



**Mainland Chinese Tourists' Decision-making on Medical Tourism in Thailand**

**He Yi**

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Tourism Management (International Program)**

**Prince of Songkla University**

**2018**

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**Thesis Title** Mainland Chinese Tourists’ Decision-making on Medical Tourism in Thailand

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Due acknowledgement has been made of any assistance received.

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ชื่อเรื่อง	การตัดสินใจของนักท่องเที่ยวชาวจีนแผ่นดินใหญ่ต่อการท่องเที่ยวสุขภาพในประเทศไทย
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ปีการศึกษา	2560

### บทคัดย่อ

การท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพเป็นการให้บริการรวมกันของบริการทางการแพทย์และการท่องเที่ยว ที่มีการพัฒนาขึ้นอย่างรวดเร็วในช่วงไม่กี่ปีที่ผ่านมา การพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพไม่เพียงแต่นำมาซึ่งการพัฒนาอย่างเข้มแข็งทางการท่องเที่ยว แต่ยังช่วยส่งเสริมและปรับปรุงเทคโนโลยีทางการแพทย์และบริการในประเทศเจ้าบ้านด้วย ประเทศไทยเป็นเมืองที่มีชื่อเสียงทางการท่องเที่ยวระดับโลก มีการสร้างตราสินค้าการท่องเที่ยวเชิงการแพทย์ระดับนานาชาติ เพื่อจัดตั้งเป็นศูนย์กลางการท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพอาเซียน จากข้อมูลในปี พ.ศ. 2559 ประเทศไทยมีนักท่องเที่ยวชาวจีนประมาณ 8.75 ล้านคน ซึ่งเป็นกลุ่มนักท่องเที่ยวที่มากที่สุดของประเทศไทย ในปี พ.ศ. 2560 รัฐบาลไทยได้ออกกฎหมายวีซ่าสำหรับชาวจีนเพื่อดึงดูดให้นักท่องเที่ยวชาวจีนเข้ามาพักและรับบริการการท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพให้มากขึ้น การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาเหตุผลในการตัดสินใจของนักท่องเที่ยวชาวจีนแผ่นดินใหญ่ต่อการใช้บริการการท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพในประเทศไทย โดยใช้วิธีการศึกษาแบบผสมผสานข้อมูลจากนักท่องเที่ยวชาวจีนแผ่นดินใหญ่ในจังหวัดภูเก็ตและกรุงเทพมหานคร จำนวน 400 คน ร่วมกับการสัมภาษณ์เจ้าหน้าที่ที่ให้บริการของโรงพยาบาลและตัวแทนบริษัทการท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพ และการสังเกตการณ์ในเว็บไซต์ของโรงพยาบาล ผลการวิจัยชี้ให้เห็นว่านักท่องเที่ยวชาวจีนแผ่นดินใหญ่ส่วนใหญ่มีความสนใจต่อการท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพในประเทศไทย ปัจจัยสำคัญที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการตัดสินใจของผู้ตอบแบบสอบถามคือ ผู้ให้บริการทางการแพทย์ (ความสามารถที่ดีเยี่ยมของแพทย์ คุณภาพของการรักษา และปัญหาทางการแพทย์ที่ได้รับการแก้ไขได้เป็นอย่างดี) และบริการสนับสนุนทางการแพทย์ (การสื่อสารที่เข้าถึงได้) ดังนั้น ทั้งผู้ให้บริการและบริษัทตัวแทนทางการท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพควรใช้กลยุทธ์การตลาดเชิงรุกเพื่อดึงดูดนักท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพจากจีนแผ่นดินใหญ่ เช่น การประชาสัมพันธ์ในสื่อสังคมออนไลน์ของจีนให้มากขึ้น

**คำสำคัญ:** การท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพ, นักท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพ, กระบวนการตัดสินใจ, ผู้ให้บริการทางการแพทย์, การท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพในประเทศไทย, นักท่องเที่ยวเชิงสุขภาพชาวจีน

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### ABSTRACT

Medical tourism -- a combination of medical service and traveling has developed rapidly in recent years. The development of medical tourism has not only brought the vigorous development of the tourism industry, but also promoted and improved the medical technology and service in host countries. Thailand as a world-famous tourism destination is actively building its "Asian Health Tourism Center" international medical tourism brand. In 2016, Thailand attracts about 8.75 million Chinese tourists, making China the largest tourist source market for Thailand. In 2017, the Thai government launched a visa-free policy for Chinese residents for entry into Thailand for medical treatment to attract more Chinese tourists for medical tourism services industry. The purpose of this research is to explore mainland Chinese tourists' perception of medical tourism in Thailand. This research adopted mixed methods approach. 400 valid questionnaires were collected from mainland Chinese tourists in Phuket and Bangkok, Thailand. Interviews were conducted with hospitals and a medical traveling agency and observations conducted on hospital websites. The results indicated that the majority mainland Chinese tourists were interested in medical tourism in Thailand. The most significant and important factors influencing respondents' decision making included medical service suppliers (excellent doctor's skill, quality of treatment and medical dispute can be good resolved) and medical support service (accessible language communication). Both medical service providers and medical agency should take active marketing strategy to attract mainland Chinese potential medical tourists, for example, more publicity in main Chinese social media.

**Keywords:** Medical tourism, medical tourists, decision-making process, medical service suppliers, medical tourism in Thailand, Chinese medical tourists

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## CONTENTS

	Page
หน้าอำนวยการ.....	ii
บทคัดย่อ.....	v
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>CONTENTS</b> .....	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLE</b> .....	<b>x</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....	<b>xi</b>
<b>CHAPTER</b>	
<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Objectives of the Research.....	3
1.3 Research Questions.....	3
1.4 Scope of the Research.....	4
1.5 Significance of the Research.....	4
1.6 Definition of Key Terms.....	5
1.7 Research Framework.....	6
1.8 Structure of the research.....	6
<b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	<b>8</b>
2.1 Overall Introduction.....	8
2.2 Definition of Medical Tourism and Related Items.....	8
2.3 Medical Tourism in Thailand.....	13
2.4 The Decision-making of Medical Tourism.....	20
2.5 Medical Tourism by Mainland Chinese Tourists.....	26
<b>3 METHODOLOGY</b> .....	<b>31</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	31
3.2 Research Population.....	31
3.3 Sampling Method and Sample Size.....	32

## CONTENTS (Continued)

	Page
3.4 Research Instruments.....	33
3.5 Data Collection.....	34
3.6 Data Analysis.....	35
3.7 Overall Design of Research.....	36
<b>4 RESULTS.....</b>	<b>37</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	37
4.2 Quantitative Data.....	37
4.3 Qualitative Data.....	57
<b>5 CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>61</b>
5.1 Summary of Main Findings.....	61
5.2 Marketing Strategy.....	65
5.3 Discussion.....	65
5.4 Recommendations.....	68
5.5 Limitations and Suggestions for the Future Study.....	70
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Vitae.....</b>	<b>95</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

	<b>Page</b>
2.1 Differences between Medical Tourism and Wellness Tourism.....	9
2.2 Medical Service of Private Hospital.....	15
2.3 The Number of Medical Tourists in Thailand.....	19
3.1 Show Design objective of research.....	36
4.1 Demographic information of respondents.....	38
4.2 Reason for mainland Chinese tourists visit Thailand.....	40
4.3 Satisfaction with experience in Thailand.....	41
4.4 Satisfaction of medical service in Thailand.....	42
4.5 Importance of factors in influencing potential medical tourists' decision making...	43
4.6 Interest in potential medical treatment in Thailand.....	45
4.7 Source of information when making decision on medical tourism.....	46
4.8 Way of traveling and Medical institution.....	46
4.9 Tourism Products.....	47
4.10 T- test for differences between male and female respondents.....	48
4.11 T-test for differences between Package tour tourists (PTT) and FIT tourists.....	49
4.12 One-Way ANOVA test for difference among demographic location.....	50
4.13 One-Way ANOVA test for difference among education background.....	52
4.14 One-Way ANOVA test for difference among age.....	55

**LIST OF FIGURES**

	<b>Page</b>
2.1 Category of Medical Treatment.....	10
2.2 Typology Medical Tourists.....	11
2.3 Different Groups of Medical Tourists Classified by Characteristic.....	12
2.4 Medical Tourism Cluster Diagram in Thailand.....	13
2.5 Jim Adams's Hierarchy of Healthcare Needs.....	21
2.6 Medical Procedures Cost by Countries 2016.....	23
2.7 Number of Chinese Tourists Traveling Abroad.....	27

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter will give an overview medical tourism and mainland Chinese tourists getting medical treatment abroad. The background is focused on the rapidly development of medical tourism in Thailand. The chapter provides understanding of the requirements of potential mainland Chinese medical tourists. Then giving the objectives of this research and provides definition of key terms.

#### 1.1 Background

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) forecast for the scale of the world tourism market in 2020, the total number of world tourists will be about 1.6 billion, travel costs about 2 trillion dollars. And it also predicted that the most popular industry in the 21st century is tourism industry.

With the rapidly development of economy, the living standard of people has improved a lot. People pay more attention on their living quality and health status. A new trend appeared that can be called “well-being”. This new word can be explained as a contented state of being happy and healthy and prosperous. Thus, the purpose of traveling not only for vacation but also combined with medical service. This kind of new trend is widely called medical tourism. Medical tourism is identified by Turner (2011) as a kind of movement of patients across nationalities and culture in order to get healthcare. These recent years, the medical tourism industry has developed rapidly in all over the world. According to the report of Asian Medical Tourism Outlook in 2015, Asia medical tourism market consists of 6 countries included Thailand. Medical tourism industry is becoming accepted by more and more mainland Chinese people. Nowadays, people go traveling to South Korea to do plastic surgery, go to Switzerland for a Sheep placenta extract injection for anti-aging, or get cancer prevention check-ups in Japan, and there are other medical tourism products that have become the main promotion tourism program in many travel agencies. During the years 2016 and 2017, the Thai government had to combat the “Zero Dollar” tour group, and tried to open a new door to attract mainland Chinese medical tourists; the result of the later is that Thailand has launched a visa-free policy for Chinese

residents for entry into Thailand for medical treatment to attract more Chinese tourists for the medical tourism services industry. According to the statistic of China National Tourism Administration, 122 million tourists choose to go traveling overseas ([www.cnta.com](http://www.cnta.com)). Thailand is still top tourism destination for the mainland Chinese people. TAT reported that China is the largest market for Thailand. In 2015, mainland Chinese tourists account for 26.5% of the total number of foreign tourists. China and Thailand have worked together and made efforts for the convenience of Chinese tourists. For example, since November 2015, Alipay can be used in the largest duty-free shop (King Power) in Thailand. In 2016, Baidu wallet can be used for online payment in more than 400 shops and restaurants and at the same time Baidu map also proposed cooperation with the Tourism Authority of Thailand to launch a Chinese map for Chinese tourists. In addition to driving the development of the Thai electricity industry, Chinese tourists also promote the improvement of the navigation system in the two countries. More and more cities have opened a direct airline route to Thailand.

The report from Ctrip “2016 online medical tourism report” released that medical tourism products in 2016 got an outbreak growth and this was achieved by consumers booking online and through the application, this way has become the main trend. Additionally, the annual order volume is 5 times the previous year, and the average price for a medical tour package tour is more than 50,000 Yuan / person ([www.ctrip.com](http://www.ctrip.com)).

There are many previous studies on motivation and perception of Chinese tourists in Thailand. And some studies focused on the marketing strategy on promoting medical tourism destination. Thai government also conducted on general medical tourists in Thailand, most of them came from European and American countries. And for the Chinese studies about medical tourism were most on how to use the example of other famous medical tourism destination countries to develop medical tourism destination image of China. While there were still few studies on mainland Chinese medical tourists in Korea and Taiwan on motivation. Therefore, this research on intention of mainland Chinese tourists take medical tourism in Thailand can fill the gap on study of potential mainland Chinese medical tourists. Facing with China this large market and in order to keep the sustainable development of tourism industry, the research on Chinese medical tourists is critical important to know potential Chinese medical tourists’ requirements. This research will focus on the intention of Chinese tourists coming to

Thailand to get medical service based on tourism experience in Thailand. Medical tourism in this research is definite as the new traveling style with people going abroad to get higher quality, better service and affordable price medical treatment and combine medical service and vacation.

## **1.2 Objectives of the research**

Medical tourism is a new industry which is highly valued by many countries especially by Asian countries. In order to get more tourism market share, more and more countries are committed to medical tourism research.

This research is focus on general medical treatment ranging from medical check-ups to specific surgery. The target population of this research is the mainland Chinese tourists in Thailand or ever traveled in Thailand. Explore Chinese tourists about the impression of Thailand from attractions, Thai food, Thai spa and shopping in Thailand. This research provided suitable scheme and gave some revelation to potential mainland Chinese medical tourists. At the same time, it provided a strategic base for attracting potential Chinese travelers.

Objective 1: To explore the traveling experience of mainland Chinese tourists and their medical treatment experience in Thailand.

Objective 2: To explore the requirements and important factors of potential mainland Chinese medical tourists' decision making in Thailand.

Objective 3: To investigate the current marketing strategy to Chinese market from both medical agent and international hospitals in Thailand.

## **1.3 Research questions**

In addition to above objectives, this research attempts to give respond to the following questions:

1.What do the Chinese tourists think about traveling experience and medical treatment in Thailand?

2.What factors will be considered for potential mainland Chinese medical tourists if they choose to get medical treatment in Thailand?

3.What kinds of tourism activities and medical service will they like to get?

#### **1.4 Scope of the research**

This research is mainly focus on the intention and perception of potential mainland Chinese medical tourists to seek medical treatment in Thailand.

##### *Scope of research area*

Quantitative data will be collected from mainland Chinese tourists by distributing street questionnaires.

Qualitative data will be collected from both interview the manager in Chinese medical agency and marketing manager of international hospitals target Chinese market and observation the website of medical service suppliers that have Chinese version.

##### *Scope of time*

The secondary information related research topic from previous researchers was collected from December 2016 to February 2017. And then quantitative data got from mainland Chinese tourists from March 2017 to August 2017. Then the qualitative data from interview arranged at the same time of quantitative data during March 2017 to June 2017.

##### *Scope of demographics*

The scope included mainland Chinese tourists in Thailand. The age of respondent is at least 20 years old. The qualitative data got from staff in medical agency and marketing department manager in international hospital targeting mainland Chinese market.

##### *Scope of Geography*

The research was mainly conducted in Phuket and Bangkok of Thailand. Because these two cities are the most popular cities for mainland Chinese tourists, so it is easier to get enough tourists to reply the questionnaires.

#### **1.5 Significance of the research**

Both in academic terms and business terms, this research have significant meanings:

*Academic terms:* The result and findings of this research will contribute to academic literature to enhance the understanding of requirements for potential mainland Chinese medical tourists. And to know the important factors that can influence potential mainland Chinese medical tourists when they make decision in medical tourism in Thailand.



*Business terms:* The findings of this research can help the medical products providers get better understanding of potential mainland Chinese medical tourists. After knowing their requirements and intentions, it is benefit to make the suitable marketing strategy to meet the needs of target consumers.

## **1.6 Definition of key terms**

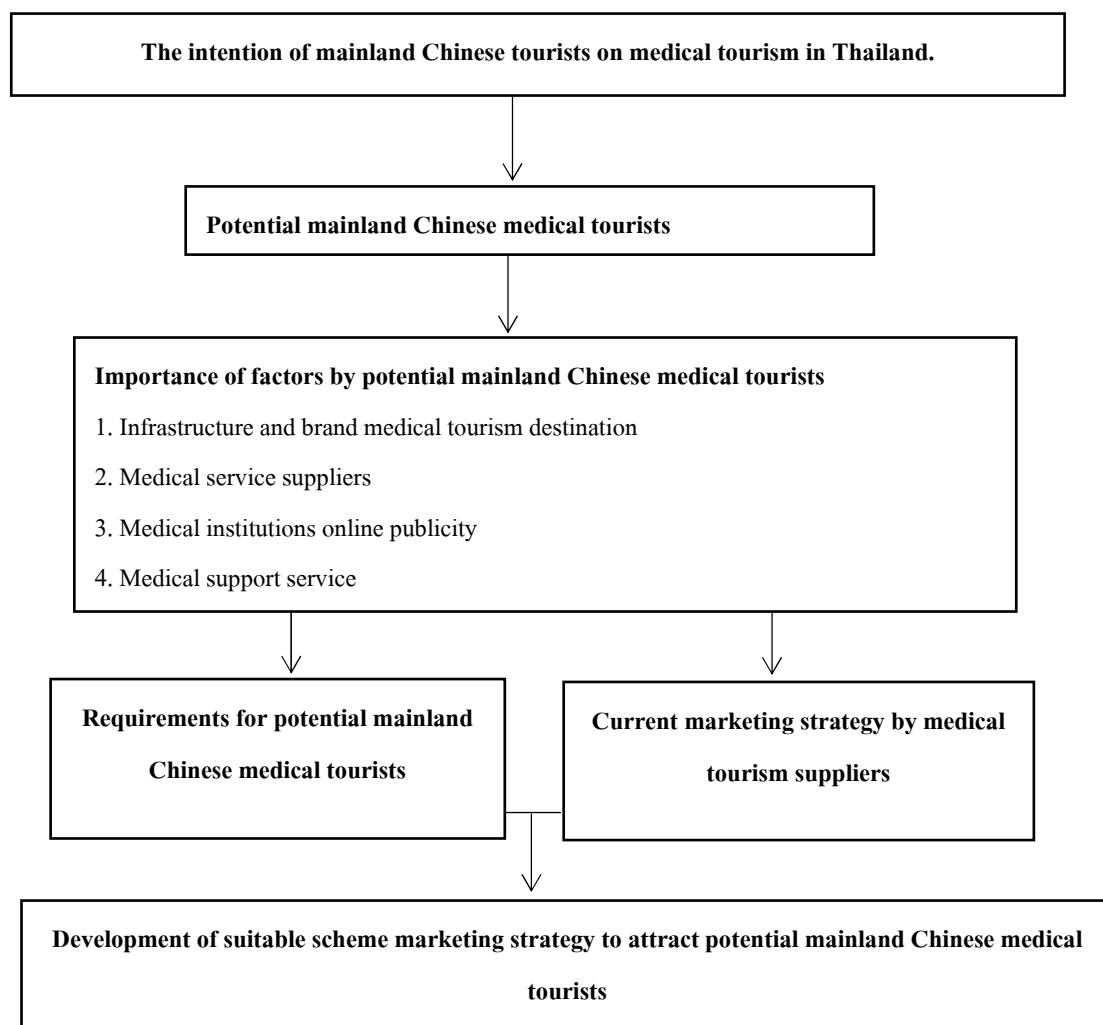
*Medical tourism:* Medical tourism is identified as people traveling to another country to get medical care or health care with the reasons of cheaper and higher quality than their home country (Turner, 2011).

