

NORTH AMERICA: BARBADOS

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

Barbados traditionally has had a well-developed and mature tourism product. However, with the raise of other tourist destinations competing for the same market the country has been forced to diversify its tourism product. The health and wellness sector has therefore emerged as a key priority area for growth within Barbados. Trending and news making topics within the wellness industry in Barbados include; the advancements being made in the areas of training and certification, standards development and the creation of products for the health and wellness sector through the use of indigenous products.

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

Spas, Wellness Tourism, Beauty, Fitness and Nutrition: We now offer, through the PBHC School, international training and certification in these areas, which will enable growth for Wellness Tourism.

Wellness Living Communities/Real Estate: Efforts have been made by private sector individuals/firms to potentially foster health and wellness retreats (e.g. Santoshia Barbados) but there is a need for greater level of effort to be made in terms of marketing and promotion to work towards the formulation of a marketing strategy to support such an endeavor.

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

Barbados has made significant strides towards the creation of wellness environment within the workplace. The recent enactment of the Safety and Health at Work (SHAW) Act speaks to one of the critical steps which have been taken in this regard. While this Act has been formally enacted into law and seeks to ensure the safety and health of employers at work a lot more still remains to be done as it pertains to wellness within the workplace. Although, some organizations have sought to foster and promote a wellness lifestyle within the workplace through the incorporation of fitness and wellness centers within their facilities greater efforts need to be made at the national level. If Barbados is to fully adopt a wellness culture within the

workplace, there needs to be greater focus at the policy level towards the creation of a framework which will drive government and non-governmental organizations to support such an initiative.

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

There has been an overwhelming positive approach to investments in the spa and wellness sector in Barbados. In 2015 alone, one of the country's leading health and wellness training institutions (PBHC School) was a recipient of an \$800,000.00 BBD grant through the Inter-American Development Bank's Competency Base Training Fund. This grant will allow for the training and certification of sixty (60) spa practitioners in their Level 3 CVQ in Massage Therapy and their ITEC Level 3 designation in either Sports Therapy, Reflexology or Aromatherapy. This grant fund which forms part of the IABD "*Skills for the Future Program*" is the single largest training grant which has been provided to any Caribbean country in the health and wellness sector. The award of this training grant to the health and wellness sector under the competitive project submission process and at this juncture within the country's economic state, clearly demonstrates the positive attitude of the government towards investments in the health and wellness sector.

Additionally, the Technical Vocational and Education Training (TVET) Council of Barbados under its Employment Training Fund (ETF) has also been a major source of grant funding investment to the spa and wellness industry. The Barbados Coalition of Service Industries Inc. has been a recipient of such funding. In 2015 the fund allocated over \$50,000.00 BDS towards the skills upgrading of spa technicians who had been working in the industry for two years or more but lack the formal training and certification to render them professionally competent within this sector. These investments speak largely, to the positive attitude of our government towards the spa and wellness sector in Barbados.

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

Together, all facets of society have an important role and responsibility to play in the creation of a well world. However, it is our governments that will play a leading role in this regard, as they are largely responsible for creating the policy framework and the enabling environment to support such initiative. Alternately, key support and stakeholder groups also have an important role to play in lobbying and advocating for the creation of a well world. Such support groups are critical in ensuring that the most accurate information is effectively disseminated to key interest groups and in mobilizing the general populous in the creation of a well world. Each individual citizen also has a responsibility to play in helping to foster a wellness environment within their country.

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