

ASIA: PHILIPPINES

1. What is currently making news in your country when it comes to wellness or wellbeing?

a. The Philippines recently co-chaired the creation of a 2015 APEC Healthy Women Healthy Economies Policy Toolkit which compiles policies and best practices to help governments, companies, and NGOs to improve female labor force participation through better health. Five focus areas were Workplace health and safety, Health access and awareness, Sexual harassment and gender based violence, Reproductive health and Work life balance. The toolkit was launched at the 2015 APEC Women in Economy Forum in Manila in September 2015. I was invited to be part of this initiative to represent the wellness sector. We worked hand in hand with doctors from different countries to finalize the toolkit. This is an indication of wellness being recognized as an integral part of the health and well being industry.

b. The Asian Society of Lifestyle Medicine (ASLM) has recently been formed . The ASLM is a group of healthcare practitioners who use lifestyle interventions in the treatment and management of disease. More doctors in the country subscribe to the use of natural treatments in the prevention of diseases but prefer evidence based lifestyle approaches. It is good to be able to represent the wellness industry in the Philippines as a founding member of ASLM.

c. The Philippine health and wellness industry continues to grow spurred by the improved consumption of health and wellness products to prevent illnesses. Besides the rising health consciousness, The expensive cost of medical treatment also encourages consumers to be more proactive in taking charge of their health.(Euromonitor June 2015).

2. Please provide one sentence that describes what you think are important developments in your country for each of the following:

Spas: Hotel spas are recording the fastest growth as consumers see spas as a “Must Have” for hotels and resorts. Day spas are challenged by the home massage industry which has become more sophisticated, with the spa experience being delivered at the client’s home.

Wellness Tourism: There is a growing interest in integrating wellness into a holiday. Filipinos based abroad avail of executive check ups, dental treatments, aesthetic treatments, detox and spa treatments when on vacation.

Wellness Living Communities/Real Estate: No major developments in this area.

Beauty: Aesthetic clinics and other beauty related businesses are growing tremendously. Anti aging treatments, whitening, weight loss programs continue to be popular with stem cell treatments getting more interest.

Fitness: Large growth in this industry with branded fitness chains coming into the country.

Nutrition: High interest in healthy and organic food and naturally healthy products. Organic markets, farm to table concept are growing in popularity. Upsurge in herbal products being sold in the market.

3. How would you describe the state of workplace wellness in your country?

Increasing interest as more companies are burdened by the cost of sickness. Many companies are introducing work place wellness through zumba classes, yoga and health talks but need an integrated approach to make behavioral change happen. Nurture Wellness Village has pioneered in introducing “**The Work Well Project**” which is a fun, interactive and educational corporate activity designed to jumpstart and educate employees on sickness prevention through better health.

4. What has been the general attitude about investing in spa/wellness in your country in 2015? Specific examples?

Investment has been limited to spas in hotels and resorts and provision of (some) healthy alternatives in the restaurant sector, but not much. Investors have been more focused on building more medical facilities all over the country.

5. Whose responsibility is it to create a well world?

Each individual should take responsibility to create a well world. When you start with the individual, you impact families, then communities, then countries then the rest of the world.

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