*Medical tourist:* Medical tourist is identified as patients who travel to other countries to receive medical treatment and combine with enjoy vacation (Connell, 2006).

*Medical tourism agency:* It is also called medical tourism provider. An organization or a company which seeks to bring prospective patients with hospitals or clinics at the same time prepares traveling arrangements.

*Potential medical tourists:* Refers to the needs of medical tourism products and have the ability to buy that can be developed to be customers through efforts of enterprises and sales staff. Potential medical tourists can be transformed into real medical tourists.

### 1.7 Research framework



### 1.8 Structure of the research

The research is divided into five chapters as following details:

Chapter 1 This chapter begins with introduction of medical tourism industry and overview of the development of medical tourism in target mainland Chinese market. And then give the objectives of this research and state research questions. After that, give classification of research scope, significance and summary the framework.

Chapter 2 This chapter provides overview of medical tourism industry literature review included the definition of medical tourism and medical tourists and decision-making of medical tourists. Then give a brief introduction of international hospitals in Thailand

and medical service. Lastly, medical tourism carried by mainland Chinese medical tourists is also referred in this chapter.

Chapter 3 This chapter is research methodology. According to the background theory, to design the basis of measurement index, the constitution of the questionnaire and the research target population.

Chapter 4 This chapter is the result of the research with empirical analysis. It is included both quantitative data analysis (describe statistics, independent sample as well as ANOVA) and qualitative data analysis (interview and observation).

Chapter 5 This chapter is the conclusion. To give abbreviation research results and the limitations of research and future research issues.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Overall Introduction

There is an overview of medical tourism and some related items. For example: medical tourism, health tourism, medical tourists and the relationship between the items. It is important to understand the meaning and distinguish the difference among each item. When planning to each or both market, it is critical important to identify the characteristic of each segment. The basic the theory of making market plan is to cater the needs of tourists. If making the same market plan and using the same message to both two targets marketing, it is hard to catch real customers and even get poor result. Bellowing, this chapter will give the review of different literature about the definition of each item, the factors of influencing decision making , the motivation by medical tourists and medical tourism in Thailand and medical tourism by mainland Chinese people.

#### 2.2 Definition of medical tourism and related items

In recent years, growing number of patients are traveling from their home countries to another countries in order to get medical or health care (Connell, 2013). The movement included elective surgery, dental treatment, reproductive treatment, organ transplant and special medical check-ups. This kind of movement that patient crossing nationalities and culture in order to get health care, which has been popularly called as “medical tourism” (Turner, 2011). Medical tourism is a wide range. Different people have different views on the concrete definition and the classification of medical tourism.

Medical tourism is treated as a subset of health tourism. Normally, health tourism is divided into medical tourism and wellness tourism. Although they are very seminar to each other, they still have difference on distinct motivation factors. Table 2.1 shows the difference between medical tourism and wellness tourism. This paper distinguishes medical tourism and wellness tourism. Wellness tourism put more focus on improve health condition through the health service, while the medical tourism is emphasized on regularly surgery procedures. However, both of them are characterized to plan to enjoy traveling at the same time to

get medical service. Goodrich & Goodrich (1987) thinks that medical tourism can be promoted health tourism, and it is purpose to attract people to medical destination. Typically, the area of medical tourism is to get specific medical treatments, while the wellness tourism is all area of making people living a healthy life, such as to go to SPA center and learn yoga. The three points of pursuit of wellness is exercise, healthcare and nutrition. Hall (1992) hold believes that medical tourism is a form of special interest tourism, while the core motivation is about health. Bies and Zacharia ( 2007) hold the review that medical tourism is the out-sourcing of medical service, choosing medical service to low-income destination.

Table 2.1 Differences between Medical Tourism and Wellness Tourism

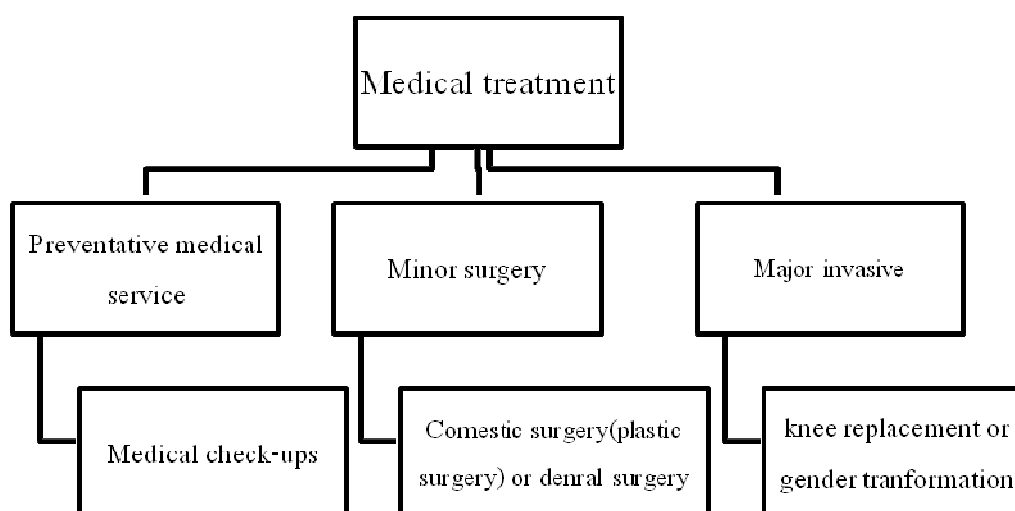
Difference Between Medical Tourism and Wellness Tourism		
Medical Tourism		Wellness Tourism
Emphasis on cure	Different Health Paradigm	Emphasis on health promotion and disease prevention
Traveling to cure a medical condition	Different Underlying Tourist motivation	Traveling to maintain or improve health
Mainstream health professionals	Different Employee Source	Employees consists of formal qualification
Services mainly consists of invasive procedures	Different Types of Service	Service generally fall outside of biomedical realm

Resource: Medical Tourism Association (2016)

A number of researchers thought that medical tourism can be dived into different types: according to people take specific treatments that can be only provided by doctors (Connell, 2006; Jen charoenwong & Assenoy, 2010; Pope, 2008; Reed, 2008). Treatments can be separated into 3 categories in following figure 2.1, they are preventative medical service such as medical check-up and health screening, and minor surgery such as cosmetic surgery and dental surgery, and major invasive procedures such as knee replacement, gender transformation (Heung et al., 2010; Pope, 2008). Medical tourists can be divided into two groups: one is a traveler whose major purpose is to receive medical treatment; another one is included with element entertainment

activities in their traveling alongside medical service (Connell, 2006; Heung et al, 2010). Medical Tourism Association (2012) defined that medical tourism is the people who live in a country but traveling to another country to receive medical service while at the same time can receive better health care than their own country, and are traveling for medical care because of affordable, higher level technology and high quality of service with high satisfaction.

Figure 2.1 Category of Medical Treatment

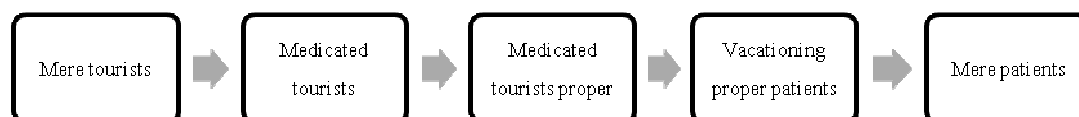


Source: Heung et al., 2010; Pope, 2008

Generally, pursuing of medical treatment plays a major role in medical tourists' decision making (Bookman & Bookman, 2007; Cohen, 2008), while the tourists who have an accident in destination Country are not belonging to medical tourists (Reddy, York & Brannon, 2010). Bookman & Bookman(2007) thought that medical tourist are not like the other tourists who choose destination according to their interests. Instead, they make decision according to healthcare requirement and then choose the more suitable destination to get medical treatments. Khan and Deb (2010) also add that the decision of treatment is planned before departure. Thus, from the definition of medical tourism and medical tourists, we can conclude that decision making is attracted by the medical facilities but not the tourism destination. While Cohen (2008) identifies three other groups: they are medicated tourists, who get treatment because of accident or sick in destination country; medical tourists, who combine both tourism and medical treatment; another group is vacation patients, who use the vacation chance to visit the destination country

mainly because of finding specific medical treatment. In principle, Cohen (2008) gave the identification of medical tourists who travels definitely for medical treatment or who combine tourism with medical service. Hunter-Jones (2004) stated that the main purpose of medical tourists for travel for recovery but not for direct medical treatment. Edelheit (2008) thought that medical tourism travel to another country for more affordability, higher quality healthcare and more professional in medical treatment procedure. AMEinfo (2009) showed the similar point that more developed countries people concerned high cost on medical treatment in their home country. Figure 2.2 gives the typology of medical tourists.

Figure 2.2 Typology Medical Tourists



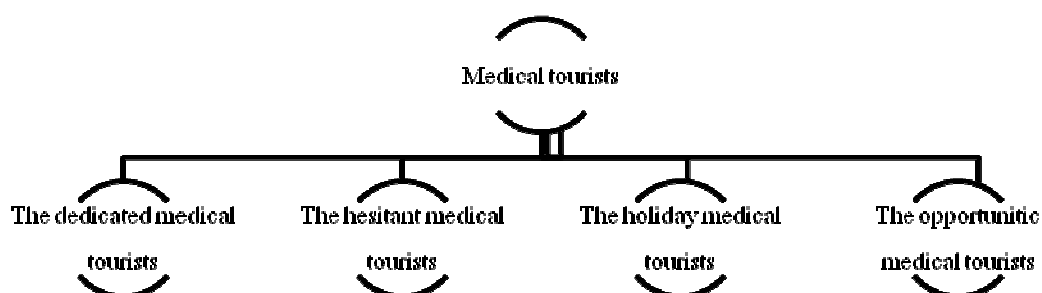
Source: Cohen (2008)

Cohen (2008) suggested that medical tourists should be divided into five-stage, ranging from mere tourists to mere patients. A mere tourist is the person who only travels for vacation but don't want to receive any medical treatment. A medicated tourist is the person who has urgent health problem in host country and need medical service. A medicated tourist proper is the person who combines the tourism activities and receives medical service both makes plan in advance or after arrives at destination. While a vacationing proper tourist is the person who has purpose for medical treatment at the same time adds tourism activities. A mere patient is the person who visit the destination country only to get medical treatment but not for vacation.

Wongkit & Mekercher (2013) showed that the medical tourists can be separated into 4 groups by characteristic of decision making and the nature of traveling. The dedicated medical tourist is the person whose purpose to travel for seeking medical treatment. The hesitant medical tourist is the person who considers medical service as one of reason for traveling, but the final decision need to arrive at destination. The holiday medical tourist is the person who makes the traveling plan mainly for vacation at the same time get medical treatment. However, the opportunistic medical tourist is the person who makes traveling plan only for holiday, but when

arrives at destination arouse the interesting or an emergency accident for opportunity to get medical treatment. Figure 2.3 shows the different groups of medical tourists.

Figure 2.3 Different Groups of Medical Tourists Classified by Characteristic



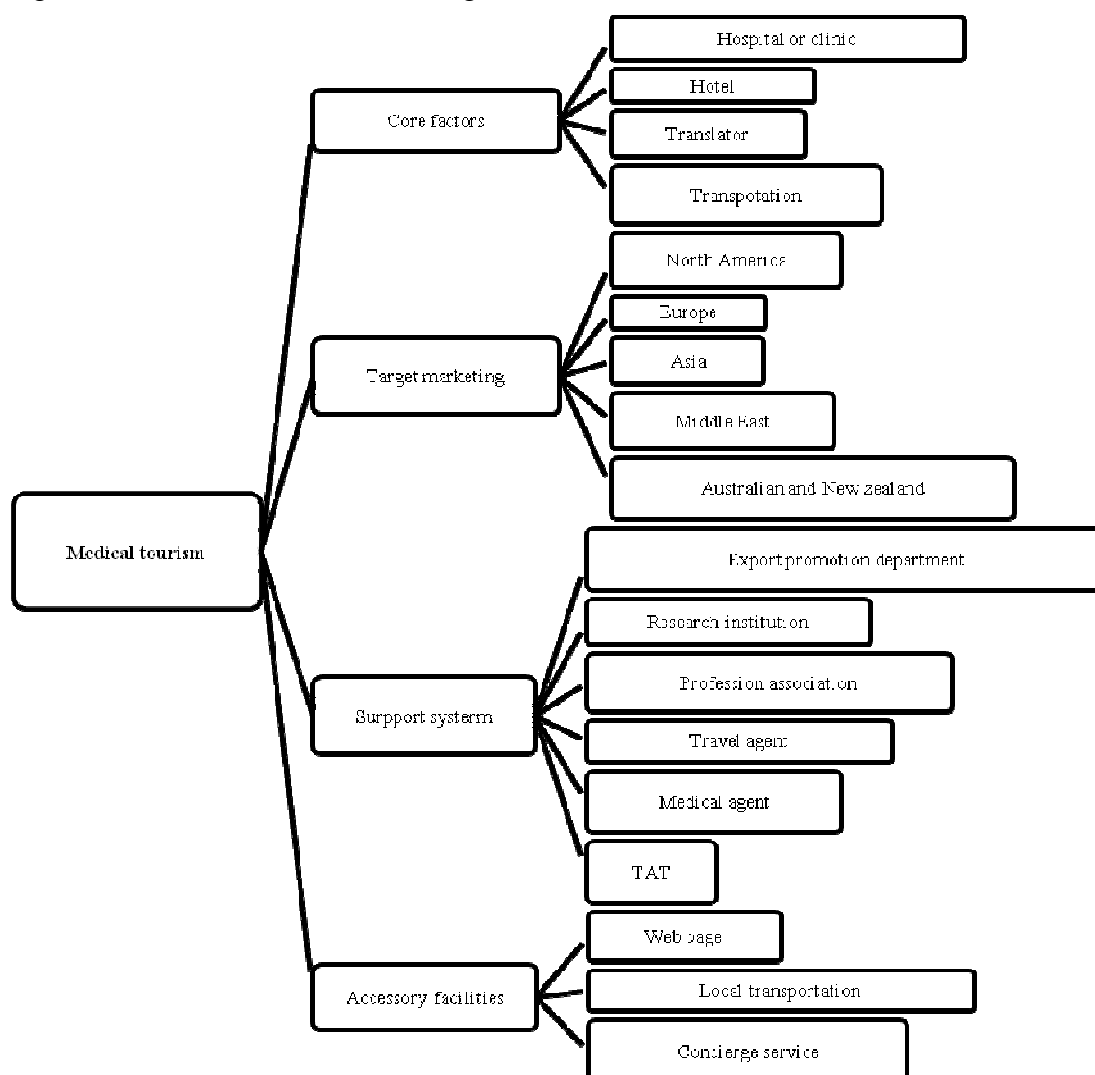
Source: Wongkit&Mekercher (2013)

The Medical Tourism Association also gives a specific definition that medical tourism can be defined traveling to foreign country to obtain medical, dental and surgical treatment at the same time getting equal or better service than their own country with the reason of affordable, accessibility or high quality service. Milica Bookman and Karla Bookman (2007) defined medical tourism as travel with the purpose of improving one's health, and also an economic activity that entails trade in services and represents the mix of at least two sectors: medical and tourism. In this research, medical tourism will be defined as mix of traveling for holiday for purpose at the same time get specific medical treatment (Lagiewski & Myers, 2008)

As mentioned above, there is an important point about the industry of medical tourism that this industry is a cross-industry. It isn't like the traditional tourism industry. Medical tourism industry covers both tourism industry and medical service, thus, there should be intersections between these two industries. Medical tourists have opportunities to enjoy traveling in destination cities at the time of receiving medical products from service providers. According to the review of research, there are several factors play important roles in medical tourism. Figure 2.4 shows the concrete factors and their relationships.



Figure 2.4 Medical Tourism Cluster Diagram in Thailand



Source: Deng & Wen (2011)

### 2.3 Medical tourism in Thailand

Although medical tourism has already developed in some countries, such as Southeast Asia and East Asia, which has been the leader of the whole Asia (ESCAP, 2009). India, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand are known as the most famous medical tourism destination countries in Asia (Connell, 2006; Henderson, 2009). Medical tourism in Thailand successfully combines with tourism industry and healthcare with great competitive advantage included good medical service, affordable price and high reputation (Connell, 2006; Teh, 2007; Woodman, 2009). Medical tourism in Thailand started in 1997 after the Asian Financial Crisis, and it until the year of 2004 to develop the first five-year plan. This plan was led by the Thai government

health department, and the purpose was to integrate the medical service, health service and traditional Thai herb medicine industry to build "Asian Health Tourism Center" international medical tourism brand. After the Asian Financial Crisis, the local private hospital lost revenue from the decline local patients. Thai government began to promote the private hospital abroad. Under the support of the Thai government, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) opened a new website especially for promoting medical tourism ([www.thailandmedtourism.com](http://www.thailandmedtourism.com)). This website provide the all the information related medical tourism, ranging from different types of medical packages and treatment provided by suppliers, the location of hospitals or clinics to guideline of destination (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010). In the policy of visa, in addition to allow retired foreigners to get retired visa, Thai government also has extended the medical legal duration of stay from 30 days to 90 days in 5 countries, including the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain (Immigration Bureau Thailand).

