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Editorial

Past and Future Issues of MMR

The MMR has seen a slowdown in article contributions. The Editorial Committee is now restructuring the journal concept and would like to bring back the impetus of article contributions from researchers, practitioners and scholars.

Beginning 2012, MMR will be published biannually in June and December. Two new sections will be added: *Speeches from Malaysian Leaders* and *Management Practices*. The Editorial Committee welcomes academics and practitioners to contribute their research and thoughts on Malaysian management practices and leadership providing insightful views and suggestions for Malaysia to move forward.

All academic articles will be double-blind reviewed and practice articles be reviewed by the Editorial Committee for the *Management Practices* section. Again, we welcome your contribution to give impact to the rising need in the Malaysian Human Capital Development.

Editor

Positioning Malaysia in Medical Tourism

by

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Malaysian Society for Quality in Health

It is estimated that the medical tourism industry in Asia will be worth US\$4bil (RM14.2 bil) by 2012, and Malaysia is positioning itself as one of the major players in this region, expecting to earn up to US\$590 mil (RM2.1 bil) within five years (The Star, Nov 8, 2008). Thus, the potential of the industry is enormous, and the Malaysian government is making the right strategic move in this direction. The paper explores the development and growth of medical tourism in the global context, as well as among the Asian key players in the industry, before deliberating on the Malaysian experience. Earmarked as one of the strategic opportunities under the Economic Transformation Programme, the industry is expected to be among the main thrusts in moving up the nation's services value chain. Challenges faced by an industry still in its infancy will also be discussed as well as its impact on socio-economic wellbeing of Malaysians at large.

Keywords: Health tourism, healthcare, private hospitals, medical outsourcing, Malaysia.

1. INTRODUCTION

Malaysia's tourism industry is a vibrant sector of the country's economy. During the Eighth Malaysia Plan (2001-2005) period, foreign exchange earnings from tourists increased at an average annual growth rate of 12.4 percent, from 17.3 billion in 2000 to almost 50 billion in 2008 (Ministry of Tourism, 2008). Although adversely affected by the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003, the tourism industry has otherwise remained robust. During the Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006-2010), tourism was expected to continue as a major source of new growth and a driver in the