Balneology in France

Christian-F. ROQUES MD
Professor Physical & Rehabilitation Medicine
Université Toulouse III
President – Institut du Thermalisme – Dax
France
Balneology organization

• Therapeutic balneology (treatment of chronic or acute disabled patients)
  – SPA Therapy
  – Physical & Rehabilitation Medicine
• Non therapeutic balneology (wellbeing, fitness, prevention)
  – Thalassotherapy
  – Aquatic centers
  – Body care or beauty centers
SPA Therapy 1

- 1200 Springs, 104 SPA resorts
- Doctor’s prescription (family, resort doctors)
- Health practitioners: doctors (600), nurses, physiotherapists, bath givers
- 12 specialities (according to the properties of the waters)
  - Rheumatisms
  - Phlebology
  - Metab. Diabetes
  - Neuro
  - Gynaecology
  - Respiratory diseases
  - Cardio-arterial dis.
  - Dermatology
  - Psychosomatic diseases
  - Urinary diseases
  - Digestive tractus
  - Stomatology
  - Children’s development disturb.

Ambulatory treatment, 3 weeks, 18 days of treatment,
4 different treatments every day
(baths, showers, muds, steam, gaz, massages, water exercise)
- Cost average 400 € (treatment) + 70 € (SPA doctor)
SPA therapy 2

- 2001 : 545 274 persons
  - 9 814 932 days for medical treatment
  - 430 000 days for well being

- Gross product of spa resorts : 2 Billions €
- Social security involvement (care) : 95% (200 Millions €)

- Female : 64 % ; male : 36 %
- Age above 60 : 50 %
- Age under 16 : 7 %

- Aetiology
  - Rheumatic conditions 65 %
  - Respiratory diseases 15 %
  - Digestive and urinary tractus 8 %
  - Circulatory disturbances 7 %
  - Skin diseases 4 %
  - Psycho-somatic disturbances 2 %
  - Others 1 %
Physical & Rehabilitation Medicine

- PRM Centers (public hospitals, private) or Ambulatory rehabilitation (doctors PRM and/or physiotherapists)
- Musculo-skeletal, neurological, respiratory problems, …
- Doctor’s prescription, social security intervention (therapeutic)
  - Global cost of balneotherapy ?
  - Number of patients treated with balneotherapy ?
  - Elementary cost : therapeutic session 15 € to 20 € + suppl. of 4 € (balneo in a tank) to 6 € (balneo in a pool)
- Care givers : doctors, physiotherapists
Thalassotherapy: 48 centers (2692 Kms of sea shore)
Thalassotherapy

- 48 Thalassotherapy centers: ambulatory treatment
- Care (medical prescription by center’s doctors):
  - baths, muds, sea weed, exercise, massages, swimming, …
  - Specific programmes:
    - post birth, urinary incontinence, tobacco stop,
    - back pain, heavy legs, fitness, slimness, …
- Health practitioners: doctors (120), physiotherapists, bath givers
- Usual duration of the treatment: 5 days
- Number of persons treated: 231 000 (french 90%)
- Number of days of treatment: 1 155 000
- Average cost: 70 € by day of treatment (total: 73 033 683 €)
- No Social Security involvement (fitness, prevention)
Aquatic Centers

- On the sea side or in land
- Outdoor and/or in door
- Balneology +/- water games and attractions
- Multinational compounds (aqualand, aquacity, caliceo)
- **Global economic weight?**
- **Number of clients?** (leisure and fitness)
- Elementary costs: ?
  - Caliceo: 10 € for one hour
    (swimming pool, hamman, aquagym, ...)
- **No doctors, no health workers involvement**
Body Care – Beauty centers

• Number of centers ?
• Number of persons treated ?
• Health workers, doctors : no
• Social security : no
• Muds, «non medical massages», baths
  Pleasure and fitness
• Average costs : 50 to 100 € (muds + massage +/- bath)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Doctors</th>
<th>Health Workers</th>
<th>AIMS</th>
<th>COST /day (€)</th>
<th>Social Security</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPA</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Treat. +++&lt;br&gt;Well being</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>540 000 (10 M days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRM</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Treat.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THALA</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Fitness Prevent</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>231 000 (1,155 M days)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQUA</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Leisure fitness</td>
<td>10 to 20</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEAUTY</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Fitness pleasure</td>
<td>50 to 100</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

• Therapeutic balneology has an important role and is particularly well structurated in SPA treatment.

• Well being balneology is widely used but is only well organized in thalassotherapy centers. But a better fitness has preventive properties and contributes to the health process.