There are six cities identified as medical tourism destinations: Bangkok, ChiangMai, HuaHin, Phuket, Pattaya and KohSamui ([www.thailandmedtourism.com](http://www.thailandmedtourism.com)). Among these six cities, Bangkok, Phuket and Chiang Mai are largely concentrated with medical tourism industry. In the past 10 years, the number of hospitals has increased quickly. According to the Department of Export Promotion (2009), 17,792 private healthcare service providers including more than 330 hospitals provide medical service in 2007. In 2010, 197 healthcare providers with 41 hospitals and 156 specialist clinics were recommended as medical service suppliers (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010). They are expert to provide medical service that can meet the international medical standards and get medical business license, at the same time supervised by The Ministry of Public Health and Medical council of Thailand to maintain the high quality medical service. Nowadays, many hospitals are accepted by the Hospital Accreditation of Thailand, ISO 9001:2000, ISO 14001, ISO 18000 and some are accredited by U.S.-based Joint Commission International (JCI). Most doctors in these hospitals are trained with oversea experience. There is no barrier of communication between doctors and patients. And also many hospitals have their own website to provide appointment service and show the information and specific doctors' schedule and different medical treatment packages. It is very convenient for foreign patients, they can get more information and then choose where they want to go from the webpage of hospital. Table 2.2 displays main medical service of private hospital in Thailand.

Table 2.2 Medical Service of Private Hospital

<b>Dental Center</b>	<b>Dental Bleaching (Tooth Whitening)</b>
	Tooth Colored Filling
	Dental Implants
	Dental X-rays by 3D Imaging Systems (3D Dental X-ray)
	Children's Dentistry
	Orthodontics
<b>Health Screening Center</b>	Comprehensive Programs for People age 40+
	Health Check-up Test Descriptions
	Executive Programs for people under age 40
	Holistic Programs for People age 55+
<b>Heart Center</b>	Congenital Heart Surgery
	Thoracic Surgery
	Vascular Surgery
	Cardiovascular Investigations
<b>Orthopedic Center</b>	Arthroscopic Meniscus Treatment
	Arthroscopic Shoulder Surgery
	Arthroscopy
	Hip Replacement (Orthopedic Surgery)
	Total Knee Replacement
<b>Plastic Surgery</b>	Abdominoplasty
	Blepharoplasty (Eyelid Surgery)
	Breast Augmentation
	Breast Reduction
	Breast Reconstruction
	Chin Augmentation

Table 2.2 Continued

<b>Dental Center</b>	<b>Dental Bleaching (Tooth Whitening)</b>
	Face Lift
	Facial Implants
<b>Skin Center</b>	Birthmark Removal
	BOTOX
	Carbon Dioxide Laser Treatment
	Chemical Peel
	Cyst Excision
	Laser Hair Removal
<b>Women's Center</b>	Antenatal Class Schedule
	Baby Delivery
	Gynecologic Laparoscopic Surgery
	Menopause & Hormone Therapy
	Hysterectomy
	Intensive Care for Newborn Babies

Source: <http://phukethospital.com/?s=Medical+Service+of+Private+Hospital>

### **2.3.1 Overview of hospitals in Thailand**

Bumrungrad International Hospital in Bangkok was the first Asian hospitals to be accredited by JCI and it as the pioneer in promoting outbound medical service (Bumrungrad International Hospital, 2012; Cohen, 2008). In the official website of Bumrungrad International Hospital, we can see English, Chinese, Arabic and etc. 13 languages you can choose for service. Yanhee hospital is famous for its plastic surgery and the official website can supply 5 languages. Even though, it is one of the most expensive hospitals in Thailand, but compared with Singapore, it still has competitive price. Bangkok hospital is another famous hospital in Thailand. It was established in 1972 as one of the first private hospitals in Thailand with services and treatment processes are internationally certified by the Joint Commission International. And many private hospitals can provide translator, agent visa and some other service for patients.

Bangkok Hospital Phuket (BPK)

Bangkok Hospital Phuket has more than 20 years history and is a joint venture between Bangkok Dusit Medical Services Plc. (BDMS). It is a part of the Bangkok General Hospital group and focuses on the concept of health care as well as being preventive health check. The hospital designed preventive health check packages to meet varied needs of customers, such as "Wellness Diamond Packages" for the executives and basic checkup for general population, including an array of blood tests, ultrasound, X-ray, MRI, CCTA, Treadmill test (TMT), Pulmonary function test (PFT), ECG, and dental check-up and eye test ([www.phukethospital.com/](http://www.phukethospital.com/)). The vision of hospital is to be the Medical Center of choice and Regional Tertiary Care in ASEAN community. Now the hospital provides 1000 Out-Patient capacities, 200 In-Patient capacities, 5 Operation Theaters, 11 ICU, and 8 CCU. At the same time, the hospital has a strong co-operation with the leading hotels, resorts and spa on the island. This will give the convenient to tourists and make them relax with medical treatment.

#### **BNH Hospital**

BNH Hospital (Bangkok Nursing Home Hospital) has over 118 years history of medical experience. The purpose of setting this hospital was to make needs of expatriates seeking quality medical treatment. And then a small nursing home was founded in 1898 under the royal patronage of King Rama 5th. More than 100 years have passed, BNH Hospital is now recognized as being the first international private hospital in the kingdom of Siam for 5 reigns. The medical service is famous for its maternity care, pediatrics, and gynecology with three main centers: Women's Health Center; BNH Breast Health Center; BNH Gynecology Center. In webpage of BNH Hospital, there are Chinese, English and Thai three language in total. The main target market is for Chinese tourists (<http://www.bnhhospital.com>).

#### **Bumrungrad hospital**

Bumrungrad hospital is the most expensive private hospital in Thailand, while compared with Singapore, it remains significantly cheaper. The price of service is 50%-70% cheaper than in Singapore. The hospital can offer more than 30 specific medical centers with 580 beds. Annually, more than 1.1 million patients, among them, 520,000 international patients were received medical treatment in Bumrungrad hospital (Patients beyond borders, 2014). And moreover, the information about the actual costs transparent online and respondent tracks of medical procedures requirement will be send to patients directly no more than 30 days.

### **Samitivej Hospital**

Samitivej Hospital was established in 1979, the vision of the establishment of hospital was to gather the best doctors and nurses together and then supply the advanced medical technology, provide high quality service to patients and their families. Now, more than 200 health professionals in six Samitivej hospitals provide medical services ranging from minor outpatient illness to major medical procedures. There are six group of hospital in Samitivej hospital, included SamitivejSukhumvit, SamitivejSrinakarin, SamitivejSriracha, SamitivejThonburi, SamitivejChonburi and Samitivej Children's Hospital ([www.samitivejhospitals.com](http://www.samitivejhospitals.com)).

#### **2.3.2 The number of medical tourists in Thailand**

According to the estimates shows that the number of medical tourists came to Thailand in 2003 is more than 730,000, in the year of 2005 is 840,000 and from 2010 to 2012, the number of foreign medical tourists is 1,980,000, 2,240,000 and 2,530,000 (Thai Ministry of Public Health). Through these statistics, the number of medical tourists is keep growing. With a critique of recording practice, 65% of patients from the Asia-Pacific region (Ormond&Sulianti, 2014). Japan and Malaysia get the rest medical tourists from UK and Germany (Cohen, 2008).

Thailand is the leader in medical tourist arrival holding more than 40% in Asia medical tourist arrivals in 2011. In 2012, the Ministry of Public Health and the Kasikorn Research Center found that 2,530,000 international patients traveled to Thailand for medical treatment. And the top five nationalities were; Japan, U.S., UK, GCC and Australia. Revenues got from medical tourism were approximately 4 billion USD. About 26.7 million travelers arrived in Thailand in 2013. The Department of Export Promotion reported that about 2.5 million of those travelers came for health tourism or medical tourism reasons. The number of medical tourists is still keep growing year by year. Thailand earned \$4.31 billion in revenue from medical tourism in 2013, after averaging 15 percent increases a year across the past decade (Medical tourism association, 2016). Table 2.3 shows the number of medical tourists in Thailand from 2010 to 2012 and the main medical tourists by nationality.

Table 2.3 The number of medical tourists in Thailand

No. of medical tourists & Estimated Revenue generated						
	2010		2011		2012	
Number of medical tourists (person)	1,980,000		2,240,000		2,530,000	
Estimated Revenue (million baht)	78,740		97,874		121,658-140,000	
Top 5 Medical Tourists by Nationality	1.	J	1.	J	1.	J
	apan		apan		apan	
	2.	A	2.	A	2.	U
	SEAN		SEAN		S	
	3.	M	3.	M	3.	U
	iddle East		iddle East		K	
	4.	U	4.	U	4.	G
	S		S		CC	
	5.	U	5.	U	5.	A
	K		K		ustralia	

Sources: Ministry of Public Health, Thailand and Kasikorn Research Center

According to the table, we can see that medical tourists traveled to Thailand in 2010 were 1,980,000 and medical tourists brought revenues was about 78,740 million Baht. Then medical tourists from Japan occupied the first range followed by other ASEAN countries, Middle East, US, UK. From 2010 to 2012, the number of medical tourists increased nearly 2 times, at the same times the revenues from medical tourism kept increased also. Japanese medical tourists arranged the first market by nationality. Medical Tourism Association reported that the revenues from medical tourism in Thailand expected to get 3.11 billion USD by 2017(Medical Tourism Association, 2017).

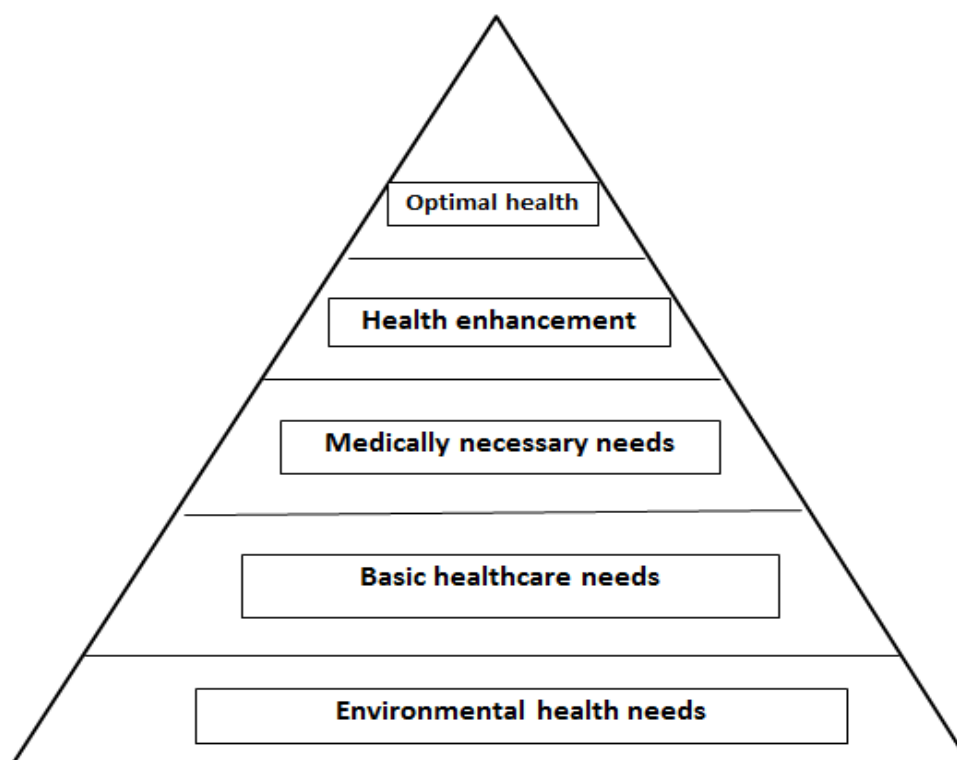
## **2.4 The decision-making of medical tourism**

Usually, people will make a decision because of many reasons. Similarly, before people choosing to receive medical treatment in another country, they may find a lot of information from different ways in medical destinations, which called the motivation.

The first step to make decision should consider a point that whether to participate medical tourism or not (Runnels & Carrera, 2012). The increasing of people's age, income and improvement of people's living standard, more and more people are aware of the importance of health. The people will be more likely to engage in medical tourism. In 1943, Abraham Maslow put forward Hierarchy of Human Needs based five-tiered pyramid. Figure 2.8 will show the reason for people driven by special needs to get medical service. This finding can make healthcare institution understand the needs of medical tourists and consider different requirements from different level of tourists. Then according to these requirements provide comprehensive service. Healthcare needs were divided into five levels: the first level is environmental health needs (fundamental healthcare needs, for example water, air and food); the second level is basic healthcare needs (basic medical care for presentation, for example immunization and preventive screening) ; the third level is medically necessary needs ( medical treatment for emergency, such as illness and injury); the fourth level is health enhancement (not necessary for healthcare but want to improve health condition, for example plastic surgery); the fifth level is optimal health (top of the pyramid, holistic, personalized and wellness). Generally speaking, it is a natural priority in healthcare needs hierarchy system that people will get basic immunizations but not cosmetic surgery. But after satisfied with the bottom three levels, people would expect to see the value demands shifting to optimal health.



Figure 2.5 Jim Adams's hierarchy of healthcare needs



Source: IBM Institute for Business Value analysis

In recent years, growing number of patients are traveling from their home countries to another countries in order to get medical care may because of high costs, inadequate or unavailable in their home country (Connell, 2013). A range of researches have explored the motivation of decision making for the medical tourists. The movement included elective surgery, dental treatment, reproductive treatment, organ transplant and specific medical check-ups. The reason for medical tourism included: health need or insurance not covered in home countries (Ramirez de Arellano, 2007); avoid waiting for a long queue; private secrets (Horowitz & Rosenweig & Jones, 2007); annual or routine medical check-ups for healthy people (O'Hagan HC, 2012); screening for specific disease in family history. Most articles referred both pull factors and push factors when identify the decision making of patients. According to a study by Veerasoon torn and Beise-Zee (2010), 27 patients were interviewed about the motivation of traveling to Thailand: high cost and the deteriorating conditions of healthcare in developed countries, the pull factors are about innovation, efficiency, qualified service and the good relationship between with doctors. Another study about the medical tourists to India, China and

Jordan with the most popular reason is about the cost, physician, facility reputation and hospital accreditation (Alsharif, Sun, Chen, Wang & Zhao, 2008). In home country long waiting and lack of access to treatment is the push factors motivation. For some patients are treat as informed active decision makers, they think that treatment procedures are necessary and urgent for health (Crooks & Cameron, 2012). Rozée and Rochebrochard (2013) explore traveling among French patients who got treatment in France but who went abroad to obtain oocyte donation due to inadequate of medical care and oocyte shortage in France.

Decision making can be based on different kinds of information resource: brochures, flyers and guidebooks produced by Medical Tourism Foundation or international hospitals (Crooks, Turner, Snyder, Johnston& Kingsbury, 2011; Ormond& Sothern, 2012). Internet plays an important role in sharing information, while normally medical tourists will pay more attention to “soft” information than “hard” information from medical information especially online oversea, so the third party information still has its limitation (N. Lunt et al., 2014). Another study result shows that the stories from their friends also can be a push factor for medical tourists. In short, good promotion can be a very important pull factor to attract medical tourists that can be developed by medical service providers. Understanding the factors, and then develop corresponding market strategy.

#### *Reasonable price*

The cost of medical treatment can be the key factor for both domestic and international medical tourists considering get medical treatment (Cornell,2006). The costs of medical service keep growing in developed countries lead people seek medical service outside their countries (Keckley& Underwood, 2008). Medical Tourism (2016) showed the compared price by different medical destinations. The details will be provided in figure 2.6. Among these countries, India, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore have advantage to be the medical tourism destinations. For example, if get IVF treatment in India can save 80%, in Malaysia can save 50% and in Thailand can save 60%.

