



1. WHAT IS MEDICAL TOURISM

Medical Tourism is the process of travelling abroad for medical treatment. This concept is not new, in fact, Canadians and Europeans are known to travel outside their regions in order to obtain medical care. Studies also show that many tourists travel to other countries in order access lower cost treatments and specialized procedures. With the development of the Medical Tourism sector in Jamaica, travellers seeking medical treatment now have the opportunity to access quality procedures, recover in anonymity and comfort at more affordable rates.

2. WHO ARE MEDICAL TOURISTS?

Medical tourists are generally residents of the industrialized nations of the world and primarily originate from the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Western Europe, Australia and the Middle East. Increasingly, people from other countries are seeking alternative treatment regimens and medical care at more affordable costs.

3. WHAT KIND OF HEALTHCARE DO MEDICAL TOURISTS LOOK FOR?

Medical tourists generally travel abroad for the more elective procedures. These include face lifts, liposuction, tummy tucks, breast augmentation, dental crowns and LASIK (laser in-situ keratomileusis), commonly referred to as laser eye surgery or laser vision correction. More critical procedures such as joint replacements, spinal disc replacements, hysterectomies and cardiac bypass surgery are also sought by medical tourists.

4. WHAT IS THE STATE OF THE MEDICAL TOURISM INDUSTRY GLOBALLY?

In 2012, studies indicated that over eight million people travelled globally for medical procedures. Medical tourists, who travelled abroad for treatment, opted for lower cost services in dental and cosmetic procedures. The statistics below show the estimated number of medical tourists travelling in 2012 and indicate cost savings for specific procedures done.

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF TOURISTS
Brazil	18,000
Costa Rica	30,000-45,000
India	300,000-700,000
Korea	81,000-150,000
Mexico	200,000-1100,000
Singapore	400,000-610,000
Taiwan	170,000
Thailand	920,000-1,200,000
Turkey	110,000
United States	600,000-800,000
All Others	800,000-2,200,000
Total Estimates in 2012	4,461,000-8,016,000

Country	Treatment	Approximate Saving (%)
Antigua	Addiction and Recovery	40
Barbados	Fertility	40-50
Brazil	Cosmetic surgery	20-30
Costa Rica	Dentistry	30-70
Hungary	Dentistry	40-75
India	Orthopedics and Restorative Procedures	50-85 - for restorative and cosmetic procedures
Israel	Fertility/IVF	30-50
Malaysia	Health Screenings	70
Mexico	Dentistry	30-60
Singapore	Cancer	30-40
South Africa	Cosmetic Surgery	40

Source: The business and pleasure of teeth: Dental tourism. Retrieved from www.ijcdmr.com/index.php/ijcdmr/article/download/180/165

5. HOW IS THE INDUSTRY STRUCTURED?

The industry consists of various service providers including private and public sector hospitals, doctors and dental offices and intermediaries such as medical travel planners, who assist with the process of coordinating overseas visits.

6. WHICH COUNTRIES IN THE REGION ARE CURRENTLY PROMOTING MEDICAL TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES?

Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Bahamas, Barbados and Cayman are some of the countries in the region actively promoting medical tourism opportunities. Established facilities, highly-skilled doctors, state-of-the-art equipment, low costs for medical procedures and innovative treatment are benefits promoted in these countries.

7. WHY DO PEOPLE CONSIDER MEDICAL OR SURGICAL PROCEDURES OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES?

The cost for medical procedures outside of the United States is generally 50 to 80 per cent less and this provides access to specialists from around the world and opportunities to recover in an exotic country, in complete anonymity.



8. HAS COST BEEN THE ONLY OR MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN TRAVELLING FOR MEDICAL TOURISM?

No. However, cost has always been an important factor to consider when seeking medical care. Persons have travelled for other reasons including access to highly skilled doctors, innovative treatment and to make efficient use of their recovery time by blending medical trips with quality vacation time.

9. WHERE CAN I SEE MEDICAL TOURISM IN ACTION?

Medical tourism is happening all around us and there are many places online to explore travel options, treatment facilities and compare prices for medical treatments. The following are popular websites on medical tourism:

www.onlinemedicaltourism.com
www.apollohospitals.com
www.medicaltourism.com



Medical Tourism in Jamaica

10. IS JAMAICA CURRENTLY A PLAYER IN THE MEDICAL TOURISM INDUSTRY ?

Jamaica has long been a player in the medical tourism industry. Persons from the diaspora generally schedule medical visits during their planned vacation. Jamaica also records medical visits from across the Caribbean annually. This dynamic positions Jamaica as a natural participant in the sector.

