

How to Select a Medical Tourism Facilitator

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By [Lorna Greenwood](#)

An estimated 58 million US residents are without healthcare insurance. Of those who do have coverage, many are choosing medical tourism - combining travel with a medical purpose - to reduce out of pocket expenses. With rising healthcare costs in the western world and quality facilities and staff in other countries, it's not surprising that the trend is increasing among both insured and uninsured Americans. A great many state of the art facilities overseas, with staff trained to current western standards are ready to serve at a fraction of the cost for similar procedures in the US.

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A New Industry - A New Profession

A new field of professionals is emerging. Medical Tourism Facilitators can help arrange travel, accommodations, transportation and medical procedures. They also provide information so the patient can choose destinations, facilities and sometimes specific health care professionals. Facilitators can also provide options for travel and medical complications insurance to alleviate financial concerns that may accompany a decision to accept the option of medical tourism. It's important to note that if they are not licensed insurance agents they may refer you to a licensed insurance agent for questions. This should not cast them in a negative light - they are acting correctly by doing so.

When selecting a facilitator, it's important to know his qualifications, experience and fees up front. Also ask for transparency and full disclosure - is he receiving income from or does he have any personal interest in the options he's providing you? The existence of income from any other sources is not necessarily a red flag - but you should be made aware of it. Being professionals, they're not likely to balk or take offense. As a consumer, you have a right to know.

Who are the local doctors who will review your case and what are their qualifications? Can you

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use your own doctor? In addition, ask if there have been any problems. Is he insured? Does he have any testimonials or former clients who have agreed to be available so you can contact them directly? Check with the Better Business Bureau and your Secretary of State to see if there have been any unresolved issues. Problems can arise anywhere in the world - even here in the US we are not immune to medical accidents or claims of malpractice, so ask your facilitator what your recourses may be if you experience a problem.

Ask about alternatives and make your own choices. Your selections should be based on your own needs and what's important to you. And your facilitator can be instrumental in providing further, critical information. By being an informed consumer, you will possess the knowledge to make wiser choices and therefore stack the odds in your favor to achieve good results. Bon voyage!

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