

Telemedicine in Medical Tourism

Empowered patient of 21st Century:

The penetration of internet is exponential. Truly internet has transformed the way of life.

Patients are now looking at affordable world class treatment with "no waiting" at healthcare delivery destinations outside home country. They research on web, connect to others in social media, travel agencies, hotels, insurance companies, interact with potential hospital at different countries and plan their visit.

It is must for hospitals to have website!! Ancient times truth.

Some findings:

- Patients don't search for medical tourism to begin with instead they would first look for relevant treatment or disease through search engines.

Visitors searching for health info primarily search for:

- Symptoms and Disease
- Medical Reports on the relevant disease
- Case / Medical studies

Hence, the content of website must be based on symptoms. The patient can be lead to your website even if he searches e.g. "chest pain" instead of "Cardiology".

Agree!! The idea of modern time!! However more than that is required!!!

The present form of web information is limited to learning about diseases, obtaining information about health care providers etc. There are very few tools available online to help individuals with specifics to their current condition to interact with the doctor.

Among them tools like google.com/health, healthvault.com is available. These and similar to that are excellent for medical tourism marketing and patient follow up.

It is not complex or difficult to develop similar type of tools for your clinic or hospital. Lets takes a scenario of one such hospital who has implemented such "patient centric" "web based" telemedicine system for medical tourism.

Hospital needs to develop web portal where patient can able to open their ehealth account free. It should be very easy and must provide step-by-step information. It will be fantastic if it proactive patient towards progressive steps.

The web portal has facility to store and send patients document like reports, vital info, history, dicom images, general images etc. At the end he submits it to hospital. Hospital must response promptly; the opinion must come from expert doctor. Incase need they will set video / web conferencing.

Conclusion; patient gets clear-cut opinion about line of treatment and you can able to closely involved with patient.

Follow up:

The same portal will be also used for follow-up and pre-operative treatment. Follow up is great concern for foreign patient. By default the patient will automatically registered in portal if treated at hospital (with due consent). Simple 10-20 minutes training will be sufficient to give idea to patient how he able to insert follow up reports; images (incase if it is done in parent country) and be in communication with expert / paramedical.

In era of "retaining customers" you provide something unique for your patient. You continue your relationship with patient even after patient left you. The application is very useful for follow up and post treatment reviews. This is the important service for your international patient (Medical Tourism).

Most healthcare provider is more depend on mouth to mouth marketing. It's the era of providing "customer delight" service. It is a win-win situation for all.