

Philippines

HEALTH & WELLNESS Travel

A Guide to World-Class Healthcare & Travel Destinations in the Philippines

We welcome your articles and comments. Email us at info@himcommunications.com
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WHEN Jim Sullivan from Australia went to the Philippines to get some dental work done, his expectations weren't too high. From his experience in his home country, the kind of dental work he was looking for usually takes weeks and cost a lot of money. Since Jim could only stay in the Philippines for three days, he estimated that all that could be done for him was a consultation and two teeth extractions.

Instead, what happened when he went to his Filipino dentist was, in Jim's opinion, nothing short of incredible. In three days, Jim was able to get his dental plates fitted and he was on a plane home with a set of dentures, top and bottom, absolutely thrilled over the results of the procedure—all at 70% less than the cost in Australia for exactly the same procedure.

It's best to hear about the experience in Jim's own words:

"Now comes the incredible bit... Friday he removed the teeth, took whatever [measurements were needed] on the remaining teeth, and advised that his driver would pick me up at 1pm on the Saturday for initial fitting of the plates.

"I was dumbfounded. To get plates made over in our country would take at least a week or more. So he fitted the plates on the Saturday afternoon... had me back at 11am on Monday to make adjustments and the final fitting.

"So I was on the plane Monday afternoon to come home with a mouth full of operational teeth.

World-Class Care... Truly Filipino



I'm still gob-smacked. Absolutely incredible. He did in 3 days what would take weeks over here and cost a hell of a lot more."

But that's not all. Jim was also grateful that his Filipino dentist gave him the time and attention he needed in order to feel comfortable and at ease considering that any trip to the dentist causes apprehension, since many, if not most of us associate such trips with pain.

The dentist that Jim went to is Dr. Joel Gutierrez, DMD, FAID, FICD, and fellow of the American Dental Association who has his clinic in Salcedo Village in Makati. It was Jim's very first time to have dental work done overseas. After Jim's initial consultation, he found out that Dr. Gutierrez "is very easy to get along with and explains every procedure fully, and at no time did I feel worried."

The five Cs

The experience of Jim Sullivan is a very good example and case study of what makes the Philippines an ideal health and wellness travel destination in the Asia-Pacific region. What happened to Jim Sullivan is not limited to foreign dental patients. Foreign patients who received other types of medical treatment in the Philippines have an experience similar to that of Jim Sullivan.

Some of us Filipinos, who naturally

Continued on page 4

Photo courtesy of The Medical City for "Philippines Heart of Asia" Travel Guide

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The Department of Tourism joins Philippine Daily Inquirer in welcoming to newsstands its exclusive new monthly supplement, "Philippines Health and Wellness Travel"!

Any first brings with it a certain excitement. In picking up this introductory edition, you, dear reader, have probably entertained the idea that the Philippines might just be the health and wellness haven you've been looking for. The following pages contain proof of that idea, proof that, indeed, achieving soundness in body and mind is more fun here in the Philippines.

Our natural wonders and top-notch services are attractive for sure, but tourists time and again have pointed to us fun-loving Filipinos as the clincher. We are why they, for wellness or for any other purpose, come and return. In proclaiming that "It's More Fun in the Philippines" and that we are "#1 for

Fun", we've just given the world a reason why ours is wellness mecca above all others.

It's now time to turn the page and discover a thing or two about world-class health and wellness services offered in and around these 7,107 islands. Enjoy reading, and eventually exploring our beautiful Philippines!

Mabuhay!

Ramon R. Jimenez, Jr.
Secretary



During the 1st Phil. Global Healthcare Forum, leaders displayed unity to continuously improve the Philippines' healthcare services for the country to capitalize on the growing trend of globalization in healthcare. Shown in photo are (from L to R): HealthCORE CEO Juris Umali-Soliman; PSQua president Dr. George Repique; PMA-CME Commission chairman Dr. Ramon Abarquez, Jr.; PhilHealth OIC & VP for Quality Assurance Group Dr. Francisco Soria; WHO Representative Dr. Woo-Jin Lew; DOH Usec. Teodoro Herbosa; Phil. Retirement Authority GM Veredigno Atienza; 1st Phil. Global Healthcare Forum Convenor Joyce Socao-Alumno; DOH Secretary Enrique Ona; DTI Usec. Cristino Panlilio; Professional Regulation Commission chairperson Hon. Teresita Manzala; Phil. Nurses Association president Dr. Teresita Barcelo; Phil. Dental Association president Dr. Roberto Tajonera; Phil. Council on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (PCAHO) president, Dr. Tomas Maramba; and Phil. Orthopedic Association vice president Dr. Geoffrey Batad.