Figure 2.6 Medical Procedures Cost by Countries 2016

Medical procedure	USA	Costa Rica	Colombia	India	Jordan	S. Korea	Mexico	Israel	Thailand	Vietnam	Malaysia	Poland	Singapore	Turkey
Heart Bypass	\$123,000	\$27,000	\$14,800	\$7,900	\$14,400	\$26,000	\$27,000	\$28,000	\$15,000		\$12,100	\$14,000	\$17,200	\$13,900
Angioplasty	\$28,200	\$13,800	\$7,100	\$5,700	\$5,000	\$17,700	\$10,400	\$7,500	\$4,200		\$8,000	\$5,300	\$13,400	\$4,800
Heart Valve Replacement	\$170,000	\$30,000	\$10,450	\$9,500	\$14,400	\$39,900	\$28,200	\$28,500	\$17,200		\$13,500	\$19,000	\$16,900	\$17,200
Hip Replacement	\$40,364	\$13,600	\$8,400	\$7,200	\$8,000	\$21,000	\$13,500	\$36,000	\$17,000	\$9,250	\$8,000	\$5,500	\$13,900	\$13,900
Hip Resurfacing	\$28,000	\$13,200	\$10,500	\$9,700	\$9,000	\$19,500	\$12,500	\$20,100	\$13,500		\$12,500	\$9,200	\$16,350	\$10,100
Knee Replacement	\$35,000	\$12,500	\$7,200	\$6,600	\$9,500	\$17,500	\$12,900	\$25,000	\$14,000	\$8,000	\$7,700	\$8,200	\$16,000	\$10,400
Spinal Fusion	\$110,000	\$15,700	\$14,500	\$10,300	\$10,000	\$16,900	\$15,400	\$33,500	\$9,500	\$6,150	\$6,000	\$6,200	\$12,800	\$16,800
Dental Implant	\$2,500	\$800	\$1,200	\$900	\$900	\$1,350	\$900	\$1,200	\$1,720		\$1,500	\$925	\$2,700	\$1,100
Lap Band	\$14,000	\$9,450	\$8,500	\$7,300	\$7,000	\$10,200	\$6,500	\$17,300	\$11,500		\$8,150	\$6,700	\$9,200	\$8,600
Gastric Sleeve	\$16,500	\$11,500	\$11,200	\$6,000	\$7,500	\$9,950	\$8,900	\$20,000	\$9,900		\$8,400	\$9,400	\$11,500	\$12,900
Gastric Bypass	\$25,000	\$12,900	\$12,200	\$7,000	\$7,500	\$10,900	\$11,500	\$24,000	\$16,800		\$9,900	\$9,750	\$13,700	\$13,800
Hysterectomy	\$15,400	\$6,900	\$2,900	\$3,200	\$6,600	\$10,400	\$4,500	\$14,500	\$3,650		\$4,200	\$2,200	\$10,400	\$7,000
Breast Implants	\$6,400	\$3,500	\$2,500	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$3,800	\$3,800	\$3,800	\$3,500	\$4,000	\$3,800	\$3,900	\$8,400	\$4,500
Rhinoplasty	\$6,500	\$3,800	\$4,500	\$2,400	\$2,900	\$3,980	\$3,800	\$4,600	\$3,300	\$2,100	\$2,200	\$2,500	\$2,200	\$3,100
Face Lift	\$11,000	\$4,500	\$4,000	\$3,500	\$3,950	\$6,000	\$4,900	\$6,800	\$3,950	\$4,150	\$3,550	\$4,000	\$440	\$6,700
Liposuction	\$5,500	\$2,800	\$2,500	\$2,800	\$1,400	\$2,900	\$3,000	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$3,000	\$2,500	\$1,800	\$2,900	\$3,000
Tummy Tuck	\$8,000	\$5,000	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$4,200	\$5,000	\$4,500	\$10,900	\$5,300	\$3,000	\$3,900	\$3,550	\$4,650	\$4,000
Lasik (both eyes)	\$4,000	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$1,000	\$4,900	\$1,700	\$1,900	\$3,800	\$2,310	\$1,720	\$3,450	\$1,850	\$3,800	\$1,700
Cornea (per eye)	\$17,500	\$9,800	N/A	\$2,800	\$5,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$3,600		N/A	N/A	\$9,000	\$7,000
Cataract surgery (per eye)	\$3,500	\$1,700	\$1,600	\$1,500	\$2,400		\$2,100	\$3,700	\$1,800		\$3,000	\$750	\$3,250	\$1,600
IVF Treatment	\$12,400	N/A	\$5,450	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$7,900	\$5,000	\$5,500	\$4,100		\$6,900	\$4,900	\$14,900	\$5,200

Source: MedicalTourism.com (2016)

### *Quality of service*

High quality of medical service is also very important for tourists to decide get outbound medical treatment (Tumer, 2010). Private hospitals in Thailand provide good medical service and possess advanced medical technology with professional doctors to meet with tourists' requirement (Mymedholiday, 2015). In some studies, perceived medical quality relates to individual evaluation of medical product, excellent medical care can show the strong competitive.

### *Hospital accreditation*

Considering the security, medical tourists will find international certificate medical service providers to get medical treatment. Nowadays, many hospitals are accepted by the Hospital Accreditation of Thailand, ISO 9001:2000, ISO 14001, ISO 18000 and some are accredited by U.S.-based Joint Commission International (JCI).

### *Professionalism*

The professional of related doctor, nurse, physician and technology can be a vital important factor for patients when making decision. For example, cosmetic surgery in South Korea, precision physical examination in Japan, cancer treatment in USA, anti-aging in Switzerland and Dental treatment in Thailand.

### *Restrictions for some treatment*

Restrictions for some treatment can be another reason for traveling oversea to get medical treatment. There are some examples like limitations on abortions, medical procedures of selection gender baby and approve of new medical treatment or new drugs. In mainland China, it is illegal for selecting gender of baby whether in hospitals or clinics. The access to new drugs facing a lot of barriers that conduct Chinese patients are later 8 years to use new drugs than other countries.

### *Medical tourism intermediary*

Medical tourism intermediary can be a bridge between patients and medical service providers, while it is not necessary for medical tourists to find outbound medical tourism service. But it can help tourists introduce appropriate destination hospitals and clinics and to help manage their travel. The intermediaries can undertake active marketing campaigns to attract more consumers than hospitals and clinics through providing comprehensive and professional translation, transfers and concierge service.

### *Cultural familiarity*

Cultural familiarity emerges as an important determinant of medical destination selection in the literature by tourists (Shim, 2010). Geographically and culturally related issues are often analyzed together with other affect factors. For example, medical tourists come from Bangladesh, Nepal prefer to get medical treatment in India (Gupta, Goldar&Mitra, 1998).

### *Long waiting time*

Another major factor is the medical care waiting time. Americans are more likely to wait for office-based medical appointments and need a doctor accept insurance plan. In other countries, people tend to wait longest for expensive elective care, four to six months for a knee replacement and more than one month for following radiation therapy after cancer surgery, such as Canada (<http://www.nytimes.com>).

### *Privacy*

Privacy sector is making a growing contribution to health care. Some special medical treatments such as, plastic surgery, gender transformation need hospital to keep secrete for them. Some medical destination is developing privacy policy for medical tourists. Some people may travel to other countries for treatment for personal reasons related to an expectation of greater confidentiality in that country compared to the home country (N. Lunt, 2011).

### *Online website*

The internet is widely used in and keeps increasing become a very important source of healthcare information and played a very important role in medical tourism industry (Hohm& Snyder, 2015). For example in U.S., people not only use the website to gather health information, but also use website to search specific hospitals and their medical service (Grigoroudis, Litos, Moustakis, Politis, &Tsironis, 2008). Medical Tourism Association (2009) stated that 49% of the American medical tourists searched about medical tourism from website and 73% sought specific information online on taking healthcare abroad.

### *Word of mouth*

The term of word-of-mouth communication is also one of the factor can influence medical tourists decision making. Xu (2007) argued that people who are involved in communication may impact on an organization. Four types of communication are referred: consumer to consumer; business to consumer; business to business; facilities business to business. WOM can either be positive or negative. East, Hammond, and Wright (2007) showed the opinion that more positive WOM than negative. However, Bailey (2004) argued that negative opinion more influence the attitude the decision.

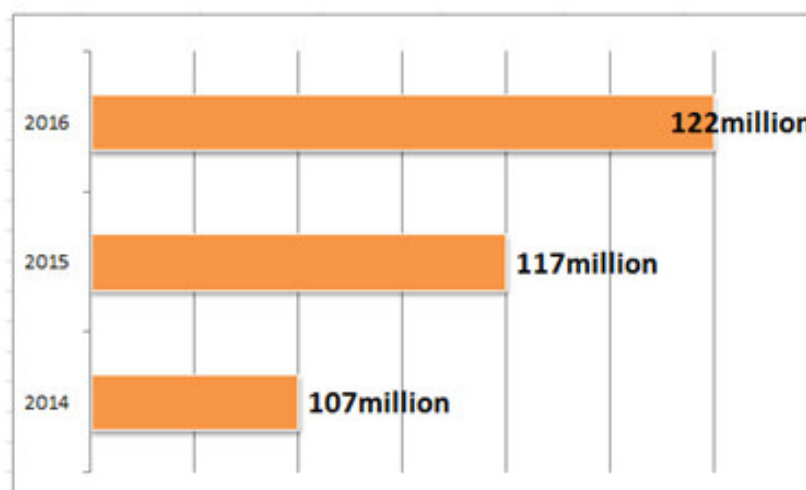
## 2.5 Medical tourism by mainland Chinese tourists

According to the sixth census data(<http://www.stats.gov.cn>), the population of mainland China has reached around 1.4 billion which is one-fifth of the world's population. With the increasing of the population, aging population and growing urbanization, the demand of health care is growing faster.

The number of China's mass affluent class has also increased fast. The world-renowned financial media, Forbes Chinese version of the Fortune April 29, published in Qingdao, "2015 China's wealth of the rich white Paper," the report shows that the end of 2014, the number of Chinese wealthy people reached 13.88 million. The affluent population is mainly gathered in first-tier cities, such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou Shenzhen, and some are in fast-growing second-tier cities such as Hangzhou, Nanjing, Xiamen, Chengdu, Wuhan and so on. However, the domestic public hospital system cannot meet the China's mass affluent class and middle class people.

The development of medical tourism in China started in Shanghai in 2009. Shanghai Development and Bureau and Shanghai Commission, Shanghai Municipal Health Bureau jointly initiated "Shanghai Medical Tourism Products& Promotion Platform" (SMTPPP). This platform was put into operation in June16, 2010, filling the gap in medical tourism in China. According to statistic from SMTPPP, approximately 60,000 Chinese travel oversea in order to find medical services ranging from anti-aging therapy, cancer screening and treatment, giving birth and chronic disease treatment in 2016. Figure 2.10 shows the number of Chinese tourists traveling abroad from 2014 to 2016 is 107 million to 122 million.

Figure 2.7 Number of Chinese Tourists Traveling Abroad



Source: China National Tourism Administration (2017)

A report by Hurun and ILTM Asia indicated that 66 percent of Chinese 1.18 million wealthy millionaires would consider medical tourism (Hurun& ILTM Asia, 2011). According to the study of MTA, the top three outbound medical destinations for Chinese medical tourists is United States, Japan and Germany and the main medical treatment is cancer and pediatric cancer treatments, cardiovascular procedures, stem cell treatments and comprehensive health check-ups (MTA, 2015).

We can see the research from China National Tourism Administration in 2016: outbound medical treatment became new trend of Chinese tourists following "explosive buying abroad", large number of affluent class people spend lot of money on outbound medical tourism. The top 10 medical tourism destination for Chinese are: Japan, Korea, USA, Taiwan, Germany, Singapore, Malaysia, Switzerland, Thailand and India (China National Tourism Administration, 2016).

### **2.5.1 Mainland Chinese medical tourists in South Korea**

According to Yonhap News Agency report, with the soaring Chinese tourists traveling to South Korea that make the number of Chinese tourists receive medical service in South Korea increasing. The Chinese surpassed the Americans for the first time and became the main market of Korean medical tourism. Korea Health Care Industry Promotion Institute released data of February, in 2012 shows that nearly 160,000 foreigners to visit the Korean for medical

tourism and among them the number of Chinese medical tourists occupied the NO.1 ([www.medical-korea.org](http://www.medical-korea.org):447). In 2012, there are 32,503 Chinese people to go to South Korea for medical treatment. Nearly 7 times than the people in 2009 (the number of people in 2009 is 4,724). Among the medical tourists, 70 percent of them are young female at 20 to 30 years old, and half of them are traveling for plastic surgery with average cost is 1.69 million won/person (1596 USD). Plastic Surgery industry is well-developed, with only 50 million people in South Korea. There are 4000 plastic surgery institutions. Merely in Seoul, there are nearly 1,200 plastic surgery institutions. Chinese tourists are becoming the largest medical tourism market in Korea. According to the Online Medical Tourism Report of Ctrip in 2016: more than 100,000 Chinese people travel to Korea for plastic surgery in 2016, nearly 5 times than 2015 ([www.yigoonet.com/](http://www.yigoonet.com/)). The average cost in 2016 is 50,000 RMB.

With the Korean drama become more and more popular in China. The trend of Korean culture as known as Korean Wave (Hallyu) that included Korean movie, Korean super star, Korean tourism, language, Korean cuisine and makeup Korean style. This trend started in 1994 and was first proposed by the Chinese media. The popularity of Korean wave indirectly create a good image for Korean plastic surgery industry and also reduce the residence of Korean plastic surgery in attract on Chinese tourists. While there is still a problem in Korean plastic surgery industry, most medical tourists are mere patients, the purpose of traveling to Korea only for plastic surgery.

### **2.5.2 Mainland Chinese medical tourists in Taiwan**

The central government carried a three-year strategy marketing plan that was called the “Taiwan Task Force for Medical Travel (TTFMT)”. This strategy provides the medical service to the international markets ([www.mohw.gov.tw](http://www.mohw.gov.tw)). At the initial purpose is mainly to Mainland tourists because of the same language and the same culture.

At present, Taiwan has more than 500 hospitals, more than 20,000 clinics, the medical industry is highly competitive with high medical technology and high level quality of service and meets the world standard for both medical service quality and physician skills. Among top 200 hospitals worldwide, 14 are in Taiwan. Moreover, 12 of these 14 hospitals have been accredited by the US Joint Commission International (JCI) ([www.jointcommissioninternational.org](http://www.jointcommissioninternational.org)). And the mainland and Taiwan have the same language,



diet, living habits and cultural background. These factors become the main factors for mainland tourists choosing get medical treatment in Taiwan. In 2013, 220,000 medical tourists traveled to Taiwan to get medical treatment totally, while 100,000 of them came from mainland (www.mohw.gov.tw). For example, Chang Gung Memorial Hospital which has the largest number of overseas patients in Taiwan. Each year the hospital received more than 15,000 overseas patients, since 2010, the mainland patients have jumped to the hospital's largest source of foreign patients, accounting for 27%. In 2013, the number of patients from the mainland increased by 35%. According to the statistic of hospital, the mainland visitors came to the hospital for medical treatment, plastic surgery as the most important subjects, accounting for about 37% and then followed by orthopedics and neurosurgery (<http://www.cgmh.org.tw>).

From Executive Information System of Taiwan, since 2011, Taiwan opened free individual travel to 47 cities in mainland (admin.taiwan.net.tw). Starting from January 2012, Taiwan has opened medical tourism visas, 53 medical institutions approved by the Ministry of Health and Welfare of Taiwan can directly apply for medical examination, medical examination or medical treatment to get Taiwan card. Mainland tourists no longer need to participate in package tour, personal travel or business visit with the endorsement, can be directly through the special hospital on behalf of the application to Taiwan for medical examination or medical beauty, and get up to stay for 15 days each tourist endorsement. For mainland people who have not get the allowance to Taiwan can be also allowed to enter Taiwan through the "medical check-up" visa system, except that one day they will go to a designated hospital for medical examination or medical aesthetics, while the rest of the time will be free. It is very convenient for mainland people to get high standard of medical care at the same time using the rest time for sightseeing.

### **2.5.3 Mainland Chinese medical tourists in Japan**

Japan is another popular medical tourism destination by mainland Chinese people. According to the medical travel journal, it said that Japan is attracting more and more medical tourists, most of them are from China, but the real number is unknown. The latest statistic was 22,000 in 2011 and 27,000 in 2012 (IMTJ, 2016). Japanese government has been very cautious about promoting medical tourism in Japan. And there is a kind of medical visa for foreigners that can allowed foreigners to stay in Japan up to six months because of get medical service. Subsidiary of Tourism agency JTB promotes inbound medical tourism and declared that

90% of these customers come from China. Many hospitals in Japan try to seek medical tourist from China. Among them included Kameda Medical Centre in Kamogawa, Chiba Prefecture and the Cancer Institute Hospital of the Japanese Foundation for Cancer Research, Nippon Medical School Imaging Centre for Healthcare and St. Luke's International Hospital in Tokyo. According to the data from Kameda Medical Centre, they had 50 Chinese patients in 2014, while in 2015, they got 160 Chinese patients. In addition for complete medical check-up, for breast cancer examination and treatment also occupied large proportion (<http://www.imtj.com>).

Another popular medical service website from Japan is MRSO, it is the largest booking medical service website in Japan which has cooperation with more than 700 hospitals. It has business cooperation with Ctrip (the largest online traveling company in China) and provides convenience for payment method included Union Pay, Wechat Pay and Alipay to attract Chinese customers. The main medical service they provide is precise medical examination, PET test, precise brain examination and gynecological examination (<http://www.japanmedical.cn>).

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter mainly about the research approach applied through all design of this research. The research instruments included research samples, data collection method, questionnaires distribution procedure and interview method. And the way to pre-test proposed questionnaires is showed in this chapter. Then, the description of measurement variables and their scaling, reliability and validity for this research are given. Lastly, the explanation of data analysis and related statistics method are also showed.

This research is focused on the intention of mainland Chinese tourists take medical tourism in Thailand and the marketing strategy target on mainland Chinese market by medical service suppliers in Thailand. In order to add more credibility of this study, both quantitative approach and qualitative approach are applied in this research. The population of this research are target mainland Chinese tourists in Thailand. The survey will done questionnaires and interview (face to face interview and interview online). And the data mainly collected in Phuket and Bangkok during the end of March to June 2017.

#### 3.2 Research population

The population of this survey consists of two target groups, they are:

The population of mainland Chinese tourists in Thailand will be used distribute questionnaires. This group of people has the traveling experience in Thailand. So they have the perception of Thailand already. It will be more useful to get information and demands from them, and then according to their requirements to design marketing strategy. And also the mainly age of this group at 20 to 60 years old, because younger people and middle age people are easier to get respondent and accept new things. It is separated by gender, age, education background, current occupation and geographic location in China.

The qualitative data of this survey consists of two kinds of ways: interview related medical service provider and observation of related Chinese website. The staff of medical traveling agency from China and two marketing managers from private hospitals target Chinese

market. To know their current marketing strategy the medical service provider use and then try to combine with potential Chinese medical tourists' requirements and design marketing strategy to attract potential customers.

### 3.3 Sampling Method and Sample Size

#### 3.3.1 Sample groups of mainland Chinese tourists

This sample of Chinese tourists uses convenience sampling method. Mainland Chinese tourists in Thailand will be chosen randomly. The target respondents of the research were the mainland Chinese tourists who had interest on medical tourism in Thailand. Then, related questionnaires were distributed to the mainland Chinese tourists in Thailand.

There are 8.75 million Chinese tourists visited Thailand in 2016 (Department of Tourism Thailand, 2017). However, there is no official statistics to show the concrete number of mainland Chinese medical tourists in Thailand every year. Therefore, the formula to calculate the sample size is unknown.

