention and Disposal.
2.4	Facilitator	A facilitator is an intermediary organization or individual appointed by the healthcare facility that assists patients in coordinating various aspects of their medical travel experience. They help with planning, logistics, appointment scheduling, translation services, and post-treatment care, ensuring a smooth journey for international patients seeking medical treatment in the emirate of Abu Dhabi.
2.5	Healthcare Facility	A facility that provides healthcare services to people, including the areas of prevention, treatment, and recovery, whether its owned or managed by a natural person or a legal person.
2.6	Medical Tourism Featured Partner	A Medical Tourism Featured Partner facility is a healthcare facility, such as a hospital, clinic, or medical center, that has been chosen and prominently highlighted within the medical tourism network. These facilities are recognized for their exceptional standards of care, specialized medical expertise, and tailored services for international patients seeking treatment in the emirate of Abu Dhabi.
2.7	Medical Tourism Network	A Medical Tourism Network is a group of healthcare providers approved by DoH to provide medical tourism services.

2.8	Medical Tourism Services	The access to either planned or unplanned medical treatment services and non-emergency healthcare services in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi by any tourist traveling from abroad to the UAE for that purpose, excluding patients whose medical care is funded by the Abu Dhabi or federal government or who are insured by health insurance policies issued by the UAE licensed health insurance companies
2.9	Medical tourist	Any tourist traveling from abroad to the UAE for either planned or unplanned medical treatment services and non-emergency healthcare services in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, excluding patients whose medical care is funded by the Abu Dhabi or federal government or who are insured by health insurance policies licensed in the UAE

3. Standard Requirements and Specifications

3.1 Membership requirements

3.1.1 To be a Medical Tourism Network Member, the healthcare facility should fulfill the following requirements:

3.1.1.1 Licensure requirements

3.1.1.1.1 Should be a licensed healthcare facility to provide medical tourism service within the emirate of Abu Dhabi.

3.1.1.1.2 The healthcare facility can register in the Abu Dhabi Medical Tourism Network through TAMM portal; after submitting an “Adding Service” application and then select “Medical Tourism”; the service will be reflected on the healthcare facility’s license.

3.1.1.1.3 The healthcare facility shall be AAMEN certified, and its electronic medical record system must be integrated with the Health Information Exchange system (Malaffi).

3.1.1.1 System and leadership requirement

3.1.1.1.1 The healthcare facility must have a medical tourism strategy aligned with the Abu Dhabi Medical Tourism Strategy objectives and goals which include:

3.1.1.1.1.1 Contribute to Abu Dhabi’s reputation for high quality complex medical care.

3.1.1.1.1.2 Stimulate national employment and contribute to the economy.

3.1.1.1.2 The healthcare facility provides transparent pricing information for all components of the package, including potential estimated additional costs as disclaimers (e.g., for complications, extended stays, or changes to the treatment plan).

3.1.1.1.3 The healthcare facility has policies and procedures in place for: receiving and addressing patients and their companions’s medical tourism service-related

complaints during the care continuum, including prior to receiving care and when the patient returns to their home country. There is a clear protocol for follow-up care, including coordination with the patient's home country's healthcare providers. Provision of detailed medical records and discharge summaries.

3.1.1.1.4 The healthcare facility has a transfer agreement for patients as a backup in case of unforeseen and unexpected complications during and after treatment, having regard to the patient's condition, medications, medical tests, and disease prognosis as well as the possibility of deceased patients.

3.1.1.2 Accreditation and ranking requirements

3.1.1.2.1 The Healthcare facility maintains at least 3 Diamonds of Muashir Ranking (or equivalent score in the new Muashir Ranking) as applicable.

3.1.1.2.2 The healthcare facility should be accredited by international healthcare accreditation.

3.1.1.2.3 The healthcare facility obtains international accreditation in the field of medical tourism, such as TEMOS, ISO 22525, and Global Healthcare Accreditation (GHA) within 18 months of the standard effectiveness date.