Philippine Medical Tourism comes of age

There is growing consensus that the medical tourism sector is the next sunrise industry for the Philippines, after the much-heralded BPO sphere.

MEDICAL tourism (also known as medical travel, health tourism or global healthcare travel) provides significant economic and social benefits to the country. Visitors from the US, Australia, Canada and Europe avail of medical treatment, diagnostics and other services of hospitals and wellness centers, as well as patronize hotels and other tourist facilities, in lower health-cost locations including Asia and the Philippines.

It provides direct revenue infusion for the country, and likewise raises the capacity utilization of hospitals and other healthcare facilities, thus spurring greater economic activity and paving the way for better job opportunities for the country's physicians, nurses and other medical personnel.

Healthcare business intelligence firm Healthcore through its recently released Philippine Medical Tourism Compendium 2011: Facts, Figures

& Strategies estimates that the country earned a total of US\$ 1.30 billion from healthcare and wellness services from overseas foreign tourists and balikbayans who visited the country from the five-year period 2006 to 2010. There is growing consensus that the medical tourism sector is the next sunrise industry for the Philippines, after the much-heralded BPO sphere.

Comparative Advantage

Healthcore has projected that the Philippines has the potential to grab an additional share of as much as US\$ 1 billion in annual revenues in the global medical tourism market by 2018 or earlier if it puts in place attractive investment environment that will enable the country to expand its healthcare infrastructure, more open and liberal travel arrangements for medical tourists and better and more extensive international



marketing promotions programs.

This research cited that the Philippines has what it takes to make the Philippines a medical tourism destination. It cited the following strengths and advantages:

1. High level of quality in healthcare. The top tertiary hospitals have state-of-the-art medical and hospital facilities and are staffed by highly qualified medical consultants, doctors, nurses and other personnel. At least eight hospitals and clinics are now accredited by different international accreditation agencies.

2. Competitive cost of healthcare services. The cost of healthcare in the Philippines is generally lower than in most developed countries such as the US and Canada.

3. Large supply of competent

healthcare professionals. The Philippines boasts of world-class medical doctors and highly qualified nurses, therapists and medical technicians. The country is a major source of medical professionals to the global labor force.

4. English communication skill, and culture of compassion and service. These service parameters are suitable and highly in demand for serving the global market for health and wellness – the same competitive advantage that has made the Philippines one of the BPO providers.

5. Geographical proximity to countries such as Guam and Micronesia, Australia, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. Because of the proximity and the generally high healthcare costs, nationals from these countries can benefit from the high-quality medical and wellness service and the low transport and travel costs to the Philippines.

Government Support

The government has put in place investment incentives to attract more investments in building the country's healthcare infrastructure. Investment incentives offered by the Board of Investments (BOI) via the Omnibus Investments Code, and implemented via the Investment Priority Plan (IPP), including income tax holidays for the first four years of business operation, zero tariff on imported capital equipment, and preferential rate on local taxes (a 5% tax rate on gross sales in lieu of the prevailing 12% Value-Added Tax on

gross sales)

Trade promotion support include grants provided by the Export Development Fund (EDF), for foreign trade missions organized by the Bureau of Export Trade Promotion (BETP) and participation in international conferences, expos and trade events through the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (an attached office under the Department of Trade and Industry) and the Department of Tourism (DOT).

Seizing the Day for Philippine Medical Tourism

International research firm Deloitte, the study added, has identified the Philippines as one of the emerging players in the multi-billion dollar industry, which currently is dominated in Asia by Singapore, India, Malaysia and Thailand.

The medical and tourism sectors and other industry stakeholders should get their act together and to further develop broad-ranging strategies and facilitate the implementation of programs in the area of healthcare infrastructure, quality management and international accreditation, liberalization of visa restrictions for the medical traveler and international marketing and promotions to catapult the Philippines to the industry's elite circle.

The Philippine Medical Tourism Compendium 2011: Facts, Figures & Strategies is available through www.healthcore.com.ph. For inquiries, please call 9108030 or 0917-8918998.

