



Article published on December 12th 2011 | [Fitness](#)

The Medical travel has seen a parallel growth in the recent years. Once upon a time it used to be just for some costly cosmetic surgeries. But the current health care crisis and growing number of UN insured people have contributed to its ever increasing popularity. More and more people are now aware of the benefits of the medical travel and are able to take control of their medical destiny. This is certainly helping patients to get the best value for their money.

At the same time the medical tourism is far from being perfect. There are many instances of dispute and botched surgeries. Many of these don't surface into the national media. So far the medical tourism is largely an unregulated profession. Even the so called associations are nothing more than a deceptive way to promote few companies. Since the medical tourism deals with patient's health, some might think it is a profession. But since this field lacks self regulation, or a regulating authority, it is not really more than a trade as of now. But one should understand that there is a pressing need to improve the quality parameters in this industry.

Unfortunately, the industry is populated largely by UN qualified people. Having said that, how does one determine quality? What should be the parameters? We will try to discuss a few of them here.

Qualifications: Ideally the medical tourism company facilitator should be someone from the medical profession with vast experience. This is very important because every patient is different. There are so many variables within the same procedure for a given set of patients. This would help the patients to identify the potential dangers ahead and would enable them to take preventive actions. Unfortunately many of the medical tourism agencies are managed by just sales people or travel agencies, who absolutely have no idea of the patient's medical condition. Can you really trust these people before going under knife in a distant land?

Quality of facilities: Many medical tourism agencies partner with any hospital or clinic regardless of quality. Here is a simple question. Would they send their family members to the same facilities? For example, some facilities south of United States are nothing more than the size of a single family home in America. How is it humanly possible to have a safer environment in such tiny facilities to cut open a human body? Only a few medical tourism companies deal exclusively with high quality facilities like with JCI accreditations.

Knowledge of the Destination: You will find many medical tourism companies deal with almost every country in the world. What do they know about those places? Have they really gone to all those places? How do they know how to prepare the patient for each area? Going to India is not same as going to Costa Rica.. Some medical tourism websites have as many as 30 different countries and thousands of hospitals and clinics. Do they even know the names of the people in these clinics? If so how is it possible?

Ethics: The medical tourism facilitator will be faced with several different scenarios. It is understood that they are in for business. But that should not be the sole driving force. This again ties back in to individual qualifications and organizational ethics. It is important to note that there not many companies that can claim that.

Next time around, when you are shopping for a medical tourism company please look closely to these attributes and you will be surprised at what you may find.

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Article Keywords:

Medical tourism agencies, Medical travel

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