3.1.1.3 Staffing Requirements

3.1.1.3.1 Medical Interpreters/Translators

3.1.1.3.2 Medical tourism Facilitator (Appendix 1)

3.2 Partnership requirements

3.1.2 Medical Tourism Featured Partners Should be a medical tourism network member fulfilling the above-mentioned criteria and shall achieve one of the following (The partnership is valid for 3 years):

3.2.1.1 Designated as a Center of Excellence by DoH.

3.2.1.2 Participating in global ranking (Example; News Week Global Ranking <https://www.newsweek.com/rankings>).

3.2.1.3 Maintains at least 4 Diamonds of Muashir Ranking (or equivalent score in the new Muashir Ranking) as applicable.

3.2.2 Medical Tourism Featured Partner Benefit

3.2.2.1 Promotion in DoH media and communication channels.

3.2.2.2 Access to events aligns with DoH (e.g. Abu Dhabi Global Healthcare Week).

4. Healthcare facility Responsibilities

4.1. The Healthcare facility shall inform the medical tourist about the following:

4.1.1. The name of the Healthcare facility in Arabic and in English

4.1.2. Service hours, availability of staff, emergency phone numbers and staff involved in and in charge of the medical procedure.

- 4.1.3. The accessibility characteristics of the facilities and services (e.g., registration process, services offered, emergency advice).
- 4.1.4. Accepted insurance, costs, payment methods and financial assistance possibilities.
- 4.1.5. Concierge services offered to the medical tourist and companions, such as transportation services, accommodation (including information about types and length of stay).
- 4.1.6. Ancillary services of the healthcare provider (e.g., library, cafeteria, laundry service).
- 4.1.7. Visa requirements.
- 4.1.8. Cancellation Policy: Documentation confirming the medical tourist 's acceptance of the policy will be retained.
- 4.1.9. Information about the insurance coverage that the healthcare provider holds.
- 4.2. The facilitator shall:
 - 4.2.1. Pre-travel and pre-treatment
 - 4.2.1.1. Collect general information including (demographic information, patient complain and medical condition) from the medical tourist so the appropriate treatment can be offered by the healthcare facility and, when requested by the medical doctor, submit a form to be completed by the medical tourist to inform the medical doctor of his or her medical history.
 - 4.2.1.2. Ensure that an application form is completed by the medical tourist; the application form shall include at least the medical tourist's contact details, language preference and acceptance of privacy policy, and shall allow the medical tourist to explain his or her needs or case.
 - 4.2.1.3. Request from the healthcare provider information regarding, for example, the medical staff, treatment, test benefits, possible general risks and complications of the treatment, length of stay and estimated time to discharge and recovery time, and inform the patient, accordingly, referring the medical tourist to the healthcare provider for a medical process explanation.
 - 4.2.1.4. Provide the medical tourist with general information regarding the travel arrangements offered (e.g., general visa information when needed, transfer information).
 - 4.2.1.5. Ensure that the medical tourist has given formal consent for their personal information to be collected and disseminated to the medical staff.
 - 4.2.1.6. Ensure that the requested medical data and tests (e.g., magnetic resonance imaging, x-rays, photos, clinical laboratory test results and medications) are provided by the medical tourist when needed for the medical procedure.
 - 4.2.1.7. Discuss with the Medical tourist their travel plans and ensure finding the most convenient travel dates.
 - 4.2.1.8. Discuss with the Medical tourist the accommodation facilities and other concierge services needed; the facilitator should suggest an accommodation provider which

meets the medical tourist 's needs (in terms of accessibility, nutritional needs, and capacity for those traveling with a companion(s)).

4.2.1.9. Inform the medical tourist about the following:

- 4.2.1.9.1. The necessary travel documents, such as passport and visa acquisition and their estimated costs.
- 4.2.1.9.2. The possibility that the treatment might be cancelled for medical reasons once the medical tourist is at the healthcare provider.
- 4.2.1.9.3. The possibility that the selected doctor will not be available due to unforeseen circumstances; in this case, an alternative shall be determined in consultation with the medical tourist.
- 4.2.1.9.4. The payment policy.
- 4.2.1.9.5. The responsibility of every party in the process (facilitator and Healthcare Facility).
- 4.2.1.9.6. The applicable legislation, which is the one in the country where the treatment is carried out.

4.2.1.10. After receiving all the information (including the medical process as well as the concierge services), send a final quotation of all services to the medical tourist for approval; this quotation shall be clear enough to allow them to identify what is included and what is not; coverage in case of complications (if any) shall be determined.

4.2.1.11. Book the treatment with the Healthcare Facility.

4.2.1.12. Arrange concierge services, considering the medical tourist's special needs and requests.

4.2.1.13. Send in advance the complete travel information to the medical tourist, including all departure and arrival dates at destination.

