

Dental Tourism – the pitfalls - Articles - Smile Solutions

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dental surgeries in Australia is licensed and maintained. This means the units are calibrated to minimise the amount of radiation dosage a patient receives and the units are not leaking radiation. Also, at the design stage, our Department of Health ensures that all surgery walls are lead-lined to prevent radiation scatter. I am aware of a popular clinic in Thailand where up to 30 CT scans are taken each day in a small room adjacent to a surgery with no lead lining in the wall separating the two rooms. Two hours in that dental chair can involve 6 to 7 CT scans – emitting a radiation level equivalent to more than 250 chest X-rays.

3. Quality of care vs price Quality of specialists Although most overseas dental practices claim that their dentists are specialists, they are recognised as specialists only in accordance with the requirements of the country in which they are practising. Australian standards for specialisation are amongst the highest in the world. For example, an oral and maxillofacial surgeon in Australia must have completed a degree in general medicine to be eligible to enrol in their field of specialisation in Australia. This is not a requirement in other countries.

Price point and budget dentistry If it is cheap dentistry or budget dentistry that you seek, then why go overseas? Practices offering such services exist right here in Australia. There is no shortage of local practices that can match or at least effectively compete on price point. Most cost-cutting exercises within the business of dentistry are available all over the world, as true quality of materials, equipment and technique costs the same wherever you go.

Social media and patient testimonials For many third world countries dental tourism has a substantial financial benefit to the tourism trade of the country. Therefore a great deal of money is invested by local industry in promoting the country's dental services to tourists via social media. These bodies carefully manage negative reviews and actively encourage the writing of hundreds of positive reviews and testimonials. It is a widely known fact that many of these testimonials have been written by the business itself to showcase their services, rather than being genuine. By comparison, Australian dentists, bound as they are by legislation that forbids them to promote themselves through testimonials and positive reviews, do not receive the same favours. In Australia, the publication of testimonials and reviews is – appropriately – against the law, so as to protect the Australian consumer from deceptive and misleading advertising.

Dental Tourism is not unidirectional ... the forgotten phenomenon In our own version of dental tourism, quality local practices across Australia service thousands of international clients from all corners of the globe – mainly from the Middle East, Eastern Europe, the United Kingdom, South America, India and even Thailand – who, in an increasingly open world market, shun their local dental practices to seek out the best dental care available to them, right here in Australia. That's because Australian dentistry is considered internationally to be among the best, if not the best. There are still enough people in the world, including Australia, who live by the belief that, when it comes to their health and that of their family, only the best will do. So although budget dental practices are proliferating, and dental tourism to third world countries is becoming more prevalent, quality Australian practices unrelentingly aspiring to provide the best health care available are also prospering.

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