WHY DO THEY COME TO PHILIPPINES FOR HEALTHCARE?

"Even if most of the women in LA are very open about cosmetic surgery, I felt that it was a cultural thing. I did not want people to know what I was doing since I'm half Asian. I enjoyed spa treatments during my stay (in the Philippines) and frequented shopping malls and restaurants. I was in the Philippines for a total of three weeks and enjoyed every minute of it.

I spent US\$5,000 for both surgeries. The level of costing made a difference and everything else that came along with it (patient care, follow ups) made it better. I saved probably US\$3,000 to 5,000

JULIANA HUSSIN
Los Angeles, California, USA
Courtesy of Belo Medical Group

"I have recently returned from my third overseas dental holiday in the Philippines. I had all my teeth crowned and I am more than happy with the final result. My total cost for dental treatment and three holidays (airfare, accommodation and spending money) was about US\$18,000. To get all my teeth crowned in Australia, I was quoted US\$50,000-60,000 just for dental services. So I have saved that much money, as well as having three memorable holidays which include golfing, staying at the beach (in between dental treatment) and a fun night life.

The dentist in the Philippines was professional at all times and had a genuine caring manner. It was obvious from day one that she cared more about my well-being and my teeth, rather than how much money she could make (a complete contrast to experiences I've had with Australian dentists). I'm only sorry I did not know about this many years ago before I paid a fortune to Australian dentists for substandard treatment."

KEN JONES
Brisbane, Australia
(courtesy of Meditour)

"A medical concierge made my hectic trip to the Philippines convenient and comfortable. I am most impressed with their staff who were there for me all the time (...even in the wee hours when I had to call to re-schedule). They could take care of all arrangements for medical, dental, derma treatments and procedures, recreation and travel accommodation, or what have you.

MALOU ESTRADA
Jacksonville, Florida, USA
(courtesy of Health & Leisure)

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

In this maiden issue of "Philippines Health and Wellness Travel", we welcome you to the possibilities open for those who seek quality, competent, world-class and caring experiences in health and wellness.

This section is dedicated to promote, not only our outstanding hospitals, clinics and state-of-the-art healthcare facilities, but also our distinctly Filipino touch and natural capacity to be friendly and happy, capped with our amazing sceneries and weather.

In the Philippines, medical and health travelers not only get healthy, recover, relax and find well-being—they also become happier. We hope you will join us on this 12-month journey and further hope to welcome you soon in our doorsteps.

Truly, to be healthy is more fun in the Philippines. Come and be well under our care!

Comparative Table of Treatment Prices in the Philippines vs Other Countries

COUNTRY	Spa Services (Massage)	Aesthetic (Nose Lift)	Eye Care (LASIK Eye Surgery)	Dental Care (Dental Bridge)	Elective Surgery (Heart Bypass)
US	\$100 - 200	\$4,000 - 12,000	\$3,000 - 5,000	\$5,500	\$90,000 - 144,000
India	\$150 - 200	\$850 - 2,600	\$1,200 - 1,700	\$500 - 780	\$8,500 - 10,500
Philippines	\$20 - 120	\$400 - 900	\$1,000 - 1,500	\$360 - 600	\$11,000 - 17,800
Thailand	\$45 - 100	\$650 - 1,200	\$650 - 900	\$280 - 500	\$11,000 - 29,000
Singapore	US\$100-300	\$3,500 - 4,500	\$1,000 - 3,400	\$1,000 - 3,000	\$16,000 - 25,000
Malaysia	\$75 - 230	\$2,000 - 2,500	\$1,700 - 2,400	\$1,000 - 3,000	\$10,500 - 17,000
Mexico	\$100 - 300	\$3,900 - 4,000	\$650 - 900	\$235 - 440	\$30,000 - 33,000