4.2.1.14. Ensure that administrative personnel of the facilitator have no access to clinical data.

4.2.2. Treatment

4.2.2.1. The facilitator assists the medical tourist in cases of unsatisfactory results.

4.2.3. Post-treatment

4.2.3.1. The facilitator acts as a mediator in case of complications or unsatisfactory results.

4.2.3.2. Specifically, during the recovery period at the destination (if any), the facilitator, as mediator, shall ensure the medical tourist receives from the Healthcare facility the necessary post-treatment follow-up, according to the medical procedure.

4.2.3.3. The facilitator shall ensure that the accommodation meets the specific medical requirements and preferences of the medical tourist.

4.2.4. Return home and follow-up.

4.2.4.1. If the facilitator is responsible for the medical tourist's return home process, The facilitator shall plan this process according to the specific needs of the medical tourist.

- 4.2.4.2. The facilitator should ensure a follow-up service once the medical tourist is back home with a clear plan to be detailed on the availability of any new medications in the original country if the patient will continue using them.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

5.1 All Healthcare facilities are required to:

- 5.1.1 Comply with reporting described at: <https://www.doh.gov.ae/en/Shafafiya/reporting/reporting-of-medical-tourism-self-pay-and-non-insurance-claims>
- 5.1.2 Document the demographic data of medical tourism patients in the patient's medical record, timely and accurately as per the defined rules.
- 5.1.3 Report the daily volume and information via DoH Shafafiya System. Main Reporting points (Patient Volume):
- 5.1.3.1 Total number of medical tourists treated.
 - 5.1.3.2 Breakdown by country of residence
 - 5.1.3.3 Breakdown by treatment category (including planned or unplanned), age category, specialty
 - 5.1.3.4 Submit reports for data validation as requested.
- 5.1.4 Ensure ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the Medical Tourism Services, including regular reviews of relevant KPIs, it includes all the following but is not limited to:
- 5.1.4.1 Patient Satisfaction Score
 - 5.1.4.2 Treatment Outcome Metrics
 - 5.1.4.3 Timeliness of Services
 - 5.1.4.4 Return Patient Rate: Measure the percentage of international patients returning for additional services.
 - 5.1.4.5 Number of international patients coming to the facility for treatment (and increase 4% year on year)

6. Enforcement and Sanctions

- 6.1 DoH may impose sanctions in relation to any breach of requirements under this Standard in accordance with the disciplinary regulation of the healthcare sector.

7. Exempted from Scope

NA

8. Relevant Reference Documents

No.	Reference Date	Reference Name	Relation Explanation / Coding / Publication Links
1	May 2007	Medical Waste Management in Health Care Facilities	https://www.DoH.gov.ae/en/resources/standards
2	February 2008	Patient Rights and Responsibilities	https://www.DoH.gov.ae/en/resources/standards
3	December 2010	HAAD Standard for First Aid Training	https://www.DoH.gov.ae/en/resources/standards
4	April 2011	HAAD Clinical Laboratory Standards	https://www.DoH.gov.ae/en/resources/standards
5	July 2015	HAAD Standard for Medical Record, Health Information Retention and Disposal	https://www.doh.gov.ae/en/resources/standards
6	Jan 2016	Guidelines for patient consent	https://www.DoH.gov.ae/en/resources/guidelines
7	December 2016	HAAD Standard for Managing the Supply and Safe Use of medications in licensed Healthcare Facilities	https://www.DoH.gov.ae/en/resources/standards

8	November 2017	HEALTHCARE FACILITY MANUAL	https://www.DoH.gov.ae/en/resources/policies
9	March 2017	OSHAD SF	https://www.adphc.gov.ae/en/Legislation/Manual
10	July 2018	DOH Standard for Clinical Complaints Management in Healthcare Facilities	https://www.DoH.gov.ae/en/resources/standards
11	September 2018	UAE Fire and Life Safety Code of Practice	https://www.dcd.gov.ae/portal/eng/UAEFIRECODE_ENG_SEPTMBER_2018.pdf
12	September 2018	Government roles in regulating medical tourism: evidence from Guatemala	https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6148768/
13	2019	DOH Health Facility Guidelines 2019	https://stem.DoH.gov.ae/HealthFacilityGuidelines/ViewPDF/ViewIndexPDF/DOH part b mobile healthcare unit
14	April 2020	DOH POLICY ON THE ABU DHABI HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGE	https://www.doh.gov.ae/en/resources/policies

