Athens, 16 March 2015

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Athens Development and Destination Management Agency**

**participates at inaugural Medical Tourism Forum in the Greek capital**

As part of the Athens Development and Destination Management Agency’s campaign to promote Athens as a city break and business destination, it commissioned a study on medical tourism and private healthcare. The key findings of the study, presented at the first Medical Tourism Forum in Athens, demonstrate that medical tourism is enjoying dynamic growth. The study analysed the factors driving demand for private healthcare in relation to household spending, the cost of health services, and demographics.

The global medical tourism market is worth $30 billion (based on figures for 2009-2010). Around 5 million patients spend an average of $6000 on each medical trip, including the cost of travel and accommodation. European citizens took over 2 million trips for medical or wellness purposes in 2011, with 2 million of those trips exclusively to receive medical care. In 2014, 1.2 million American citizens travelled abroad for medical reasons.

The global medical tourism market is predicted to increase by 25-35% annually in the next few years. This is an exciting growth opportunity for Athens, which has a number of comparative advantages as a destination for medical tourism:

* Availability of highly qualified personnel across the health sector
* Low labour costs compared to other European cities (especially in medical services outside hopsitals)
* High quality tourism infrastructure
* Affordable destination that offers value-for-money
* Favourable and progressive legislation to encourage investment in medical tourism

The City of Athens has identifed medical tourism as a potential growth sector. It could help boost the Greek economy and establish an innovative new tourism market for the Attica region. The municipality is developing partnerships in order to provide a comprehensive range of medical services so that Athens can become a leading destination for medical tourism.

To read the study (in Greek), please go to: [www.developathens.gr/el/meletes-erevnes](http://www.developathens.gr/el/meletes-erevnes)

**For further information, please contact:**

Kalliopi Andriopoulou

Athens Development and Destination Management Agency

kandriopoulou@developathens.gr

[www.developathens.gr](http://www.developathens.gr)

+30 210 3253123