Source: Philippine Medical Tourism Compendium 2011, HealthCORE

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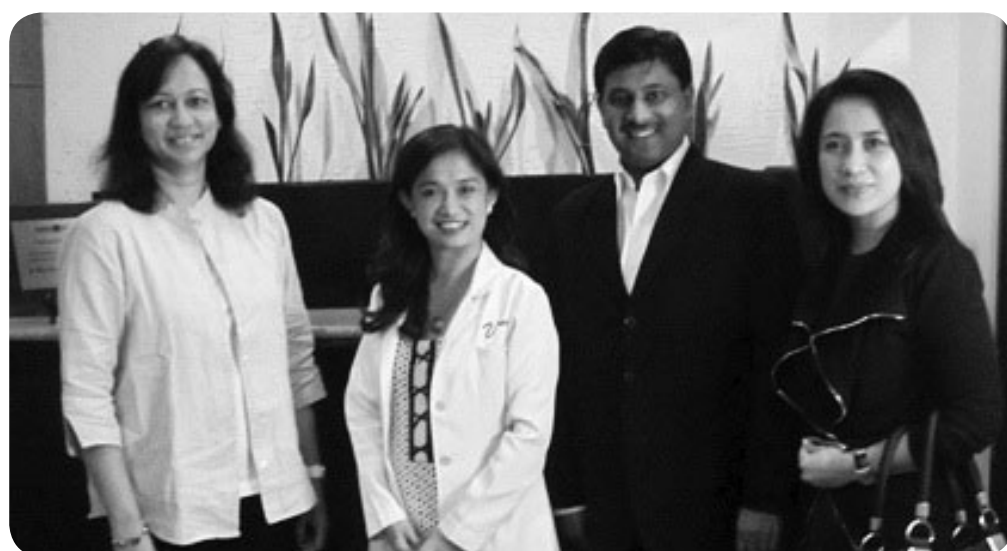
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[illegible]



Do you see distractions in your field of vision?



If flashes of light, floaters or shadows appear in your vision you might be suffering from a

Retinal Tear or Detachment

What is retinal detachment?

Retinal detachment is a disease that most often results from tears or breaks in the retina. These tears cause light-sensitive cells to pull away from their normal position causing vision to be darkened and distorted.

Tears or breaks in the retina may result from thinning and deterioration due to aging. They may also occur when the vitreous, which is attached to the retina, shrinks and pulls part of the retina along with it, leaving tears or holes. Shrinkage of the vitreous may be caused by aging, abnormal growth of the eye, inflammation or injury. Eye diseases such as tumors, inflammations, or diabetic complications may also cause retinal detachment.

The chances of developing a retinal detachment are greater if a patient is severely nearsighted, has a family history of retinal detachment, has had cataract surgery, or has suffered severe trauma to the eye or head.

Early symptoms of a retinal break and detachment include seeing sudden flashes of light, floaters (floating black spots), and what look like smoke or cobwebs. A dark curtain or a shadow obstructing one's vision is already a warning sign of retinal detachment -- a case requiring immediate professional care.

How is retinal detachment treated?

If there is a break in the retina (tears or holes) without retinal detachment, the ophthalmologist may perform laser procedures to seal the break. If retinal breaks lead to retinal detachment, the condition may have to be treated by major surgery.

Retinal detachment requires immediate treatment to prevent total loss of vision. It is best to see your ophthalmologist right away if you have symptoms of retinal tear or detachment.

The Retina



The retina is the delicate inner lining at the back of the eye. It acts like film in a camera. When light strikes the retina, it captures the image via a complex chain of chemical reactions that changes light rays into electrical impulses. The impulses are then transmitted to the brain through the optic nerve and one then "sees" the captured image. If any part of the delicate retina is damaged, some degree of vision will be lost.

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LIST OF MEDICAL TOURISM PROVIDERS IN THE PHILIPPINES

HOSPITALS

Asian Hospital and Medical Center
Baypointe Hospital and Medical Center
Cardinal Santos Medical Center
Capitol Medical Center
Cebu Doctors University Hospital
Chong Hua Hospital
Davao Doctors Hospital
Las Piñas Doctors Hospital
Makati Medical Center
Manila Adventist Medical Center
Manila Doctors Hospital
Medical Center Manila
Palawan Adventist Hospital
Perpetual Succour Hospital
Tagaytay Hospital and Medical Center
Sta. Rosa Hospital and Medical Center
Parañaque Doctors Hospital
St. Frances Cabrini Medical Center
St. Luke's Medical Center
The Medical City
University of Santo Tomas Hospital
World Citi Medical Center

PHILIPPINE CENTERS FOR SPECIALIZED HEALTHCARE

East Avenue Medical Center
Lung Center of the Philippines
National Kidney and Transplant Institute
Philippine Children's Medical Center
Philippine Heart Center

SPECIALTY CLINICS

American Eye Center
Asian Eye Institute
AT Reyes Dermatology and Laser Center
Belo Medical Group
Eye Republic Ophthalmology Clinic
Home Health Care
The Nazareth Formation House-Bob
Garon Therapeutic Community Center
Noli Center for Alzheimer's and Elderly Care
Self Enhancement for Life Foundation, Inc.

