

Global Spa Summit JOINING TOGETHER. SHAPING THE FUTURE.

Medical Wellness/Lifestyle Enhancement/Medical Spas What's the Future?

Concurrent Breakout Session (Roundtable)

Tuesday, May 19th 2009 11:15am – 12:15pm

La Fontaine 1&2, Victoria-Jungfrau Grand Hotel & Spa, Interlaken, Switzerland

Moderator: Dr. Geraldine Mitton, Medical Spa Consultant, South Africa

Panelists:

Eva Adamer-Konig, Principal, FH Joanneum University of Applied Science, Austria

Renate Brune, CEO, Brune Group, Germany

Nicola Fortunati, General Manager, STB Group, Italy

**Dr. Mario Krause, Medical SPA Scientific Director, World Society of Anti-Aging
Medicine, Germany**

Dr. Franz Linser, CEO, Linser & Partner Consulting GmbH, Austria

Dr. Tamas Varhelyi, Associate Professor, Szolnoki Foiskola, Hungary

**Dr. David Wong, Medical Consultant, Health Integration Center/Bangkok MediPlex,
United States**

Scribe: Aras Erekul (Cornell)

Dr. Geraldine Mitton (moderator)

Let's explore the future where medical services will be integrated with spa services. Roundtable experts, please summarize in about 5 minutes how your organization approaches medical wellness and lifestyle enhancement.

Nicola Fortunati

STB(Societa Terme e Benessere) owns three separate spas in Tuscany, Italy. We have always been a traditional thermal spa. I find the new "MediSpa" term ridiculous. Our guests meet an MD first, who is a specialist in thermal medicine and is part of our internal medicine department. Our physicians act as mentors for the guests, focusing on healthy nutrition, prevention, and healthy living practices.



STB pays special attention to research collaborations with universities and especially weight loss research. We believe that specialization in spas is important, as it is not feasible to try being everything to everyone. All therapies are totally covered by government insurance, making our spas available to people from all social backgrounds.

Renate Brune

We are developing a new project at a national park near Berlin as a healing place. It is important to have integrative medicine in a medical spa. Multiple modalities including Ayurveda, naturopathy, therapeutic fasting, medical diagnostics, hydrotherapy, osteopathy, fitness testing, dermatology and executive health programs are practiced at the property in a customized manner for every single guest. A crucial part of the stay will be daily exercise in nature. Psychological and motivational techniques will also be utilized to convey the wellness message and to help improve the lifestyle choices of the guests.

Dr. Franz Linser

I was a sports science specialist at Innsbruck University working with the Austrian ski team. If we want to celebrate life, first we have to increase the basic appreciation of beauty in people's minds. If we are talking about health, it doesn't always have to be about medical services. Lifestyle management is even more important than medical interventions for our health.

Eva Adamer-Konig

I am the head of the Health Management and Tourism department at Joanneum University, Austria. We focus on educating tomorrow's spa managers in the medical field as well as enabling them to distinguish quackery from legitimate wellness practices. Our program curriculum focuses on health in theory and practice, health economics and health promotion.



Dr. Tamas Varhelyi

I am an MD, a computer programmer, and an economist. In the 19th century, the brand of a spa town depended on the quality of its healing waters. Unfortunately, today brand image is more important than the quality of the therapies. Balneology and health resort medicine has to be based on scientific evidence. Hungary is a country with many thermal spas with a long tradition of medical doctor led programs. The focus is on the treatment of chronic health problems, mainly musculoskeletal and digestive conditions.

Dr. David Wong

I am an MD and a holistic medicine specialist. In 1978 I founded a health integration center, bringing together nutrition, osteopathy, Traditional Chinese Medicine, and western medicine. A couple of years ago a medical center in Bangkok was established, a one-stop-shop for health. I have been consulting with Thai doctors to implement various complementary therapies.

The medical center in Bangkok is a beautiful building with 40 stories of condos, healthy restaurants, esthetic services, dentistry, optometry, multi-discipline check-up facility, holistic medicine center, and a fully accomplished spa. We also offer care for the elderly. Another similar project is being developed in Dubai.



Dr. Mario Krause

I teach anti-aging medicine to other physicians. Achieving happiness is the main goal, also maintaining health and wellness. Medical spas can connect the gap between our current medical systems and the emerging wellness demand. According to my research, 55% of people expect prevention from a medical spa and 70% expect education about healthy nutrition at a medical spa. 97% think the presence of an MD at the medical spa is important or very important.

Currently private insurance companies cover medical spa care but I expect it to decrease in the coming years. Logic is not enough for people to make lifestyle changes, people need to be “seduced” to choose healthier living habits.

Dr. Helena Baranova, President, European Institute for Personalised Prevention, France

As a scientist and consultant in genomics, I feel that some people fail to achieve health no matter how many healthy choices they make due to their genetic predisposition to illness. So, it is imperative to offer genetic analysis to guests, in addition to all the holistic wellness modalities already mentioned.

Dr Geraldine Mitton (moderator)

In many European countries, medical doctors are essential coordinators and prescribers of the clients “spa” experience. There is a holistic approach to treating current health problems, promoting wellness while at the same time including interventions which are aimed at preventing illness and degenerative conditions. Anti-ageing medicine may be a new discipline in the western world, but “spa medicine” according to Professor Karagulle and Dr. Fortunati has been practiced for many years in Italy, Hungary, Turkey, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and other European countries. It is logical to say that with our increased lifespan today, people want to live longer without disabling health problems. The spa industry is ideally placed to offer a total approach to lifestyle enhancement.



The Global Spa Summit is an international organization that brings together leaders and visionaries to positively impact and shape the future of the global spa and wellness industry.