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The world is shrinking. Did you say what? What we mean by it is we are getting better connected and are less defined and bound by our geographic and national boundaries. The current economic downtrend has resulted in a marked decrease in benefits in most of the affected countries. Some of the consequences includes unemployment, loss of healthcare benefits or marked decrease in healthcare benefits. Despite the economic downtown the healthcare costs are still going up. This is mainly due to the hospitalization costs in the developed world. For example, the surgeon and anesthesiologist would make less than six thousand dollars in a surgery that would cost over \$50,000 after insurance price negotiations. Where would all this money go? The answer being the high cost of hospitalization has driven up the costs for many of the procedures requiring surgical intervention.

The same \$50,000 procedure after the insurance might cost over \$80,000 for the uninsured patient. When the patient cannot afford the insurance in the first place, how can one expect him to pay for such massive bills? This has led to skipping on the preventive care among many uninsured and under insured patients and have resulted in the increase of otherwise preventable surgical interventions. These factors have helped the medical tourism industry a lot. The patients are consumers first. A typical consumer generally shops around for the best price available and also tries to get some coupons on top of the best price. And how is this scenario any different? As mentioned before, the world is becoming a smaller place. Most of the products are coming from China. The consumer loves his country made products but don't have much a chance of what to buy because of complex market pressures. The same thing is happening in the field of medical tourism.

The motives for health tourism are different for patients in different countries. For example, some countries in the Middle East and many countries in Africa do not have facilities or expertise to carry out complex life saving surgeries. And many patients cannot afford the prices charged by western countries. And it is also a fact that obtaining a visa also poses significant problem to these patients. Hence the countries like India with enormous hospitals with world class standards and rack bottom prices have become the obvious choice. One would be surprised by the capabilities of these hospitals. Many American patients have commented that the facilities and the service have surpassed that of many American hospitals.

The corporate world is eagerly looking for a way to curb the healthcare costs. They are noticing that the healthcare costs are going up. They also notice that their employees are paying bigger portion of their salaries every year. But this has not resulted in increased care. On the contrary, one would notice that the benefits are constantly dropping with higher deductibles and out of pocket costs. Many employers are today receptive to the idea of incorporating medical tourism as one of the strategies to curb the problem of increasing medical costs. And some have already begun the pilot projects to encourage the employees to utilize medical tourism as one of the alternatives to bring down the costs. If utilized and implemented properly, this should translate in to significant savings in healthcare for the employers and employees alike.

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