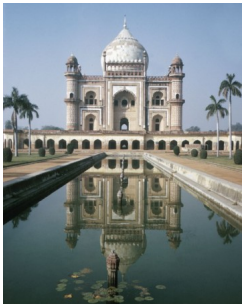


# U.S. Citizens Head to India for Health Care



The medical tourism is booming in India. U.S.-based IndUShealth, Inc., a global health care service that links uninsured and self-insured Americans to affordable, high-quality medical care in India, made a referral agreement with Wockhardt Hospitals, Ltd.

This company runs several hospitals in India. IndUShealth, Inc., makes agreements with hospitals that have been accredited by the Joint Commission International. IndUShealth, Inc mission is to, qualify and refer patients to the Indian hospitals.

According to Vishal Bali, CEO of Wockhardt Hospitals, Ltd.: "We are among the leading international hospitals that attract overseas patients because of the excellent surgical care that we provide."

The health care in the U.S. is more and more expensive and so travel to India is for some 45 million uninsured and underinsured Americans a good choice. Wockhardt's hospitals are in cities of Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kolkatta and Nagpur. The doctors there are able to perform e.g. hip resurfacing, knee replacement, coronary bypass or endoscopic disc removal.

The quality of Wockhardt's services is high. The doctors have often studied and worked in western countries and also the Wockhardt is associated with Harvard Medical International.

But not everybody likes the idea of medical travel. Recently, the largest American union, United Steelworkers, blocked a US company Blue Ridge Paper Products intention to send its 60-year-old employee Carl Garrett to India for surgery. Union spokesperson Stan Johnson did not want to expose its members to risks associated with providing healthcare in the Third World.

The government of India is hugely supporting the medical tourism industry. There is a huge advertising campaign going on to promote India's health sector. They even started issuing M (medical) visa to the medical patients, and MX visas to their spouses. Last year there were some 200,000 foreigners for medical care in India. The number is expected to grow.

The main crowd-puller is, however, is the price. . For example, bone marrow transplants cost US\$30,000 in India, US\$62,500 in Thailand and US\$250,000 in the US.

Date: 2007-01-09

Article link: <http://www.tourism-review.com/us-citizens-head-to-india-for-health-care-news119>