

Press Release

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Find medical help in financially tough times

Web platform ONMEDIX helps in eight languages to find the best medical services abroad

Stuttgart, 16.02.2009 - Check up in Puerto Rico, hip replacement in India, new teeth in Hungary: worldwide more and more patients take their health care into their own hands. In order to get a better and in most cases a cheaper treatment the patients do not mind to travel to foreign countries.

According to Deloitte Touche 700,000 patients from the states have traveled in 2007 to seek medical treatment abroad. In the US employers are discontinuing their group health insurance because of the high costs. This trend will probably continue to rise as companies look for any possibility to cut costs in this present financial crisis.

This leaves the about 170 million underinsured individuals to find an affordable solution for their medical needs on their own.

Comparing prices, a hip replacement for example which costs in the US around \$44,000 will cost in India only about \$9,000.

In many countries like Mexico, Puerto Rico or India clinics certified after medical US standards are catering like luxury hotels for the special needs of their foreign patients.

ONMEDIX is a guide to medical service providers abroad and to the necessary information.

This multilingual web portal, which has been developed in cooperation with the German university of Hohenheim, will bring patients and medical service providers from all around the world together.

“To find in a foreign country a special treatment or a medical you can trust is not as easy as one would think,” states Julius Ehret one of the three founders of ONMEDIX. “If you search the Internet in English you will usually only get clinics that have an English homepage. But many very good clinics for example in Germany don’t provide an English Webpage.” For him this is only one of many reasons why there is a necessity for a multilingual Portal like ONMEDIX.

Growing market potential

Medical tourism goes in all directions, on one side for example are the US-Americans who travel abroad to seek treatment for less money. On the other side are wealthy people from Arabian countries looking for the very best, or Canadians who do not want to wait for month for surgery in their own country that travel to the United States.

In numbers, there will be in 2008 approximately 1.5 million patients traveling abroad spending about \$2 billion in treatment costs with yearly growth rate for the next succeeding years of approximately 100%, while there will be at least 400,000 patients traveling to the US spending close to \$5 billion for medical treatment.

Worldwide there will be \$50 billion spend for medical tourism in 2008 by 2012 the market will cross the 100 billion Dollar line.

“The internet plays a major role in this field”, states Mehmet Tosun responsible for the technical development of the ONMEDIX platform. “Research shows that at least 70% of people traveling for medical care have informed themselves about their place of treatment over the internet.”

International service in eight Languages

All this is already enough reason for the three founders to bridge a gap in the market. ONMEDIX offers its services to patients and medicals likewise. The platform could be called the “global yellow pages for medical tourism”. However, this is only part of the story: the main idea is, that the information of the medical service providers is being translated into eight languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Russian, Spanish and Turkish), partly automatically partly by professional translators. The Patients will find the medical treatment or medical institution in their proper language it does not matter if he uses Google.com or Google Arab. This helps greatly to build up trust of a patient into a foreign facility.

Something unique with this web platform is the great bandwidth: “from the States to India, from heart surgery to teeth replacements, from Asthma to skin diseases. There is no competitor of our knowledge who gives the medical service providers from all around the world the possibility to enter all their treatments in all the languages necessary to their customers,” states Halis Şahin, who is responsible for market research and administration of ONMEDIX. “But we offer the medical facilities further services, like the publication of special promotions, publication of papers on treatments or illnesses to name just a few”.

ONMEDIX has been awarded two major European innovation prizes: “EXIST” as well as “Young innovators” both consisting of money funds, giving the three founders financial independence for building the platform.

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