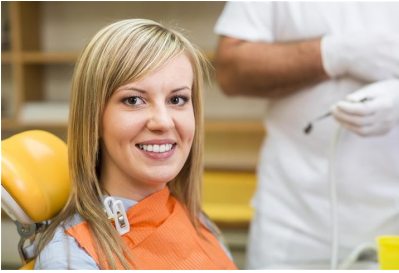


Columbia while Eastern Europe countries offer low cost dental services as well.



Location

Dental clinics offering services to foreigners are growing in amount in cities like Los Algodones in Mexico having more than 300 affordable dental care providers and Bangkok, Thailand boasting of an extensive network of clinics with attractive costs.

Many locations offer the consumers discounted dental care when compared to prices in their home countries while many dentists join dental tourism market with special offers that come with slight twists. One factor that decides where consumers go is how far they are ready to travel for their dental treatment, and if the travel costs are worth it.

Predictions for 2014

Dental tourism demand is expected to expand with the number of dentists offering services in the year 2014. The trends foreseen by experts include:

Multi trips: Consumers who require extensive dental work like dental crowns or implants, root canals or dentures will have to make frequent visits to the dentist for perfect results and maybe an additional biannual check-up.

Regional options: Regional solutions will affect dental tourism, especially if distance travelled is a major factor that equals travel costs. The evolving industry will make consumers travel to places they are comfortable and familiar with so that they can also plan a vacation. Like North Americans may travel to Latin America, Europeans will travel to Eastern Europe, Australians will travel to South East Asia while Asians will travel within Asia.

Competition: Dentists look to expand revenues as they see huge potential in dental travel. Thus dentist clinics with limited infrastructure and centers with wide offerings compete to attract the same patients. This competition leads to confusion, chaos and blurring of lines between the good and bad and can lead to a price war.



Price wars: As consumers will look for deals with a total return on investments including treatment and travel costs, lodging and incidental expenses, they look for all-inclusive deals to reduce potential financial risks. People tend to travel if they have significant savings and will not travel for a single dental implant, unless they had already planned to visit the country.

Transparency: This is important as many times, there are differences between what is marketed and what is delivered. Dentists may advertise the use of top American brand dental implants but actually use low quality, unreliable implants while charging for a high-grade article. Consumers thus have to do proper research before undergoing any treatment.

Commodity: As suppliers and demand for service is common, dental tourism is growing into a commodity-type market where procedures, materials, techniques and skills used are similar everywhere. Differentiating factors like costs and quality are blurred amongst the many dental service providers.

Competitive advantages: To remain competitive dental clinics have to think strategically and differentiate themselves through innovation, talent and services offered.

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