15	June 2021	DOH STANDARD ON REPORTING SUSPECTED ADVERSE DRUG REACTIONS AND ADVERSE EVENTS	https://www.DoH.gov.ae/en/resources/standards
16	2022	Professional Qualification Requirements (PQR)	https://www.DoH.gov.ae/en/pqr
17	March 2023	Standard for Healthcare facility Licensure	https://www.DoH.gov.ae/en/resources/standards
18	March 2023	STANDARD FOR CLINICAL PRIVILEGING OF HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE AND CLINICAL SERVICES	https://www.DoH.gov.ae/en/resources/standards
19	December 2023	Circular New Definition of Abu Dhabi	https://www.doh.gov.ae/en/resources/Circulars
20	December 2023	DOH POLICY ON MEDICAL TOURISM IN THE EMIRATE OF ABU DHABI	https://www.doh.gov.ae/en/resources/policies
21	December 2023	ISO 22525:2020 Tourism and related services Medical tourism Service requirements	https://www.iso.org/standard/73387.html

22	March 2024	People of determination	https://u.ae/en/information-and-services/social-affairs/people-of-determination
23	March 2024	Regulation for Leadership and Management for Safety in Nuclear Facilities	https://www.fanr.gov.ae/en/rules-regulations/regulations-guides/regulations
24	May 2024	Medical Tourism	https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2024/health-care-abroad/medical-tourism
25	May 2024	Medical Tourism: Treatments, Markets and Health System Implications: A scoping review	https://www.oecd.org/els/health-systems/48723982.pdf
26	May 2024	Travel and health	https://www.who.int/health-topics/travel-and-health/#tab=tab_1
27	May 2024	Health Information Exchange standards	https://www.doh.gov.ae/en/resources/HIE
28	May 2024	Abu Dhabi - Healthcare Information and Cyber Security Standard V2	https://www.doh.gov.ae/en/resources/standards

29	June 2024	New Definition of Medical Tourism Services for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi & Reporting Mechanism	https://www.doh.gov.ae/en/resources/Circulars
30	July 2024	Data Standards	https://resources.data.gov/standards/concepts/#:~:text=For%20the%20purposes%20of%20this%20web%2C%20a%20%E2%80%9Cdata,that%20data%20across%20different%20systems%2C%20sources%2C%20and%20users.
31	July 2024	Ranking	https://www.newsweek.com/rankings

Appendix 1: Minimum competency requirements and recommendations for facilitators:

Facilitators are responsible for assisting a patient in seeking and achieving quality medical procedures. They assist medical tourists to navigate through a series of regulatory systems, Healthcare facility and accommodation facilities to seek appropriate care.

Facilitators play an important role in the practice of medical tourism. Also, the quality of the facilitation may impact the health of the medical tourist.

The minimum competency requirements and recommendations for facilitators are as follows:

A. Knowledge of the travel market

- Facilitators shall be competent and fully familiar with the DoH & Department of Tourism and Culture laws and regulations.
- Facilitators shall have the competency to develop medical tourism packages, individual services, or both, taking the minimum legal requirements into consideration (when applicable).
- Facilitators shall have the necessary knowledge of rules and conditions for conducting international transactions (e.g., payments, transfers), if applicable.

B. Knowledge of the medical travel motivations

- Facilitators should understand the basic medical tourism value chain, the main stakeholders and the key issues that motivate a medical tourist to seek a medical intervention outside their usual country of residence.
- Facilitators should understand the needs and expectations of the medical tourist and their companions.

C. Minimum medical knowledge

- Facilitators should know their limits regarding the provision of advice relating to treatments or outcomes.
- Facilitators shall refrain from giving medical advice in any way.

D. Knowledge on how to manage potential conflict of interest

- Facilitators shall ensure transparency in their transactions with the medical tourist.

E. Knowledge of the medical tourism destination

- Facilitators should have adequate knowledge of the medical tourism destination they are proposing.
- Facilitators should be aware of the cultural and linguistic peculiarities of the host medical destination.
- Facilitators should be aware of the legal protections as well as the applicable medical liability documents.

F. Customer care

- Facilitators should possess customer care skills practiced throughout all touch points from the initial contact to the follow-up care.

G. Ethical marketing

- Facilitators shall provide the medical tourist with objective, reliable and updated information.
- Facilitators should ensure their websites are properly managed and regularly updated.