Level of confidence: This is the level of risk that can be accepted and it is usually described as a percentage (e.g. 95% confidence level or interval). However, the research results are reported as point estimates, but it can only be confident that the true value of the estimate in that population falls within a particular range that can be called confidence interval. The percentages stand the probability that the true value falls in fact within the confidence interval boundaries. And the most popular confidence level is 90% confidence, 95% confidence and 99% confidence. This research chose 95% confidence referring from previous studies. Grosz and Sardy (2014) gives a simplified formula to calculate the sample size as following:

Where;

n=Sample size

P=the portion of mainland Chinese medical tourists in Thailand would like to random 0.05

Z= the accurate of this research will be  $z=1.96$  when the 95 percent confidence will be 0.05

E=the highest error will be 0.05

Formula  $n=P(1-P)(Z^2)(E^2)$

$$n=(0.5)(1-0.5)(1.96*2)(0.05*2)$$

$$n=384.16$$

Therefore, the sample size was 385

So the sample size is determined by 385. Until August 2017, 400 usable questionnaires were returned from respondents both in Bangkok and Phuket. And among these 400 respondents, 264 of them have interest in medical tourism in Thailand.

### **3.3.2 Sample of group of in-depth interviewers**

This group was applied purposive sampling method based on researcher observation. Both of them have marketing strategy target mainland Chinese medical tourists marketing and get the stable customer source. This research uses face to face interview with the related staffs and to know their main marketing strategy to their target markets. From the previous literature review, three places are enough to get the data.

### **3.4 Research instruments**

This research is a kind of exploratory research which applied mix approach, combined both quantitative method and qualitative method.

Quantitative: Questionnaire are designed as an instrument to collect data from Chinese tourists' perception of traveling experience in Thailand and their intention on taking medical tourism in Thailand with requirements. The respondents were asked to rank and reason for choosing according to their preference and requirements. The questionnaires are divided into 4 parts and consist of multiple-choice questions, liker-score questions and open-ended question as follows:

Part 1: Demographic questions. This part included gender, age, current occupation, education background and location.

Part 2: About mainland Chinese tourists' traveling experience and medical service experience in Thailand. Questions in this part will show the mainland Chinese tourists' experience in Thailand directly. Traveling experience have important effect on mainland Chinese tourists' impression on Thailand and this can be the potential factors to influence them to make decision on medical tourism in Thailand.

Part 3: About the requirements and important factors of potential mainland Chinese medical tourists in Thailand. The questions included which kind of medical treatment and tourism activities they are interested and what kind of factors they will consider when choosing medical tourism destination. Because medical tourism combined both of medical service and tourism, when medical tourists taking medical service, there should be related tourism activities added in this industry.

Qualitative: Face to face interview was conducted with staffs in medical traveling agency and private hospitals. A semi-structured interview was used with 3 respondents who have experience on target Chinese marketing. The interview questions included:

1) Questions related to the way of their market to mainland Chinese customers including use of various marketing method to attract the mainland Chinese consumers to select services, evaluation of effectiveness of marketing methods they had employed and involvement.

2) The important factors on the mainland Chinese consumers choosing medical service in their company.

3) Current medical tourism service

4) The top medical service that mainland Chinese consumers choose most.

5) Future marketing plan for mainland Chinese market.

6) Recommendations and suggestions for the future development of medical tourism in Thailand to their target mainland Chinese market.

### **3.5 Data Collection**

This study was comprised of primary data and secondary data.

Primary data: This kind of data was collected by distributing questionnaires in hand. The data collecting area was at airport, shopping mall, street and restaurants in Phuket and Bangkok. And the qualitative approach was conducted by face to face interview with medical service providers (hospitals both in Phuket and Bangkok) and Chinese medical agent (Bangkok).

Secondary data: This kind of data was collected from related articles, journals, previous studies, books, news, and websites included medical tourism website and some traveling agency website.

### 3.6 Data Analysis

After collecting data from target population through both questionnaires and in-depth face to face interview.

Questionnaire: Data was coded and computed with the help of SPSS systems program. The researcher used descriptive statistics to find out the frequencies of variables, percentages and means, independent sample t-test and ANOVA for this study. In different part of questionnaires, proper method is used to analyze the data. Independent sample test is only used to compare two groups and interpretation is analyzed 95% confidence level with 5% significance. Moreover, independent sample t-test as well as content analysis for the open-ended questions analysis of variance(ANOVA) is used to compare means of difference more than two groups. And interpretation was also at 95% confidence level with 5% significance.

The data analysis, mean is based on the interval level that is calculated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{The interval width} &= \frac{(\text{Maximum} - \text{Minimum})}{n} \\ &= \frac{(5 - 1)}{5} \\ &= 0.80 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the researcher arranged the level of importance as follows:

<b>Mean</b>	<b>Level of Importance</b>
1.00 -1.80	Very Low
1.81-2.60	Low
2.61-3.40	Medium
3.41-4.20	High
4.21-5.00	Very High

In-depth interview: Content analysis is used for this kind of data to find out the different marketing scheme from different companies. It is conducted to summarize and research findings from the interview and opened-end questions for qualitative data in the questionnaires.

The topic interview is the Survey about Mainland Chinese Medical Tourists issue in Your Company.

### 3.7 Overall design of research

Table 3.1 Show Design objective of research

<b>Objective's</b>  <b>Content</b>	1. To explore the traveling experience of mainland Chinese tourists and their medical treatment experience in Thailand.	3. To investigate the current marketing strategy to Chinese market from both medical agent and international hospital.
	2. To explore the requirements and important factors of potential mainland Chinese medical tourists' decision making in Thailand.	
<b>Population</b>	Mainland Chinese tourists in Thailand(over 20 years old) in Thailand	Private hospitals and medical traveling agent target mainland Chinese market
<b>Sampling method</b>	Convenience selected method	Purposive and Snowball method
<b>Focal Point</b>	Target mainland Chinese tourists who are aware of medical tourism in Thailand.	Medical service suppliers target mainland Chinese market
<b>Population size</b>	Unknown	Companies related medical tourism in Thailand
<b>Sample size</b>	385 respondents	Until data saturation
<b>Actual sample size</b>	400 respondents	None
<b>Data collection method</b>	Distribute questionnaire	Face-to-face semi-structured interview and secondary data
<b>Data analysis</b>	Descriptive statistics, One-Way ANOVA, T-test, Content analysis, Five points numerical scales	Content analysis



## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter is focused on the results of both quantitative research and qualitative research. For quantitative research, until the end of July, 500 questionnaires had distributed in both in Phuket and Bangkok and 400 usable questionnaires can be used. A screening question was asked if they would come as medical tourists in Thailand and then 246 answered 'Yes'. Data below is based on the answer of these 246 respondents. The collected data was analyzed by software SPSS program and use descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages and mean), independent sample t-test and ANOVA analysis. And for the qualitative data, primary (in-depth interview) and observation (website and magazine) got from medical tourism products providers. Information collected was analyzed by content analysis.

##### *Reliability analysis*

In order to check whether respondents of questionnaire are consistent or not, the research conducted reliability analysis. Reliability refers to the consistency, stability and reliability of measurement results. Generally, it will use internal consistency to indicate the level of test reliability. The higher reliability coefficient, the more consistent, stable and reliable the results of the test are. Therefore, the research conducted Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. Ideally, the Cronbach alpha coefficient of a scale should be above .7 (DeVellis, 2016).

The Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient on questionnaires related 3 parts included satisfaction of traveling in Thailand, satisfaction of medical service in Thailand and importance of choosing medical tourism service factors is ranging from .738, .860 and .927 that indicates high reliability and credibility.

#### 4.2 Quantitative data

##### 4.2.1 Profile of respondents

Table 4.1 will show the demographic information from respondents. The respondents included of 88 males (35.8%) and 158 (64.2%) females. Most of respondents are at the age of between 20-30 years 162 (65.5%). Because the people at the middle age and old age

are easier to refuse give respondent than the younger people. The marital status of respondents is 139 single (56.5%) and 107 married (35.5%). The respondents have bachelor degree occupied 124 (50.4%), then followed by college diploma 65 ( 26.4% ) , high school or lower 32 (12.4%), master degree 17 (6.9%) and master degree above only 6 (2.4%). The current occupation of respondents on private employed 87 ( 35.4% ) , then next isgovernment employed and students occupied 44 (17.9%) and 42 (17.1%). The location of respondents divided into 7 parts, among them, the east China 16.3%, the central China 25.2%, the southwest China 19.9%,the southern China 15.0%, the north China 13.0%, the northeast China 6.1% and last is the northwest China 4.1%.

Table 4.1 Demographic information of respondents

Demographic Factors		Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender (n=246)	Male	88	35.8
	Female	158	64.2
Age (n=246)	20-30 Years	162	65.9
	31-40 Years	63	25.6
	41-50 Years	12	4.9
	51-60 Years	5	2.0
	Above 61	4	1.6
Marital Status (n=246 missing 1)	Single	139	56.5
	Married	107	43.5
Education Background (n=246 missing 2)	High School or lower	32	13.5
	College Diploma	65	26.4
	Bachelor Degree	124	50.5
	Master Degree	17	7.1
	Master Degree Above	6	2.5
Current Occupation (n=246 missing 1)	Students	42	17.1
	Retired	6	2.4
	Government Employed	44	17.9

Table 4.1Continued

	<b>Demographic Factors</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
	Self-Employed	23	9.3
	Private Employed	87	35.4
	Professional	11	4.6
	Others	32	13.3
Location	East China	40	16.3
(n=246 missing 1)	Northeast China	15	6.1
	North China	32	13.3
	Central China	62	25.2
	Southern China	37	15.1
	Northwest China	10	4.1
	Southwest China	49	19.9

#### **4.2.2 The reason and experience for mainland Chinese tourists visit Thailand**

Table 4.2 shows the reason why mainland Chinese tourists choose to travel to Thailand. The top five reasons are cost valuable (53.8%), good environment (53%), close to China (50%), easy to get visa (44.7%) and diversity tourism attractions (33.3%). The cost, environment and the visa can be the main reason for mainland Chinese tourists choosing traveling in Thailand.

Table 4.2 Reason for mainland Chinese tourists visit Thailand

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Cost valuable	215	246	53.8
Good environment	132	246	53
Close to China	123	246	50
Easy to get visa	110	246	44.7
Diversity tourism attractions	83	246	33.3
Famous tourism destination	78	246	31.7
Love the Thai food	61	246	24.8
Convenient shopping mall	57	246	23.2
Low cost transportation	57	246	23.2
Familiar culture	33	246	13.4
International environment	20	246	8.1
Others	6	246	2.4
Medical treatment	4	246	1.6

Table 4.3 shows the results of satisfaction with experience in Thailand. There are 8 items related tourism experience in Thailand: Thai people, recreational activities, price, shopping, accommodation, Thai food and transportation.

Table 4.3 Satisfaction with experience in Thailand

Item	Number	Mean	Satisfaction Level
Thai people	245	4.3265	<b>Very High</b>
Tourism attraction	246	4.0935	
Shopping in Thailand	244	4.0451	
Thai food	243	3.9630	
Accommodation	246	3.9065	<b>High</b>
Prices	246	3.8984	
Recreational activities	246	3.7927	
Transportation	245	2.9796	<b>Medium</b>

*Missing value has been removed in this table*

The Thailand tourism preference of mainland Chinese tourists ranged from Thai people (M=4.3265), Tourism attraction (M=4.0935), Shopping in Thailand (M=4.0451), Thai food (M=3.9630), Accommodation (M=3.9065), Prices (M=3.8984), Recreational activities (M=3.7927) and the last one is Transportation (M=2.9796). Most satisfaction items are in the high level or very high level, only the score of transportation was under medium level. In general, the impression of traveling in Thailand for mainland Chinese tourists was very good. Good traveling impression conducts most respondents will come to visit Thailand next time.

According to the statistic of respondents, 165 of them are the first time to come to Thailand. There are two ways of traveling, 104 tourists come with the package tour and 142 tourists come by themselves. After getting experience in Thailand, the majority of the tourists (237) will revisit Thailand next time.

Table 4.4 Satisfaction of medical service in Thailand

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level of satisfaction
Service	54	4.3148	.66798	
Facility of private hospital	54	4.2593	.73164	<b>Very High</b>
Coordination center for foreign patients	54	4.1481	.81048	
Quality of medical treatment	54	4.0926	.85271	
Doctor's professionalism	54	4.0556	.85598	<b>High</b>
Nurse's professionalism	54	4.0185	.87934	
Language use for doctors	54	3.9444	.83365	
Language use for staffs	54	3.5926	.78952	
Cost	54	3.3704	1.01491	<b>Medium</b>

Notes: 5 Likert-scale was used to mark the satisfaction of each factor.5-Very Satisfied, 4- Satisfied, 3- Neutral, 2- Somewhat unsatisfied and 1- Very unsatisfied.

Among 246 respondents who have interest on taking medical service in Thailand, 54 of them have ever got medical treatment in Thailand and most of them are for getting sick or accident. This group of people is not belonging to medical tourists, but they have impression of medical service in Thailand. Then the table 4.4 indicates the satisfaction of this group of people on medical service in Thailand. The average satisfaction is 3.9774 that indicate a high overall satisfaction level on taking medical service in Thailand. Except the cost factor in medium satisfaction level, the satisfaction of most factors are in a high level. And the top 3 satisfaction factor is Service (M=4.3148), Facility of private hospital (M=4.2593) and Coordination center for foreign patients (M=4.1481). While the less satisfied factor is Cost (M=3.3704). Because all respondents who got medical treatment at private hospital don't have insurance, so they think the cost in the private hospital is higher than they expected.

#### 4.2.3 Survey on tourists participate medical tourism in Thailand

According to the results of questions above, among 246 respondents who have interest in medical tourism in Thailand, 85 (34.6%) respondents have ever heard about medical tourism in Thailand while most of respondents never get any information on this issue. That

means most of them don't know too much about medical tourism in Thailand or the publicity of medical tourism in Thailand target on Chinese market is not enough. When interviewed with respondents, most of them knew plastic surgery in South Korea and cancer scan in Japan. And respondents who know medical tourism in Thailand get the information mainly on magazine and social media.

While there are still parts of tourists not want to participate in medical tourism in Thailand. The reason for respondents who are not consider come to Thailand for medical tourism can be attributed that they need more information about medical tourism in Thailand, language barriers and public transportation

Table 4.5 Importance of factors in influencing potential medical tourists' decision making

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
1. Infrastructure and brand medical tourism destination	Short waiting time	4.4919	.65616
	Good climate for treatment	4.3306	.61478
	Facilities for families of patients	4.3402	.73358
	Comfortable environment	4.3008	.62512
	The diversity of medical tourism products	4.1951	.80972
	Convenient local transportation	4.0490	.90855
	Accommodation	4.0854	.76986
	Tasty food	3.9024	.86581
	Similar culture	3.6260	1.02538
	Distance between home country	3.6341	1.04798
Entertainment activities surroundings	3.6245	1.01516	

Table 4.5 Continued

Variable	Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
2. Medical service suppliers	Excellent doctors skill	4.7510	.53490
	Quality of treatment	4.7358	.52615
	Medical dispute can be good resolved	4.7388	.54803
	Sophisticated medical equipment	4.6463	.61356
	Good service attitude	4.6748	.58548
	Reputation of medical service providers	4.6327	.55419
	Accreditation	4.5285	.64934
	Follow-up treatment	4.4262	.62747
	Provide insurance during the stay in Thailand	4.4065	.70378
	Cheaper price	4.3659	.76950
	Privacy	3.8415	1.12271
3. Medical institutions online publicity	Medical service providers have official website	4.3592	.70243
	Information on doctors can be found on website	4.1748	.78632
	Medical treatment information can be found on website	4.1184	.82870
	Information on medical facilities can be found on website	4.0772	.79162
4. Medical support service	Accessible language communication	4.7236	.56858
	One-stop service	4.2327	.84383
	Online payment	4.1179	.84172

Notes: 5 Likert-scale was used to mark the importance of each factor. 5-Very Important, 4-Important, 3-Neutral, 2- Somewhat Important and 1-Not Important at all.



29 items related importance of factors in influencing potential medical tourists decision making are showed in table 4.5. And these items are divided into 4 main parts: infrastructure and brand of medical tourism destination, medical service suppliers, medical institutions online publicity and medical support service. In part 1, the top 3 factors that influence decision making is Short waiting time (M=4.4919), Good climate for treatment (M=4.3306) and Facilities for families of patients (M=4.3402). In part 2, potential tourists consider the top 3 factors is Excellent doctors skill (M=4.7510), Quality of treatment (M=4.7358) and Medical dispute can be good resolved (M=4.7388). In part 3, the most important factor is Medical service provider have official website (M=4.3592). In the last part, the most important factor is Accessible language communication (M=4.7236).

According to the level of importance table, the mean level is between 3.41-4.20 means the importance level is high and if the mean level between 4.21-5.00 that means the importance level is very high. Most of factors are in the high level of importance.

#### 4.2.4 Survey on perception of medical tourism in Thailand

Table 4.6 Interest in potential medical treatment in Thailand

	Items	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>Medical Service</b> <b>(Notes: multiple</b> <b>answers)</b>	Medical check-ups program	138	56.1
	Prevention cancer scan	79	32.1
	Beauty treatment	77	31.3
	Plastic surgery	72	29.3
	Cancer treatment	48	19.5
	Dental treatment	46	18.7
	IVF	23	9.3

Mainland Chinese tourists were asked about the potential medical procedures they might be interest in in the future. According to the table 4.6, it shows that Medical check-up program (56.1%) was the most popular medical service for mainland Chinese tourists and then followed by Prevention cancer scan (32.1%), Beauty treatment (31.3%) and Plastic surgery (29.3%) The last three medical services are Cancer treatment, Dental treatment and IVF.

Table 4.7 Source of information when making decision on medical tourism

	<b>Items</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
<b>Approach to know medical tourism information in Thailand (Notes: multiple answers)</b>	Introduction from colleague or friends	159	64.6
	Website from hospital or TAT	107	43.5
	Media	92	37.4
	Medical tourism promotion and introduction meeting	40	16.3
	Intermediary	22	8.9

Table 4.7 shows the source of information when respondents making decision on medical tourism. The majority of respondents chooses the information from Introduction of colleague or friends (64.6%), and then followed by Website from hospital or TAT (43.5%), Media (37.4%), Medical tourism promotion and introduction meeting (16.3%) and Intermediary (8.9%).

