Issues and challenges related to Ayurveda Wellness Tourism development in Sri Lanka: Perspective of Ayurveda health professionals

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Ayurveda Wellness Tourism (AWT) is gaining global recognition as travelers increasingly seek effective solutions for health concerns and illness prevention. Rooted in traditional Ayurvedic principles, AWT emphasizes a holistic connection with nature, offering restoration and rejuvenation through a tranquil and cost-effective alternative to Western medicine, particularly in response to modern sedentary lifestyles. Sri Lanka, with its tropical climate, rich natural resources, and well-established Ayurvedic system, has significant potential to position itself as a leading AWT destination. While tourism remains a major contributor to Sri Lanka's GDP, the wellness segment remains underdeveloped. Ensuring high standards of treatment and service delivery, alongside adherence to international regulations, is vital for sustainable growth. This study investigates the challenges and opportunities for AWT in Sri Lanka, with insights drawn from interviews with 21 Ayurvedic practitioners. Key issues identified include limited government support, shortages of qualified personnel, and inconsistent regulatory practices. The findings highlight the urgent need for a comprehensive national strategy tailored to Sri Lanka's unique context. Strengthening the regulatory framework, enhancing professionalism, and fostering effective information sharing are crucial for realizing the full potential of Ayurveda Wellness Tourism in the country.

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