11. WHY IS JAMAICA FAVORABLY CONSIDERED AS A DESTINATION FOR MEDICAL TOURISM?

With its reputation for world class medical professionals, strong network of diagnostic facilities, indigenous natural herbs and mineral spas, great hospitality and being near shore to the world's largest source market for medical tourists, Jamaica is uniquely positioned to be successful in this fast growing industry.

12. DOES JAMAICA HAVE A SUITABLE POOL OF MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS?

Jamaica is renowned for its highly trained doctors, nurses and medical technicians. Healthcare professionals are considered among the country's most valuable resource and are central to the development of the medical tourism industry in Jamaica. In 2015, approximately 444 medical doctors, 561 nurses, 38 physiotherapists and 46 dental nurses and assistants graduated from the University of the West Indies Faculty of Medical Sciences.

13. ARE PRIVATE MEDICAL SERVICES OFFERED IN JAMAICA?

There are eight private hospitals operating in Jamaica; they offer the full range of medical care. The most recent addition to the private hospital landscape is Hospiten, owned by Spain's Grupo Hospiten (HOSPITEN Group) - an international network of private hospitals, with over 1,000 beds. They are committed to providing high-level healthcare services. Private hospitals are supported by a network of over 2000 private practice physicians.

14. WHAT IS THE LANDSCAPE FOR DENTAL SERVICES?

There are currently 252 private dental service providers in Jamaica offering a range of medical procedures. Dental services offered in Jamaica include all of the recognized fields of dentistry, with specialists in all areas, except prosthodontics.

15. WHAT IS THE TYPICAL COST FOR PROCEDURES IN JAMAICA VS UNITED STATES?

Generally, costs are 50 to 80 per cent lower in Jamaica compared to the United States. The greatest savings is typically found in cardiac procedures with fees 75-90% lower in Jamaica, compared to the United States.

16. WHY IS MEDICAL CARE SO MUCH MORE AFFORDABLE IN JAMAICA?

The cost for health care is dependent on different variables. These include the country's wage rates, consumer's ability to pay, cost of living, regulations governing the industry and insurance costs. These factors influence the rates charged for health yet, in most cases, have no real impact on the quality of the health care which is partly dependent on the physician delivering the care. Jamaica's favourable mix of variables has created an environment of quality healthcare at competitive rates when compared to North American markets.

17. WHAT IS JAMAICA'S PROGRESS ON DEVELOPING THIS INDUSTRY?

In 2010, Jamaica engaged consultants to explore the opportunities for developing the medical tourism industry. A positive result from this study, led to the establishment of a task force to drive the mandate of a successful industry. The Medical Tourism Roadshow series was designed as the platform to promote this sector in Jamaica and throughout the United States.

18. WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR COLLABORATION WITH NORTH AMERICAN INTERESTS?

With North America being one of the largest source markets for medical tourists, research has identified significant interest from some US hospitals exploring Jamaica for satellite operations. Though this largely represents direct investments to Jamaica, plans are also being developed for the creation of business linkages at all levels within the industry.

Interested? Next Steps...

19. WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE IN JAMAICA'S DEVELOPING MEDICAL TOURISM INDUSTRY?

- **Medical Travel Planners:** Recommend Jamaica as a destination for medical treatments in dentistry, ophthalmology, cosmetic surgery, orthopedic, cardiology and bariatric surgeries, diagnostic and other procedures.
- **Joint Ventures:** Partner with existing private sector medical service providers to establish facilities in the treatment of international patients seeking healthcare.
- **Greenfield Development:** Create centres of excellence for quality and cost effective healthcare.

20. HOW CAN I CONNECT WITH PRACTITIONERS IN JAMAICA TO FURTHER EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES?

You may correspond with medical doctors in Jamaica through:

- The various medical associations: Medical Association of Jamaica, Association of Surgeons in Jamaica and Dental Association of Jamaica.
- **JAMPRO:** facilitates enquiries and connects you with the most suitable medical associations or facility.

21. I WANT TO VISIT AND EXPLORE FURTHER. WHO CAN GIVE ADVICE ABOUT WHICH DOCTORS AND/OR HOSPITALS TO VISIT WHILE IN JAMAICA?

JAMPRO's mandate is to assist business interests and facilitate investments to Jamaica. JAMPRO will work with travel planners, entrepreneurs, medical service providers and other interests, to plan an itinerary based on expressed needs. The agency will also guide projects from the development stages through to its implementation.



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