Table 4.8 Way of traveling and Medical institution

	<b>Items</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
<b>Way of traveling (n=244)</b>	Traveling with family or friends	187	76
	Traveling with agency	33	13.4
	Traveling alone	24	9.8
<b>Medical institution (n=245)</b>	Private hospital	144	58.5
	Medical clinic	101	41.1

*Missing value has been removed in this table*

Table 4.8 shows the way of traveling during medical tourism and medical institution preference. According to the statistics, the majority of respondents chose traveling with family or friends (77.5%), and then the rest respondents chose agency (11.5%) and alone (10.8%). There are two kinds of medical institution can choose, between Private hospital (58.5%) and Medical clinic (41.1%) is not big difference.

Table 4.9 Tourism Products

	Items	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>Medical tourism cities</b> (Notes: multiple answers)	Phuket	143	58.1
	Bangkok	141	57.3
	Chiang Mai	90	36.6
	Pattaya	50	20.3
	HuaHin	27	11
	Others	7	2.8
<b>Place</b> (Notes: multiple answers)	Sea and island	203	82.5
	Nature sightseeing	145	58.9
	Night market	112	45.5
	Shopping mall	97	39.4
	Heritage destination	81	32.9
	Theme park	70	28.5
	Temple	70	28.5
<b>Recreational experience</b> (Notes: multiple answers)	Thai spa (massage) experience	184	74.8
	Recreational entertainment activities	109	44.3
	Thai cuisine experience	108	43.9
	Local Thai wedding ceremony experience	89	36.2
	Thai traditional crafts making experience	80	32.5
	Thai traditional dancing performance	53	21.5
<b>Restaurant</b> (Notes: multiple answers)	Local Thai restaurant	175	71.1
	Street food	145	58.9
	Chinese restaurant	92	37.4
	Japanese restaurant	39	15.9
	European restaurant	32	13

Notes: Missing value has been removed in this table.

Medical tourism is not only including medical service, but also combining with tourism experience. Thus, the results in table 4.9 are related tourism products. According to traveling experience and preference, the respondents gave different reply. On the question of medical tourism cities, most of respondents chose Phuket (58.1%) and Bangkok (57.3%) as their

potential medical destinations. And there are some respondents chose Chang Island and Krabi as medical tourism destination. The last three questions are related activities they want to enjoy during their stay in Thailand. The majority of respondents preferred sea & island (82.5%) and nature sightseeing (58.9%). On the question about the recreational activities Thai spa is the most popular activities by respondents (74.8%). And for the food, the top three kinds of food are local Thai restaurant (71.1%), street food (58.9%) and Chinese restaurant (37.4%).

#### 4.2.6 T-test analysis (only significant differences shown)

Table 4.10 T- test for differences between male and female respondents

Factors	Male(mean)	Female(mean)	t-test	Sig.
<b>Satisfaction experience in Thailand</b>				
Recreational activities	3.9886	3.6835	3.016	.003
<b>Importance of factors</b>				
Medical dispute can be good resolved	4.5795	4.8280	-3.482	.003
Excellent doctors skill	4.6207	4.8228	-2.622	.010
Sophisticated medical equipment	4.5341	4.7089	-2.003	.047
Accreditation	4.4091	4.5949	-2.033	.044
Provide insurance during the stay in Thailand	4.2727	4.4810	-2.243	.026
Short waiting time	4.3523	4.5696	-2.411	.017

Notes: indicates statistically significant difference  $p \leq 0.05$

The results in table 4.10 from t-test indicated for differences between male and female respondents. Males are more satisfied on recreational activities than females. And there are big significant difference between male and female on the importance of factors. For medical dispute can be good resolved, excellent doctors, sophisticated medical equipment, accreditation, provide insurance during the stay in Thailand and short waiting time are more important for females than males.

Table 4.11 T-test for differences between Package tour tourists (PTT) and FIT tourists

<b>Factors</b>	<b>PT(mean)</b>	<b>FIT(mean)</b>	<b>t-test</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
<b>Satisfaction experience in Thailand</b>				
Thai food	3.5098	4.2908	-6.829	.000
Shopping in Thailand	3.8627	4.1761	-3.122	.002
Thai people	4.2039	4.4155	-2.417	.016
Transportation	3.5631	2.5563	6.950	.000
Accommodation	3.6827	4.0704	-4.054	.000
Tourism attractions	3.9231	4.2183	-3.091	.002
<b>Importance of factors</b>				
Medical service providers have official website	4.2212	4.4610	-2.675	.008

*Notes: indicates statistically significant difference  $p \leq 0.05$*

The results in table 4.11 from t-test showed for differences between Package Tour Tourists and FIT Tourists in satisfaction experience in Thailand and importance of factors when considering taking medical tourism in Thailand.

For satisfaction experience in Thailand, FIT tourists showed more satisfied in Thai food, shopping, Thai people, accommodation and Tourism attractions, while Package Tour tourists are more satisfied in transportation than FIT tourists.

For importance of factors, FIT tourists think that medical service providers have official website is significant important than Package Tour tourists.

#### 4.2.7 One-Way ANOVA tests (only significant differences shown)

Table 4.12 One –Way ANOVA test for difference among demographic location

Satisfaction experience in Thailand	Demographic location	mean	One-Way ANOVA	
			F-stat	Sig
Recreational activities	East China	3.9750	2.384	.030
	Northeast China	3.8667		
	North China	3.9375		
	Central China	3.8871		
	Southern China	3.7027		
	Northwest China	3.3000		
	Southwest China	3.5510		
Prices	East China	4.2000	2.917	.009
	Northeast China	4.0000		
	North China	3.9688		
	Central China	3.7742		
	Southern China	3.9730		
	Northwest China	3.3000		
	Southwest China	3.7959		
<b>Importance of factors</b>				
Excellent doctors skill	East China	4.7750	2.429	.027
	Northeast China	4.9333		
	North China	4.6875		
	Central China	4.7541		
	Southern China	4.9459		
	Northwest China	4.8000		
	Southwest China	4.5510		

Table 4.12 Continued

	Demographic location	mean	One-Way ANOVA	
			F-stat	Sig
Quality of treatment	East China	4.8250	3.154	.005
	Northeast China	4.8667		
	North China	4.8438		
	Central China	4.6613		
	Southern China	4.8919		
	Northwest China	4.9000		
	Southwest China	4.5102		
Follow-up treatment	East China	4.6250	2.249	.040
	Northeast China	4.2857		
	North China	4.1875		
	Central China	4.3934		
	Southern China	4.5946		
	Northwest China	4.5000		
	Southwest China	4.3469		

Notes: indicates statistically significant difference  $p \leq 0.05$

The table 4.12 shows one-way ANOVA results for satisfaction experience and importance of factors in demographic location.

For the satisfaction experience in Thailand, recreational activities and prices have significant difference among the respondents from different demographic locations in China. The results show that the people in East China are more satisfied in recreational activities in Thailand than respondents from other location of China. And respondents from East China are more satisfied in prices than people from other parts of China. Respondents from Northwest China show the lowest satisfaction in prices than respondents from other locations of China.

For importance of factors that indicated respondents from Southern China are more concerned about excellent doctor skills than respondents from other places and the difference is statistically significant with the respondents from Southwest of China. For the Northwest China respondents, quality of treatment has statistically significant difference higher

than East China, North China, Central China and Southwest China respondents. And respondents from East China have statistically significant difference than respondents from North China on the item of follow up treatment.

Table 4.13 One –Way ANOVA test for difference among education background

Satisfaction experience in Thailand	Mean		One-Way ANOVA	
	Education background	mean	F-stat	Sig
Accommodation	High school or lower	3.6563	2.540	.041
	College diploma	3.9231		
	Bachelor degree	4.0081		
	Master degree	3.8824		
	Master degree above	3.3333		
<b>Importance of factors</b>				
Convenient local transportation	High school or lower	3.8387	2.995	.019
	College diploma	4.2000		
	Bachelor degree	4.0726		
	Master degree	4.1176		
	Master degree above	3.0000		
Excellent doctors skill	High school or lower	4.4688	3.163	.015
	College diploma	4.8281		
	Bachelor degree	4.7823		
	Master degree	4.8235		
	Master degree above	4.5000		
Quality of treatment	High school or lower	4.4375	4.428	.002
	College diploma	4.8769		
	Bachelor degree	4.7581		
	Master degree	4.6471		



Table 4.13 Continued

Satisfaction experience in Thailand	Mean		One-Way ANOVA	
	Education background	mean	F-stat	Sig
Online payment	Master degree above	4.5000	2.513	.042
	High school or lower	3.9063		
	College diploma	4.3231		
	Bachelor degree	4.0565		
	Master degree	3.9412		
Provide insurance during the stay in Thailand	Master degree above	4.6667	4.221	.003
	High school or lower	4.0625		
	College diploma	4.5846		
	Bachelor degree	4.3871		
	Master degree	4.3529		
Short waiting time	Master degree above	4.8333	3.157	.015
	High school or lower	4.2188		
	College diploma	4.6615		
	Bachelor degree	4.4435		
	Master degree	4.5294		
Good service attitude	Master degree above	4.8333	3.243	.013
	High school or lower	4.3750		
	College diploma	4.7846		
	Bachelor degree	4.6694		
	Master degree	4.7059		
Follow-up treatment	Master degree above	5.0000	3.090	.016
	High school or lower	4.1667		
	College diploma	4.6308		
	Bachelor degree	4.3629		
	Master degree	4.3529		
	Master degree above	4.8333		

Table 4.13 Continued

Satisfaction experience in Thailand	Mean		One-Way ANOVA	
	Education background	mean	F-stat	Sig
The diversity of medical tourism products	High school or lower	3.9375	3.357	.011
	College diploma	4.3846		
	Bachelor degree	4.0887		
	Master degree	4.4706		
	Master degree above	4.6667		
One-stop service	High school or lower	4.0938	2.540	.041
	College diploma	4.4063		
	Bachelor degree	4.1452		
	Master degree	4.2353		
	Master degree above	5.0000		

The results in table 4.13 included one-way ANOVA test for differences satisfaction experience in Thailand and importance of factors among education background.

For satisfaction experience in Thailand, there are significant And there is statistic significant difference among respondents from different education background in the satisfaction level of accommodation in Thailand. Respondents who are under bachelor degree are more satisfied in accommodation than respondents under other education background.

For importance of factors, college diploma respondents considered more convenient local transportation, excellent doctor skill and quality of treatment than other groups respondents. Compared with other groups, master degree above respondents showed most importance in the factor of online payment, provide insurance during the stay in Thailand, short waiting time, good service attitude, follow-up treatment, the diversity of medical tourism products and One-stop service.

Table 4.14 One –Way ANOVA test for difference among age

Importance of factors	Mean	One-Way ANOVA		
	Age	mean	F-stat	Sig
Medical dispute can be good resolved	20-30	4.7019	6.035	.000
	31-40	4.9048		
	41-50	4.8333		
	51-60	3.8000		
	Above 61	4.5000		
Medical service providers have official website	20-30	4.3354	2.947	.021
	31-40	4.5397		
	41-50	4.1667		
	51-60	3.8000		
	Above 61	3.7500		

The results in table 4.14 indicated one-way ANOVA test for differences in importance of factors among different age. According to the results show that the importance of medical dispute can be good resolved and medical service providers have official website have significant difference among respondents in different age groups. Respondents at the age of 31-40 consider more important of medical service providers have official website and medical dispute can be good resolved than other age group respondents. Respondents at the age of 51-60 show lowest importance of medical dispute can be good resolved.

#### 4.2.8 Respondents comments

Respondents were asked by 1 open-ended questions to give their recommendations on medical tourism in Thailand.

Some comments are related about transportation:

*In Thailand, I need taxi to go everywhere and the transportation cost is very expensive.*

*Need more public transportation.*

Some comments are related about language barriers:

*I got sick and went to hospital and can't speak English and Thai and there was no one able to speak Chinese. Need Chinese translators.*

*More staffs can speak Chinese.*

*If there is no communication barrier, I will consider come to Thailand.*

*Provide correct language translate service and give professional explanation of treatment*

Some related about medical service products:

*I want to know more information about plastic surgery.*

*I am interested in plastic surgery, but I don't know how to get information about it in Thailand.*

*Need more advertisement to propagate medical tourism in Thailand.*

*Chinese service included website, medical tourism program list, no communication barrier.*

Some other comments:

*I don't need to go for medical treatment outside of China, because I am a doctor.*

*It is too far from China.*

*More information on the websites.*

*In my hometown I can get a good medical treatment.*

*The time of treatment is shorter.*

*I stayed at hospital for one night, and the private room is very good and cheap.*

*The service in hospital is very good.*

*I hope to get longer visa for staying in Thailand when get medical treatment and reasonable price.*

*Rich entertainment activities and experience when taking medical tourism in Thailand.*

*Giving specific program list and related price.*

### 4.3 Qualitative data

Another methodology of this research is qualitative method. Qualitative data comes from two aspects, one is interview with related medical service providers and another one is observation website of medical tourism service provider target Chinese market. Following will give the results of interview and observation.

#### 4.3.1 Interview

The research sample comprised 3 medical service providers in Thailand target on Chinese market. Through interview, medical service, marketing strategy and future plan received. In general, semi-structured interviews can help researcher get first-hand and latest information from medical tourism service suppliers. There are 2 hospital located in the central and south of Thailand and one medical traveling agency in Bangkok. The questions and results as follows (Respondents 1, medical traveling agency; Respondents 2,3, hospital):

**Question 1: Which kind of marketing strategy the hospital use to attract mainland Chinese tourists and which kind of strategy is more effective?**

Respondents 1: *Our Company has cooperation with many international hospitals in Thailand. Our main job is as an intermediary. But all cooperators are in Bangkok. Our head office in Shenzhen, that helps to promote our service and contact hospital in China. We get customers from two methods, one is from cooperation Chinese hospital and another one is from self-media (main website and Wechat Official Accounts). Customer can contact with us directly through customer service. Customers can choose hospital by themselves and we help them to get contact with hospital in Thailand and provide Chinese translator and accommodation. Compare two marketing strategy, the traditional one (customers from hospital in China) is more effective. Every month we can get 15-20 customers.*

Respondents 2: *Hospital main get Chinese customers from two ways: one is agency in China (Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Shanghai) and another one is from E-business (TAT and PTA). And also our official website has Chinese version and Weibo (very famous social media in China, like Twitter). We can update our medical service information and promotion packages through social media and then Chinese customers can get information instantly. Most customers of our hospital come from agency China. They will send Chinese customers every month.*

Respondents 3: *Hospital mainly get Chinese patients from agency in China. We only provide medical service and professional Chinese translator. The agency will arrange the rest things. Our hospital also has Chinese version website to introduce our medical service, while the main marketing strategy is still contact with Chinese medical traveling agency.*

**Question 2: What are the important factors for mainland Chinese customers choose get medical treatment in your hospital? (Through agency to come to Thailand)**

Respondents 1: *At first, Chinese people have communication problem when getting medical treatment. And they don't know how to contact with hospital oversea, so they need intermediary to help them to contact and arrange everything. Our office in Thailand have professional Chinese translator and they will company with customers from they arrive in Thailand till they go back to China. For customers, they don't need afraid the unfamiliar language environment. If they want to go traveling outside, we can arrange travel according to the requirements and physical condition of the guests.*

Respondent 2: *Most Chinese come to our hospital because of shorter waiting time. They don't need to wait long as in China. And another reason is medical service attitude and cost. The same cost but get better service quality.*

Respondents 3: *The service quality is very famous in Thailand. And short waiting time is another important factor for Chinese customers coming to Thailand, for example, the IVF from the beginning to finish in total about 22 days. Another reason is for privacy, some Chinese people want to keep secret, for example IVF and plastic surgery procedure.*

**Question 3: The current medical tourism service (Package) hospital has and the top medical service for mainland Chinese tourists choose**

Respondents 1: *Now, our cooperation with hospital is mainly on IVF, most of our customers come for the IVF. But I hope our service is not only IVF, we need more information of medical service in hospital and requirements of Chinese customers.*

Respondents 2: *Now we have three main package target Chinese market: Medical check-up package, Anti-aging and IVF. Our customers are also come from these three packages.*

Respondents 3: *Actually, we have every medical procedure for tourists. But most Chinese customers come for IVF. So this is our main package.*

#### **Questions 4: Future marketing plan for mainland Chinese market**

Respondents 1: *We need expand our service not only in IVF, but also on other medical service. But this expanding must built on better understanding the needs of customers and current medical technology. Hope to build one-stop service line and combine medical service with tourism service.*

Respondents 2: *We need more cooperation with Chinese company and use social media to introduce Chinese tourists' medical tourism in Thailand. China has become largest tourists source country for Thailand. Our hospital are paying more and more attention on Chinese market.*

Respondents 3: *More cooperation in different areas with Chinese market. Put more attention on research on Chinese market.*

#### **Question 5: Recommendations for the future development of medical tourism in Thailand target on mainland Chinese market.**

Respondent 1: *Thailand as a world famous tourism destination and has been famous medical tourism destinations for western country people. But for Chinese people, they only know it is a tourism country. Medical tourism as a new word for most Chinese people, so it need more publicity.*

Respondent 2: *Medical tourism as a new and promising industry, it need more support from Thai government. It means the good policy to attract Chinese tourists.*

Respondent 3: *If we want open Chinese market, we need give more information to let Chinese tourists know medical tourism in Thailand. TAT as a external publicity window, we need more help from this good platform.*

#### **4.3.2 Observation**

There is another method to collect qualitative information is observation. The researcher searched on the website and found that there are mainly 47 medical tourism providers situated in 7 tourism cities in Thailand, Bangkok, Phuket, KohSamui, Pattaya, ChiangMai, HuaHin and UdonThani. The medical tourism service providers included both private hospital

and clinics and all of them provide at least three languages communication service. And among 47 hospitals and clinics, 16 of them have already got JCI accreditation and 11 of them provide Mandarin (Chinese) translation service included Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, Yanhee Hospital, Bangkok Hospital, Bumrungrad Hospital, Chaophya Hospital, Vejthani Hospital, Mission Hospital, SamitivejSukhumvit Hospital and Synphaet Hospital.

