
**MALAYSIA HEALTHCARE WINS AGAIN AS THE
“HEALTH & MEDICAL TOURISM DESTINATION OF THE YEAR”**

International Medical Travel Journal Awards

CROATIA, 26 APRIL – Malaysia is honoured to be recognised as the recipient of “Destination of the Year” once again, at the International Medical Travel Journal (IMTJ) Awards 2017 in Opatija today. Being acknowledged as the top leading medical tourism destination at an international platform, cements the country’s reputation for providing top notch and innovative healthcare.

Receiving the title increases Malaysia’s profile as a healthcare travel destination. Having held the title of “Destination of the Year” for three years in a row from 2015, 2016 and now 2017, Malaysia Healthcare must now strive harder to strengthen the travel value-chain as a holistic proposition, through three key tenets of industry facilitation, optimisation of digital marketing and sustainable growth.

This recognition was judged by a team of 23 judges, chosen for their experience in the medical tourism sector such as Keith Pollard, the Managing Editor for IMTJ and the Chairman of the Judging Panel, UK; Ilan Geva, President of Ilan Geva & Friends, USA; Dr Claudia Mika, Managing Director of TEMOS International GmbH, Germany; Dato’ Dr. Jacob Thomas, President of Association of Private Hospitals in Malaysia (APHM), Malaysia; and Elizabeth Ziemba, President of Medical Tourism Training Inc, USA; just to name a few of the elite judges.

The judges looked for all-round excellence in promoting inbound medical tourism, verified statistics of yearly growth in medical tourists served, evidence of high levels of patient satisfaction and co-ordinated activities that delivered an increase in medical tourism.

“We are humbled to be given this recognition once again. We must ensure that the title entrusted on us is maintained and upheld. Having created awareness that Malaysia is a viable option as a medical tourism destination, we must now raise that awareness to an unprecedented level. We have much work to do”, says Sherene Azli, Chief Executive Officer of Malaysia Healthcare.

Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC) or better known as Malaysia Healthcare, also received for the first time, a win as the “Health and Medical Tourism Cluster of the Year” award. The award recognises efforts by a health or medical tourism cluster or association that demonstrates unparalleled qualities in organising, managing and stewarding medical or health tourism organisations and enterprises under its umbrella.

As a coordinating agency, MHTC strives to facilitate the focused development of the healthcare travel sector in Malaysia, which includes building strategic public-private

partnerships domestically and abroad, in a bid to create increasingly easier access to Malaysian healthcare for international patients.

Malaysia's private hospitals also grabbed several awards during the event. These are:

- International Hospital of the Year – Winner: Sunway Medical Centre
- Best Marketing Initiative – Winner: Sunway Medical Centre
- International Fertility Clinic of the Year – Winner: TMC Fertility Centre
- Best Quality Initiative – Highly Commendable: Sunway Medical Centre

“IMTJ is pleased to confer these awards to Malaysia, MHTC and Malaysian private hospitals, in recognition of the healthcare services they provide, par excellence, to health seekers all around the world. Malaysia Healthcare is, without a doubt, a rising force in the world of global healthcare,” commented Keith Pollard, Chief Editor of IMTJ and the CEO of Intuition Communications Ltd, IMTJ's parent company.

The IMTJ award proves further testament to Malaysia Healthcare's success at building bridges within international healthcare travel, adding to its long list of accolades, which includes “Best Country in the World for Healthcare” by International Living's Annual Global Retirement Index 2015-2017 and “Public Private Partnership Medical Travel Destination of the Year” at the 8th Annual World Medical Tourism & Global Healthcare Congress.

The Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC), is an agency set up in 2009 under the Ministry of Health to facilitate and promote Malaysia's healthcare travel industry. Sherene Azli, its Chief Executive Officer said that, “Malaysia has the ecosystem and infrastructure for an end-to-end healthcare services in place and being proclaimed “Health and Medical Tourism: Destination of the Year” for the third consecutive year not only accentuates the country's strengths but is also set to take Malaysia's name a notch higher in the industry internationally”.

“We are honoured to receive these awards from IMTJ. Healthcare in Malaysia is highly accessible, competitively affordable and of world-class quality. Patient safety and care is paramount and assured by the high standards mandated by stringent government regulations set by the Ministry of Health Malaysia and how industry stakeholders such as the Association of Private Hospitals of Malaysia (APHM), Tourism Malaysia, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), Immigration Department of Malaysia, and Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA) come together and take a concerted effort in promoting this industry for the country as a whole. We are proud that the world is taking increasing notice of the high-value healthcare services Malaysia is able to deliver,” further enthused Sherene Azli.

As part of its efforts to convey the essence of Malaysia Healthcare, the country recently unveiled “Share My Love”, a continuation of the “Malaysia Loves You” campaign, launched in 2016. “Share My Love” carries a message of love, unity and kindness, inviting all to come and experience Malaysia's excellent healthcare and indulge in its famed Malaysian hospitality.

This concept encompasses the essence of Malaysia's healthcare, which provides great care, compassion and warmth. It is this very love and welcoming spirit that Malaysia Healthcare hopes to convey and invite everyone to its country.

Organised by the IMTJ which was established in 2007, the annual IMTJ Medical Travel Awards is a prestigious award that recognises innovation, excellence and best practices in the medical travel and medical tourism sector, and is judged by an independent panel of medical travel experts. The awards ceremony is hosted in conjunction with the IMTJ Medical Travel Summit which takes place in Opatija on April 25-26, 2017.

ABOUT MALAYSIA HEALTHCARE TRAVEL COUNCIL (MHTC)

MHTC is an agency under the purview of the Ministry of Health Malaysia that has been entrusted with the responsibility of curating the country's healthcare travel scene. Identified as a National Key Economic Area (NKEA), the healthcare travel industry has great potential to contribute to the nation's economy in its final dash towards achieving a developed nation status.

For Media Enquiries:

Shobena Singam
Head - Public Relations & Communication
shobena@mhtc.org.my

For information on Malaysia Healthcare, visit:

www.medicaltourism.com.my
+603 2726 8688 (Call Centre)

