

RECESSION SLOWS DOWN MEDICAL TOURISM FOR NOW



Medical tourism is one of the luxury items, which has been severely hit by the recession. This is somewhat surprising considering that people tend to put their health first. However, improvements are expected in the coming years, particularly in the up and coming destinations.

Medical tourism has always been a difficult area to analyze. Its popularity almost entirely depends on the type of medical tours we focus. People will always be willing to dig into their pockets for rare operations or even special forms of pain relief, **yet the cosmetic area, including face-lifts and liposuction has really been suffering in recent times.**

According to the accounting giant Deloitte, **there has been a general drop of 14% in medical tourism throughout the past 2 years.** Clearly people have been cautious about spending money on luxury procedures including wart removal or changes to the nose. This is particularly true of the American population.

In 2007, more than 750,000 Americans traveled abroad to either perfect their bodies and looks or to deal with a medical problem, which was deemed too expensive or unavailable in the USA. However, this figure became 648,000 in 2009. People are either saving or simply do not have the funds for medical tourism. It would also be fair to state that the countries with the medical facilities tend not to be the cheapest.

However, it is not all doom and gloom on the medical tourism front. Deloitte has also stated that improvements are on the horizon as more positive news is expected about the state of world economics. Inbound medical tourism to the USA will certainly enjoy an increase despite the country being less than renowned for its medical services even for its own citizens. **40% of Americans have stated in surveys that they would be willing to go abroad for the purpose of medical tourism** and the Indian market in this field is set to rise by around 30% by 2015.

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