



Is the Time Right for a Ministry of Wellness? Let's Craft this Role Together

Breakout Discussion Forum

Participants

Mayor Serge Dedina, Mayor, The City of Imperial Beach, U.S.

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Session Summary

At the 2015 Global Wellness Summit in Mexico, we shared the current thinking about the Ministry of Wellness initiative and we experienced very positive interest from delegates. To move the initiative forward, these four next steps were identified by Summit delegates, as well as the Ministry of Wellness Working Group post-Summit:

1. Implement a collaborative, user-friendly platform with the following components for any country or region (i.e. Mayors) to use:
 - *Clear business case a country can use for prioritizing wellness/wellbeing*
 - *Assessment of readiness, willingness, ability to prioritize wellness/wellbeing*
 - *Collection of best practices*
 - *Collection of emerging practices, including wellbeing assessments*
 - *Approaches for getting started, for instance, changing the name from Minister of Health to Minister of Wellness*
 - *Opportunities to share knowledge, tools, and resources, as well as create new innovations and relationships for advancing wellbeing*
2. Create a panel of respected experts in different health & wellbeing fields. These can be drawn on to advance wellbeing conversations (i.e. as part of GWI panels), as well as contribute to the collaborative platform (mentioned above). In addition, they can provide expertise in the GWS; for instance, we could have a panel from the Tyrol wellness cluster to discuss how wellbeing has become a priority in that region of Austria and the impact that has had on the economy and communities.
3. Determine if GWI wants to be the organization that takes a position on what the role of Minister of Wellness is and brings together leaders globally who want to step into that role. For instance, mayors (like Mayor Serge Dedina of Imperial Beach, California, USA) who are passionate about advancing wellness and wellbeing in their cities.

4. Get funding so that we can secure dedicated people for taking this initiative to its next level (as outlined above). For instance, possible funding sources might be the U.N. or the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

At the 2015 GWS in Mexico, additional people “raised their hand” as willing to give their perspectives about the MOW initiative:

- Thierry Malleret – who has a clear economic case for country-level wellness (and thus, the role of Minister of Wellness)
- Anni Hood – who sees clear connections with Wellness Tourism globally
- Franz Linser – to discuss insights from advancing wellbeing in Austria
- Liz Terry – who shared her idea about GWI leading the way by appointing a full-time person to the MOW role on a non-governmental basis, with the long term goal to get governments to set up their own posts of wellness minister
- Jean-Guy de Gabriac – to discuss a potential Minister of Wellness activity as the movement of Global Wellness Day to Global Wellness Daily
- Kim Marshall – who has contacts she feels could further support develop the MOW role
- Serge Dedina – who can share lessons about what’s happening in Imperial Beach and California, as well as potentially lead a growing group of mayors who want to incorporate wellbeing into their leadership
- Josef Woodman – who sees clear linkages with medical tourism

We believe that Nerio Alessandri, head of Technogym, would also have good insights about the MOW role, particularly in light of his company’s mission and government partnerships to advance wellness globally.

Finally, a suggestion was made to shift the name from *Ministry* of Wellness to *Minister* of Wellness, making the role itself less bound by a seemingly large governmental function and thus more available to anyone at any level of government or nongovernment who has a dedicated passion for advancing wellbeing.

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