Among these medical service providers, 7 of them have Chinese version included Bangkok Hospital Pattaya, Yanhee Hospital, Bumrungrad Hospital, Chaophya Hospital, Vejthani Hospital and SamitivejSukhumvit Hospital and Bangkok Hospital Phuket. And all the medical service products in their Chinese website target Chinese market range from medical check-up, IVF, plastic surgery and Anti-aging. Most of Chinese websites provide comprehensive hospital information, doctors' information, treatment information and service in hospitals and the application of medical visa.

There are some famous and professional Chinese cross-border medical platform provide only on medical tourism service, such as cypares.com (Chunyuguoji), Saint Lucia Consulting (Shengnuoyijia) and Weizhen International Plastic Surgery Alliance (Weizhenguoji). Platforms can provide medical record translation, long-distance consultation, overseas referral, medical treatment accompanying and domestic expert disease follow-up service that give more convenient to patients. The most popular medical service on platform range from IVF, cancer treatment, cancer scan, precession medical check-up and anti-aging procedure. (China Overseas Medical Tourism market research Report, 2016)



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

This chapter consists of conclusion and limitations of the research as well as the recommendation for the medical tourism industry target mainland Chinese market. And the objectives of this research as stated in chapter 1 are discussed as following:

Objective 1: To explore the traveling experience of mainland Chinese tourists and their medical treatment experience in Thailand.

Objective 2: To explore the requirements and important factors of potential mainland Chinese medical tourists' decision making in Thailand.

Objective 3: To investigate the current marketing strategy to Chinese market from both medical agent and international hospitals in Thailand.

#### 5.1 Summary of main findings

##### 5.1.1 Traveling experience in Thailand

In total, from 400 respondents, 246 respondents expressed interested in medical tourism in Thailand. Thus, these 246 respondents can be used to analyze the research. From 246 respondents, female tourists are more than male tourists which occupied 64.2%. That means maybe females prefer traveling than males. Majority of respondents are at the age 20-30, then followed by 31-40 years category. Moreover, 50.4% of respondents are in the bachelor degree and 35.4% of respondents are private employed. Then, cost valuable (53.8%), good environment (53%), close to China (50%) and easy to get visa (44.7%) become the main reason for mainland Chinese to choose to travel in Thailand. Therefore, price, good environment, the distance between mainland China and visa could be main publicity points to mainland Chinese market in medical tourism.

Furthermore, the majority of tourists are the first time to visit Thailand and most of them come to Thailand by themselves. In addition, 237 respondents (96.3%) express that they will come back to Thailand again. That means Thailand has strong attraction to mainland Chinese tourists.

When doing the survey about satisfaction of traveling experience, expect the transportation factors, most of factors are in the high satisfaction level. That shows most mainland Chinese tourists have a good impression on tourism in Thailand and it is the basis of implementation marketing strategy target on mainland Chinese market.

### **5.1.2 The perception of medical tourism in Thailand**

54 respondents have ever got medical treatment in Thailand mainly because of sickness or accident. Expect cost factor, other factors like service and facilities of private hospital are in the very high or high satisfaction level. It indicates that respondents are generally satisfied with medical service in Thailand.

Only 34.6% of respondents have ever heard of medical tourism in Thailand, while the majority of respondents don't have enough knowledge about medical tourism in Thailand. Whatever, there are still over half of respondents show interest in medical tourism in Thailand even they don't get enough information.

Phuket (58.1%), Bangkok (57.3%) and Chiang Mai (36.6%) are the main medical tourism destinations for potential mainland Chinese medical tourists. These three cities are also the most popular tourism cities among Chinese tourists.

For medical service products, medical check-ups (56.1%) is the most popular medical service, and the followed by prevention cancer scan (32.1%), beauty treatment (31.3%) and plastic surgery (29.3%).

In terms of source information when making decision on medical tourism in Thailand, 64.6% of respondents choose the introduction from colleagues or friends, and then followed by website of hospital or TAT (43.5%) and media (37.4%).

The results founded that the majority of respondents will travel with family or friends (76%). And for the medical institution, respondents choose private hospital occupied 58.5% and medical clinic occupied 41.1%.

In terms of the importance of factors that influence potential medical tourists decision-making, the results shows that medical service supplier (like excellent doctor skill, good service attitude, accreditation, cheaper price...) is much more important than other three variables. In addition, short waiting time , good climate for treatment, facilities for families of patients, comfortable environment, medical service providers have official website and accessible

language communications are also in very high importance level when respondents considering medical tourism.

### **5.1.3 Tourism products**

Medical tourism products are not compromised of medical service, but also included tourism products. Three items show in the tourism products: tourism attractions, recreational experience and restaurants. For attractions, 82.5% of respondents want to go to sea and island, 58.9% of respondents enjoy nature sightseeing and 45.5% of respondents want to go to night market when they take medical tourism in Thailand. While for recreational experience, large numbers of respondents are interested in Thai spa experience, Thai cuisine and recreational activities. And for the restaurant, local Thai restaurant and street food is more popular among potential mainland Chinese medical tourists. It indicates that tourism product is also one of vital important part in medical tourism. Thus, value the importance of tourism products and arrange tourism products and medical service can add more value of medical tourism products.

### **5.1.4 T-test and One-way ANOVA findings**

#### *T-test for satisfaction experience in Thailand*

T-test for the differences between male and female in satisfaction of experience in Thailand shows that males are more satisfied in recreational activities than females.

The results in differences between package tour tourists and FIT tourists indicate that FIT tourists show much higher satisfaction in Thai food, shopping in Thailand, Thai people, accommodation and tourism attractions than package tour tourists. While in the term of transportation, FIT tourists are less satisfied than package tour tourists. The reason maybe for FIT tourists when they arrived in Thailand, they have more choice than package tour tourists. And they will use local transportation and communicate with local Thai people.

#### *T-test for importance of factors*

T-test results indicate that there are significant differences between male and female in entertainment activities surroundings, medical dispute can be good resolved and excellent doctor skill. Males consider entertainment activities surroundings more than females, while females think medical dispute can be good resolved and excellent doctor skill more important than males.

In terms of importance of factors, FIT tourists have big differences with package tour tourists. Compared with package tour tourists, FIT tourists are more considered medical dispute can be good resolved, excellent doctor skill, sophisticated medical equipment, accreditation, provide insurance during the stay in Thailand and short waiting time.

*One-Way ANOVA for satisfaction experience in Thailand*

Respondents from different demographic locations indicate big differences in satisfaction experience in Thailand. For recreational activities and prices, respondents from East China have higher satisfaction than other group respondents. While for respondents from Northwest China show lowest satisfied than respondents from other demographic locations. The reason maybe the price level in East China is higher than Northwest China.

When compared with different education background respondents, Bachelor degree respondents are more satisfied with accommodation, while master degree above respondents show lower satisfied in accommodation than other groups.

*One-Way ANOVA for importance of factors*

Respondents from Southern China are more concerned about excellent doctor skills than respondents from other places and the difference is statistically significant with the respondents from Southwest of China. For the Northwest China respondents, quality of treatment has statistically significant difference higher than East China, North China, Central China and Southwest China respondents. And respondents from East China have statistically significant difference than respondents from North China on the item of follow up treatment.

College diploma respondents considered more convenient local transportation, excellent doctor skill and quality of treatment than other groups. Compared with other groups, master degree above respondents showed most importance in the factor of online payment, provide insurance during the stay in Thailand, short waiting time, good service attitude, follow-up treatment, the diversity of medical tourism products and One-stop service..

Compared with different age groups, respondents at age 41-50 are focus on medical dispute can be good resolved than other groups. That maybe compared with other groups, they have larger pressure than others. For medical service providers have official website, age group in 31-40 consider more.

### **5.1.5 Tourists' comments**

Review from the comments that most of respondents indicate that they don't have enough information and knowledge about medical tourism in Thailand. If they see more information about medical tourism in Thailand like they see plastic surgery in South Korea, they will be more interested in it. And then is about the no-barrier communications, because the majority of mainland Chinese can't use fluent English to communicate. Then last one is about the medical tourism products and specific cost.

## **5.2 Marketing strategy**

Marketing practitioners may need to promote more inbound medical tourism in Thailand through publicity, and emphasize more on unique treatments, medical practices, and services, together with images that evoke indulgence and trust, which can encourage visits from foreign tourists.

For hospitals, they rely on Chinese intermediary to send customers to them. And they also use Chinese social media like Weibo and main webpage have Chinese version to publicity their medical service products. The products are focused on plastic surgery, IVF, medical check-ups and anti-aging procedures.

For medical traveling agency, they put more emphasis on IVF and they have stability cooperation with hospital and institution in China. In China, the company use social media (Weibo, Wechat) and advertisement in hospitals to publicity their service.

## **5.3 Discussion**

This research explores mainland Chinese perception of medical tourism in Thailand based on the primary data from 400 questionnaires through convenience sampling, in-depth interview and observation through website. It is promising that Thai government has undertaken policies to attract mainland Chinese medical tourists. Understanding the requirements of potential medical tourists is vitally important for development of medical tourism. The majority of mainland Chinese tourists have interest in medical tourism in Thailand and regarding for the current situation of medical service in China and the support of Thai government, it is prospective to develop medical tourism target mainland Chinese market.

### **5.3.1 Objective 1**

To explore the perception of mainland Chinese tourists on traveling experience and medical treatment experience in Thailand.

The research tries to explore the perception of mainland Chinese tourists on both traveling experience and medical treatment in Thailand. Through the statistic results in questionnaires, the majority of respondents are in high satisfaction level in traveling in Thailand. However, there is still something need to improve is the transportation. In addition, the satisfaction level of FIT tourists in some items is much higher than package tour tourists expect transportation. Good impression of tourism in Thailand can be a good basis to develop and publicity medical tourism in Thailand. And the number of Chinese tourists visit Thailand in these years is keeping increasing and in 2016, 8.75 million Chinese tourists came to travel in Thailand. 80 respondents had got medical treatment in Thailand because of sick and accident. This kind of tourists are belong to medicated tourists (Cohen, 2008), but they are only accident medical tourists. The average satisfaction level is in a high level, but only for the cost in medium level. Most of respondents paid treatment by themselves without insurance coverage. At least, most of respondents have a good impression on medical service in Thailand. Consumer to consumer can be one of impact on an organization in communication (Xu, 2007). The challenge for medical service is how to attract these prospective tourists become medicated tourists proper. Thus, the medical service providers should promote and enhance the level of medical treatment and service, at the same time considers the cost of medical treatment for Chinese tourists. This included provide more professional Chinese medical translators in order to promote better understanding between doctors and patients.

### **5.3.2 Objective 2**

To explore the requirements and motivations of current and potential mainland Chinese medical tourists in Thailand.

More than half of respondents are interested in medical tourism in Thailand, while most of them don't have sufficient knowledge on this issue. Bangkok, Phuket and Chiang Mai become the most popular medical tourism destinations. And these 3 cities are also the most popular tourism cities for Chinese tourists, thus, in the promotion of tourism cities for Chinese market through official website or social media at the same time to promote medical service in

these cities as a new trend. To let more Chinese consumers know medical service in Thailand. Because online website is widely used in and keeps increasing become a very important source of healthcare information and play a very important role in medical tourism industry (Hohm& Snyder, 2015). Medical service can be added-value service in tourism industry. Medical check-ups, beauty treatment, prevention cancer scan and plastic surgery is the main potential medical service for potential mainland Chinese medical tourists. Stake holders encourage the cooperation between medical service providers and Tourism Company and develop high quality and targeted medical tourism packages included recreational activities, tourism attractions and restaurant to meet potential mainland Chinese medical tourists' requirements. Or medical service providers can distribute all Chinese tourists like special promotion coupon to attract them to attend special medical program like precision medical check-ups or if they get sick can get discount in hospital.

Respondents' majority choose to get information from colleague or friend that shows the effect of word of mouth. As the research of Lee and Spisto (2007), medical tourists will not travel alone but will be companied with their relatives or friends during their treatment outside of their home country. And the finding of this research also found potential Chinese medical tourists choose travel with families or friends, therefore the full service of the companions can't be ignore by medical tourism products suppliers. For instance, they can provide accommodations, healthcare experience or some recreational activities. Most of respondents are maximum age of 20-30 years old and 31-40 years old, private employed and from East of China. Only small part of them are medicated tourists, and majority of respondents are mere tourists.

The most important factors that can influence respondents making decision on medical tourism is medical service suppliers part such as excellent doctor skill, quality of treatment and medical dispute can be good resolved. Thus, medical service provides should put more emphasis on enhance doctor and nurse skill and get full communication with patients. And another important factor is accessible language communication, it is necessary for medical service suppliers to provide professional Chinese medical translators. Medical service provider have official website is another important factor to influence potential medical tourists decision making. Official website can improve credibility and it is better for website have Chinese version webpage.

### 5.3.3 Objective 3

To investigate the current marketing strategy to target Chinese market from both medical agency and international hospital.

At present, the marketing strategy for both medical agency and international hospitals interviewed is simple. For medical agency, one company provides simplified medical products like IVF, actually medical service products in hospitals are not only IVF, but also like plastic surgery, dental treatment, medical check-up. While maybe that is the reason for some restriction by Chinese policy. Medical agency can have cooperation with traveling company to arrange the treatment time and traveling time that can make their customers enjoy this outbound medical tourism journey and improve satisfaction level.

International hospitals interviewed are more rely on Chinese medical agency to get customers, and even they have Weibo to promote medical service, while the effect is not too big. Hospitals could take positive marketing strategy such as attend medical tourism promotion meeting hold in China and get the support from Tourism of Authority of Thailand to promote their medical service or get cooperation with online traveling agency in China to make targeted program with tourism products. And another important marketing strategy is to put advertisement on Chinese social media to provide first hand medical service information in Thailand. This is the direct and effective way to provide medical tourism information for Chinese citizens.

### 5.4 Recommendations

Medical tourism industry as a new and prospective industry and more and more sophisticated players will enter this new market. While in order to thrive over the long-term, the stakeholders constantly innovate and look for new ways to bring in customers as well as retain current customer base. Both of medical service suppliers and medical agency should get deep understanding of this market included types of service offered, customers profiles and preference, tourism destination, medical tourism leading destinations and future trend and opportunities. This could be a business model for extend medical tourism target mainland Chinese market in Thailand.

In mainland China, medical tourism normally becomes the privilege to affluent class but not for the mass groups. If medical tourism in Thailand can attract mass groups of Chinese, it will be a



meaningful practice. Through the summary of the results and consideration of mass groups people, the researcher give recommendations both to medical service providers and medical agency as following:

#### **5.4.1 Recommendations to medical service providers**

1. Provide diversity medical products. Medical service providers provide specific medical products to meet the requirements of potential mainland Chinese medical tourists. For example: medical check-up program, prevention cancer scan, beauty treatment and plastic surgery package.

2. Advertisement. Regarding majority mainland Chinese tourists don't have sufficient medical tourism information in Thailand, so advertisement is a necessary method to promote medical tourism in Thailand. The place to put advertisement should target in big cities, like Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou which citizens have economic strength and desire for traveling. The advertisements can be showed in Chinese website, television, magazines or tourism promotion meeting hold by TAT.

3. Management. Improve customer service level target Chinese medical tourists included professional Chinese medical translators to provide better service. Establish medical tourism research center target Chinese market and get cooperation with Thai government to get better understanding the requirements of mainland Chinese medical tourists in order to make correct marketing strategy. Give support to train medical tourism industry professional especially Chinese market. Encourage setting up one-stop service, and cooperating with tourism industry.

4. Marketing campaign. When promoting medical service, highlight affordable price with high-end medical service. Adopt differentiation strategy to meet with the requirements of different customers and give specific consult service. At the same time, through the strategic cooperation with Airline Company, hotels and traveling agency to provide individual products.

5. Give specific introduction of application free access visa for medical treatment reason. Until now, free access visa policy for Chinese citizens can be easily found on many website, while the way of application procedures is not clearly. Thus, the issue of application for free access visa could be show in main Chinese social media and hospital official website.

### **5.4.2 Recommendations to medical agency**

1. Make combination between tourism products and medical service in Thailand to provide one-stop service for customers.

2. Not only focus on millionaire niche market, but also put more emphasis on middle-income people. Providing diversity medical tourism products in order to meet with the requirements of different income level people. Target mass tourism market could add more market advantage.

3. Strengthen the understanding of medical service providers in Thailand. This can help medical agency to know the strong point of different medical service providers for the effective resource integration.

4. Focus on the target medical tourists group in first-tier Chinese city and potential medical tourists group in second-tier city. People in first-tier city have more consumptive power and ability to accept new concepts, while people in second-tier city can up to consumption potentiality through stimulation.

5. Through the point of customers to make competitive price of medical tourism products at the same time to make price transparency. Price is the direct standard for consumers to measure the value and quality of goods and it is a vital important factor affecting consumers' buying behavior.

6. Opening different distribution channel, included online and offline marketing. For the majority of mainland Chinese, medical tourism is a new concept and this kind of intangible products can't be seen and touch, so it is necessary to adopt mix marketing strategy to provide more useful information. For online marketing part, develop product online channel sales with some well-known domestic and foreign tourism industry website. As for offline marketing, it is necessary to find reliable intermediary to sale medical tourism products.

## **5.5 Limitations and Suggestions for the future study**

### **5.5.1 Limitations**

1. Respondents of questionnaire were got from Phuket and Bangkok, Thailand. This is only small group of mainland Chinese tourists. Hence, this may not reflect the overall population like mainland Chinese tourists in ChiangMai, Pattaya.

2. The sample size for different demographic locations in mainland China are not enough, so the significant difference for perception among demographic locations maybe unreliable.
3. It is very difficult to get response from current mainland Chinese tourists, so their direct motivation to come to Thailand for medical tourism is unknown.
4. Bias too many young respondents, while the middle age and old age respondents are little.
5. Lack of marketing strategy information from medical service suppliers and medical agency, the sample of interview is not enough. Different medical service providers may have different marketing strategy target Chinese market.
6. Income of respondents is not referred in questionnaire.

