

## **AROGYAM Workshop ‘Global Medical Flows Across Borders’**

Achutha Menon Centre for Health Science Studies,  
Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Trivandrum  
11-12 February 2016, with an optional excursion on 13 February 2016.

**Organizers:** Dr Margret Frenz and Professor Kannan Srinivasan, coordinators of the AROGYAM medical tourism group

This workshop explored the global medical flows across borders often summarized in the term ‘medical tourism’ – a term that has been defined in many different ways over the last couple of decades in the ever-increasing field of transcultural health studies. The AROGYAM medical tourism group adopted the term ‘movements for health care’ to allow for the rather varied and manifold aspects that are summarized under ‘medical tourism’ in the literature.

In this workshop, such papers were particularly encouraged which had a comparative perspective, taking into account specific types of movements for health care between the so-called global north and global south, with a focus on – but not limited to – our partner countries India, Germany, and Great Britain.

In order to understand the nature of movements for health care more fully, mapping out the flows and nodal points connected to it, the types of treatments sought, the social and economic backgrounds of both providers and clients need to be analysed more deeply. Further themes discussed at the workshop were the flows of doctors, patients, ideas and concepts of medical systems, and the relationships between these different flows. The workshop provided insights into the globalization of the medical market, its intricate connections and challenges.

The workshop had 8 sessions: 2 on the first day and 6 on the second day. There were 14 participants from Achutha Menon Centre for Health Science Studies, Trivandrum, University of Edinburgh, and University of Heidelberg.

On the first day, following the welcome and introductions, the first session of the workshop had Dr Ananda Samir Chopra from Kassel/Heidelberg give a paper on ‘Medical Tourism, Wellness and Alternative Medicine – The New Incarnation of the Traditional German Kur’. Following this, Professor Kannan Srinivasan and Dr Margret Frenz, University of Edinburgh, presented a lecture on ‘Medical Tourism in Thiruvananthapuram District’.

The second day began with Dr Biju Soman’s talk on ‘Health Technologies Aid in Medical Tourism’. The other speakers of the day were Dr Sylvia Sax, Dr Revati Phalkey, and Dr Michael Marx speaking on ‘Harnessing Medical Tourism benefits to the Indian Public Health System, the Role of International Public Health Goals’; Dr Dina Sidhva, University of Edinburgh, Dr George Palattiyil, University of Edinburgh, and Dr Sunita Reddy, JNU, India speaking on ‘Outsourcing Reproduction: Surrogates’ and Commissioning Parents’ Experiences of Commercial Surrogacy Arrangements in India: a Review of Literature’, Dr Sheela Saravanan, Heidelberg University, speaking on ‘Global Movement for Reproductive Technologies: Socio-ethical Challenges and Policy Responses’, Professor Roger Jeffery, University of Edinburgh speaking on ‘Medical Tourism in India: The Trajectory of a Fantastic Promise’ and Dr Harish Naraindas, JNU, India, speaking on ‘Vampires, Virtuosos and Victims: Medical Tourism as a Morality Play’.

Overall the workshop was a great success, opening new avenues for future research.