#### **5.5.2 Suggestions for the future study**

1. Future studies can be focused on motivations of current mainland Chinese medical tourists and get more information from this niche market.
2. The differences among different age group tourists on perception of medical tourism in Thailand.
3. This research can be utilized for additional study on the difference of perception on medical tourism in Thailand between current Chinese medical tourists and potential Chinese medical tourists.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A : Questionnaire

#### Mainland Chinese Tourists' Decision-making on Medical Tourism in Thailand

Dear Respondents,

I am a MBA student in Business Administration, Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management (International Program), Prince of Songkla University. The purpose of this survey is to collect data for my MBA thesis on "*Mainland Chinese Tourists' Decision Making on Medical Tourism in Thailand*". I would be really appreciated your help for participation in this survey. The data collected will be used for academic purpose only and will surely be kept confidential.

#### What is medical tourism?

Medical tourism is identified as a kind of movement of patients across nationalities and culture in order to get healthcare (Turner, 2011). Healthcare included complete medical check-ups, plastic surgery, health scan and specific medical treatment. Medical tourism combined medical service with tourism activities.

Please write or tick (✓) in the box which corresponds to your answers

Screening question: Would you come to Thailand as a medical tourist? (If Yes, please proceed with the questionnaire; If No, thank you)

Yes       No

#### **Part 1**

1) Gender:       Male       Female

2) Age:       20-30       31-40       41-50       51-60       Above 61

3) Marital status:       Single       Married

4) Education background

- High School or lower       College Diploma  
 Bachelor degree       Master degree     Master degree above

5) Current occupation

- Students       Retired  
 Government Employed       Self-Employed  
 Private Employed       Professional (Lawyer and Doctors)  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

6) Which part of China are you in? (Please mark your province)

- East China (Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Anhui, Fujian, Shandong)  
 Northeast China (Liaoning, Heilongjiang, Jilin)  
 North China (Beijing, Tianjing, Hebei, Shanxi, Neimenggu)  
 Central China (Hubei, Hunan, Jiangxi, Henan)  
 Southern China (Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan)  
 Northwest China (Shanxi, Ningxia, Gansu, Xinjiang, Qinghai)  
 Southwest China (Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou, Chongqing, Xizang)

**Part 2**

7) Why do you choose to travel in Thailand? ( You can choose more than one)

- Good environment (no pollution)       Close to China  
 Cost valuable       Diversity tourism attractions  
 Convenient shopping mall       Love the Thai food  
 Low cost transportation (Air ticket)       Easy to get visa  
 Familiar culture       International environment  
 Famous tourism destination       Medical treatment  
 Others \_\_\_\_\_

8) Is it your first time to come to Thailand?

- Yes       No \_\_\_\_\_ (Times)

9) You traveled to Thailand with tour package tour or by yourself?

- Package tour       FIT

10) How satisfied are you with tourism products in Thailand? (Preference from 5 to 1)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Unsatisfied	Extremely Unsatisfied
Thai food	5	4	3	2	1
Shopping in Thailand	5	4	3	2	1
Thai people	5	4	3	2	1
Transportation	5	4	3	2	1
Recreational activities	5	4	3	2	1
Accommodation	5	4	3	2	1
Tourism attractions	5	4	3	2	1
Prices	5	4	3	2	1

11) Will you come to visit Thailand again?

Yes       No \_\_\_\_\_ (Why)

12) Have you ever get medical treatment in Thailand?

Yes       No (If Yes, then question 13; If No, then skip to 15)

13) What kinds of medical treatment did you get?

Accident or Sick

Planned in advance \_\_\_\_\_ (treatment)

Decided in Thailand \_\_\_\_\_ (treatment)

14) How satisfied are you with medical treatment in Thailand?(on this trip)

NO		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Somewhat unsatisfied	Very unsatisfied
1	Facility of privatehospital	5	4	3	2	1
2	Coordination centre forforeign patients	5	4	3	2	1
3	Cost	5	4	3	2	1
4	Doctors'professionalism	5	4	3	2	1
5	Nurses 'professionalism	5	4	3	2	1

6	Quality of medical treatment	5	4	3	2	1
7	Language use for doctors	5	4	3	2	1
8	Language use for staffs	5	4	3	2	1
9	Service	5	4	3	2	1

### **Part 3**

15) Have you ever heard and seen the advertisement about medical tourism in Thailand?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (where)       No

16) If you consider getting medical treatment in Thailand, which city will you choose? (You can choose more than 1)

Bangkok                       Phuket  
 Chiang Mai                   HuaHin  
 Pattaya  Others \_\_\_\_\_

17) If you come to Thailand for medical tourism, what is important? (Choose according to the importance)

NO.	Item	Very important	Important	Neutral	Somewhat important	Not important
	Short waiting time	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Good climate for treatment	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Distance between home country	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Convenient local transportation	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Comfortable environment	⑤	④	③	②	①

1	Diversity of medical tourism products	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Entertainment activities surroundings	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Facilities for the families of patients	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Tasty food	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Accommodation	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Similar culture	⑤	④	③	②	①
2	Excellent doctor skills	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Sophisticated medical equipment	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Reputation of medical service providers	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Quality of treatment	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Accreditation	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Cheaper price	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Provide insurance in Thailand	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Follow-up treatment	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Privacy	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Good service attitude	⑤	④	③	②	①
Medical dispute can be good resolved	⑤	④	③	②	①	
3	Medical service providers have official website	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Information on doctors can be found on website	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Medical treatment information can be found on website	⑤	④	③	②	①

	Information on medical facilities can be found on website	⑤	④	③	②	①
4	Accessible language communication	⑤	④	③	②	①
	Online payment	⑤	④	③	②	①
	One-stop service	⑤	④	③	②	①

18) If you come to medical tourism in Thailand, which approach will you choose? (You can choose more than 1)

- Introduction from colleague or friends
- Website from hospital or TAT
- Media (Magazine, TV, Advertisement)
- Intermediary (Medical travel agency, Institution)
- Medical tourism promotion and introduction meeting
- Others \_\_\_\_\_

19) What kind of traveling way will you choose if you come for medical tourism in Thailand?

- Traveling by yourself
- Traveling with family or friends
- Traveling with agency

20) Which kind of medical tourism service information do you want to know more? (You can choose more than 1)

- Medical check-ups program       Prevention cancer scan
- Plastic surgery       Cancer treatment
- Dental treatment       IVF
- Beauty treatment (Botox or Skin Disease Procedures)

21) Which kind of medical institution would you prefer?

- Private hospital       Medical clinic

22) Where do you want to enjoy when take medical tourism in Thailand? (You can choose more than 1)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Theme park                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sea and island       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Night market                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Shopping mall        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Temple                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Heritage destination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nature sightseeing (mountain and waterfall) |   |

23) What kind of recreational experience do you want to get when take medical tourism in Thailand? (You can choose more than 1)

- Local Thai wedding ceremony experience
- Thai cuisine experience
- Thai spa (massage) experience
- Thai traditional crafts making experience
- Thai traditional dancing performance
- Recreational entertainment activities (lady show, elephant performance)

24) Which kind of restaurant do you want to go during the medical tourism in Thailand? (You can choose more than 1)

- Local Thai restaurant
- Street food
- Chinese restaurant
- European restaurant
- Japanese restaurant
- Others \_\_\_\_\_

25) Do you have some recommendation on medical tourism in Thailand or more information you want know?

\*\*\*END OF QUESTIONNAIRE\*\*\*





## 问卷调查

### 关于中国大陆游客到泰国医疗旅游的意向调查

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您好,

感谢您在百忙之中做这份调查！我是泰国宋卡王子大学普吉校区旅游管理专业的一名中国留学生。做这次问卷调查的目的是为了我的研究生论文《关于中国大陆游客到泰国医疗旅游的意向调查》搜集数据。

#### **什么是医疗旅游?**

医疗旅游，是指将旅游和治病、疗养结合起来的一种新的旅游形式。简单来说，它提供的服务主要包括了体检，医疗和观光。

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请根据您的实际情况在方框打对勾(✓)

筛选问题：您愿意作为医疗游客来泰国吗？（如果愿意，请回答下面的问题；如果不愿意，谢谢）

愿意不愿意

#### **第一部分**

1) 性别：男 女

2) 年龄：20-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61岁以上

3) 婚姻状况：未婚已婚

## 4) 最终学历

- 高中及以下      大专      本科  
硕士      硕士以上

## 5) 职业

- 学生      退休  
政府部门或者事业单位      个体工商户  
私企      专业人员 ( 医生或者律师 )  
其它\_\_\_\_\_

## 6) 您所在的地理位置? (请标记出您所在的省份)

- 华东地区 (上海, 江苏, 浙江, 安徽, 福建, 山东)  
东北地区 (辽宁, 黑龙江, 吉林)  
华北地区 (北京, 天津, 河北, 山西, 内蒙古)  
华中地区 (湖北, 湖南, 江西, 河南)  
华南地区 (广东, 广西, 海南)  
西北地区 (陕西, 宁夏, 甘肃, 新疆, 青海)  
西南地区 (四川, 云南, 贵州, 重庆, 西藏)

**第二部分**

## 7) 为什么你会选择来泰国旅游(可多选)

- 良好的自然环境 (无污染)      距离中国比较近  
性价比高      旅游资源的多样化  
购物方便 ( 很多的购物中心 )      喜欢泰国的食物  
廉价的交通工具 (廉价航空)      签证简单

- 熟悉的文化背景      国际化的环境  
国际知名的旅游胜地 医疗服务  
其它\_\_\_\_\_

8) 这是您第一次来泰国吗?

- 是 否 \_\_\_\_\_(次数)

9) 您这次来泰国旅游是跟团游还是自由行?

- 跟团游 自由行

10) 对泰国旅游产品印象的满意偏好度调查 (满意高低度从5到1排序)

	非常满意	满意	一般	有点不满意	极度不满意
泰餐	5	4	3	2	1
在泰国购物	5	4	3	2	1
泰国人	5	4	3	2	1
交通	5	4	3	2	1
娱乐活动	5	4	3	2	1
住宿	5	4	3	2	1
旅游景点	5	4	3	2	1
价格	5	4	3	2	1

11) 您下次还会再来泰国吗?

是 否 \_\_\_\_\_ (理由)

12) 您曾经在泰国接受过医疗服务吗?

有 没有 (如果有, 请转第13题; 如果没有, 跳到第15题)

13) 请问您接收的哪种医疗服务?

意外或者生病      来泰国前决定的 \_\_\_\_\_ (症状)

来泰国后决定的 \_\_\_\_\_ (症状)

14)                    对在泰国接受医疗治疗的满意度调查

序号		非常满意	满意	一般	不满意	非常不满意
1	私立医院的医疗设备	5	4	3	2	1
2	外籍病人服务中心	5	4	3	2	1
3	医疗价格	5	4	3	2	1
4	医生的专业水平	5	4	3	2	1
5	护士的专业水平	5	4	3	2	1
6	医疗治疗水平	5	4	3	2	1

7	医生的语言 能力	5	4	3	2	1
8	其他员工的 语言能力	5	4	3	2	1
9	服务	5	4	3	2	1

### **第三部分**

15) 你之前有听说过泰国的医疗旅游 ( 到泰国看病或者整容之类的项目 ) 吗?

有\_\_\_\_\_ (地点, 电视或者杂志等) 没有

16) 如果您考虑来泰国医疗旅游, 您会选择泰国的哪个城市?  
(可多选)

曼谷 普吉岛 清迈 华欣 芭堤雅 其它\_\_\_\_\_

17) 在选择医疗旅游目的地的时候, 您觉得那些方面是比较重要的? ( 按照重要程度来选择, 重要程度从⑤到①)

序号	项目	非常重 要	重要	一般	不重要	一点也不 重要
	较短的等待时间	⑤	④	③	②	①
	相似的文化背景	⑤	④	③	②	①
	地理上接近中国	⑤	④	③	②	①
	便利的当地交通	⑤	④	③	②	①
	舒适的生活和治疗环境	⑤	④	③	②	①
	多样化的医疗旅游产品	⑤	④	③	②	①
	新鲜的空气	⑤	④	③	②	①
	附近丰富的娱乐活动和设施	⑤	④	③	②	①

	为患者家属配备便利的便利设施	⑤	④	③	②	①
	美食	⑤	④	③	②	①
	住宿	⑤	④	③	②	①
2	医疗纠纷能够被妥善解决	⑤	④	③	②	①
	医生高超的医术	⑤	④	③	②	①
	顶端的医疗设备	⑤	④	③	②	①
	医疗机构的声誉	⑤	④	③	②	①
	医疗质量	⑤	④	③	②	①
	医疗机构的国际认证	⑤	④	③	②	①
	医疗项目的收费	⑤	④	③	②	①
	提供滞留泰国期间的保险	⑤	④	③	②	①
	医疗服务态度	⑤	④	③	②	①
	隐私政策	⑤	④	③	②	①
	后续治疗	⑤	④	③	②	①
3	网上可查询相关治疗的信息	⑤	④	③	②	①
	网上可查询医疗设备的信息	⑤	④	③	②	①
	网上可查询医生的相关信息	⑤	④	③	②	①
	医疗服务提供者有官方网站	⑤	④	③	②	①
4	医疗诊断过程中顺畅的语言沟通	⑤	④	③	②	①
	提供网上支付	⑤	④	③	②	①
	旅游医疗一条龙服务	⑤	④	③	②	①

18) 您会通过哪种方式来了解泰国医疗旅游的相关信息？

( 可多选 )

经朋友或者同事的推荐

- 医院的官网或者泰国旅游局官网
- 大众媒体(杂志，电视节目或者广告)
- 中介(医疗旅游中介或者医疗旅游协会)
- 关于医疗旅游的推介会
- 其他\_\_\_\_\_

19) 您会选择什么样的旅行方式来泰国医疗旅游?

- 独自来
- 和朋友或者家人
- 跟旅行团

20) 哪种医疗旅游信息您最想进一步了解? ( 可多选 )

- 医疗体检项目
- PET/MRI防癌筛查
- 微整形
- 癌症的治疗
- 牙科
- 试管婴儿
- 美容(瘦脸针，抗衰老项目)
- 其他\_\_\_\_\_

21) 您比较偏向于哪种医疗机构?

- 私立医院
- 医疗诊所

22) 您最想去泰国哪里玩? ( 可多选 )

- 主题公园
- 海岛
- 夜市
- 购物中心
- 寺庙
- 古迹遗址
- 自然风光(瀑布或森林)

23) 您在泰国医疗旅游的期间，什么样的体验活动您最感兴趣？（可多选）

- 传统泰式婚礼体验
- 传统泰餐烹饪体验
- 泰式按摩体验
  - 传统泰式手工艺品制作体验
  - 传统泰式舞蹈教学体验
  - 娱乐项目(人妖秀，大象表演，丛林飞跃等等)

24) 在泰国医疗旅游时，您最想去哪种餐厅吃饭？（可多选）

- |                                 |                                  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 传统泰式餐厅 | <input type="checkbox"/> 街头美食    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 中国餐厅   | <input type="checkbox"/> 西餐厅     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 日式料理   | <input type="checkbox"/> 其他_____ |

25) 您对泰国的医疗旅游有什么建议或者您还想进一步了解其它方面的医疗信息？

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\*\*\*END OF QUESTIONNAIRE\*\*\*

I sincerely appreciate your time and cooperation. Thank you very much.



## Appendix B : Certificate



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### RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Mainland Chinese Tourists' Perception of Medical Tourism in Thailand

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### ABSTRACT

Medical tourism – a combination of medical service and traveling - has developed rapidly in recent years. The development of medical tourism has not only brought the vigorous development of the tourism industry, but also promoted and improved the medical technology and service in host countries. Thailand as a world famous tourism destination is actively building its "Asian Health Tourism Center" international medical tourism brand. In 2016, Thailand attracted about 12.2 million Chinese tourists, making China the largest tourist source market for Thailand. In 2017, the Thai government launched a visa-free policy for Chinese residents for entry into Thailand for medical treatment to attract more Chinese tourists for medical tourism services industry. The purpose of this research is to explore mainland Chinese tourists' perception of medical tourism in Thailand. This research adopted mixed methods approach. 200 questionnaires were collected from mainland Chinese tourists in Phuket and Bangkok, Thailand. Interviews were conducted with hospitals and a medical traveling agency and observations conducted on hospital websites. The results indicated that the majority mainland Chinese tourists were interested in medical tourism in Thailand. The most significant and important factors influencing respondents' decision making included accreditation, quality of treatment, excellent doctors skills and accessible language communication.

**Key words:** Medical tourism, medical tourists, decision-making process, medical service suppliers, medical tourism in Thailand, Chinese medical tourists

### INTRODUCTION

With the rapid development of an economy, the living standards of people can improve significantly. People pay more attention on their living quality and health status. A new trend has emerged that can be called "well-being". This word can be explained as a contented state of being happy and healthy and prosperous. Thus, the purpose of traveling is not only for vacation but also combined with medical service. This kind of new trend is widely called medical tourism. Medical tourism is identified by Turner [1] as a movement of patients across borders and culture in order to get healthcare. In recent years, the medical tourism industry has developed rapidly all over the world. According to the report of Asian Medical Tourism Outlook in 2015, the Asia medical tourism market consists of 6 countries including Thailand. The medical tourism industry is becoming accepted by more and more mainland Chinese people. Traveling to South Korea to do plastic surgery, going to Switzerland for sheep placenta extract injection for anti-aging, getting cancer prevention check-ups in Japan and other medical tourism products have become the main promotion tourism programs for some outbound travel agencies. Thailand has launched a visa-free policy for Chinese residents for entry into Thailand for medical treatment in order to attract more Chinese tourists for the medical tourism services industry. The annual number of medical tourists in 2016 was five times higher than during the previous year, with the average price of a medical tour package more than 50,000 Yuan per person ([www.ctrip.com](http://www.ctrip.com)).

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