For complete listing, please visit www.philippinesheartofasia.ph.
To know the guidelines how to become a provider, please visit www.healthcare.com.ph.

SERVICES UNDER PHILIPPINE MEDICAL TOURISM PROGRAM

- Executive Check-up
- Diagnostic & Laboratory Technologies
- Eye Care and Sight Restoration
- Dental Care, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
- Aesthetic, Dermatology, Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery
- Multi-Disciplinary Weight Management Care
- Wellness Treatments
- Cardiovascular Care
- Cancer Care and Stem Cell Therapy
- Joint Replacement
- Retirement



STATE-OF-THE-ART technology add to the competence and efficiency of hospitals and clinics.

World-Class Care... Truly Filipino

From page 1

take our health care services for granted, might be wondering what all the excitement is about. So let's look at Jim's story and find out what makes foreign patients so happy after they receive medical treatment in the Philippines.

Caring. Filipinos are nurturers. From childhood, we are raised with the capacity to care about those who need it the most. It's no surprise that Filipino nurses are sought-after around the world—patients love them because they are friendly and caring. A friendly, caring attitude from a nurse or doctor is proven to boost the immune system and improve patient outcomes.

Competence. Filipino medical professionals go through rigorous and extensive training before they are allowed to practice their profession. Filipino doctors are board certified and are, in general, highly-motivated to pursue continuing medical education, locally and overseas, throughout their professional life. Our best doctors are affiliated with international medical organizations and work in tertiary hospitals that adhere to global standards.

Compassion. As Filipinos, we are not just friendly and caring—we are compassionate. Compassion is one of the hallmarks of our culture—we have a deeply set ability for empathy and we act on this in order to help those in need. Our medical professionals are imbued with this quality as well. Take note that Jim felt this compassionate care not only from his dentist but even from the dentist's driver and clinic staff.

Communication. Much has been

said about Filipinos' proficiency in the English language—not all of us may have perfect grammar but we still communicate in English better than most of our Asian neighbors. Plus, some of us who received better education and exposure may even know English better than its native speakers.

But that's not the kind of communication we are referring to. Filipinos love to talk. Not in a mindless chatter but out of a genuine, authentic desire to connect and share with others. It's in the Filipino's nature to find joy in communicating and connecting with all sorts of people—just look at how we have become the SMS (texting) capital of the world. We love to reach out. We want to relate to others, even foreigners. We form relationships because it's in our nature to share.

This kind of communication is what Jim Sullivan experienced with his Filipino dentist, who took the time to explain the dental procedures and thus, eased the former's anxiety. This kind of communication is, no doubt, what Jim experienced in relating to his dentist's driver, clinic staff and many other Filipinos he may have met during his short visit.

Cost-effective. Obviously, the relatively lower cost of health care in the Philippines—in comparison to other, more developed countries—is a big factor that attracts foreign patients to come here. Still, without the other C's in this list, it's doubtful that these foreign patients would have such a positive, wonderful experience. After all, if cost is the end-all and be-all, patients have alternatives to the Philippines.

Furthermore, the computation of cost



AUSTRALIAN medical traveler Jim Sullivan with dentist Dr. Joel Gutierrez and his assistant Riza Pigar



COMPETENCE, care, compassion and communication skills are some of the strengths and advantages of the Filipino healthcare professionals.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MEDICAL CITY AND ST. LUKE'S MEDICAL CENTER FOR PHILIPPINES THE HEART OF ASIA TRAVEL GUIDE

HOSPITALS and clinics have international patient centers equipped to cater to any nationality. Some have concierge services offering translation and tour packages.



does not refer only to the actual price of the treatment. The cost of medical and health travel to the Philippines includes airfare, accommodations, transportation, food and, significantly, the amount of time they spend in the country to await treatment and begin recovery.

If time is money, then foreign patients in the United States, Canada, Australia and Europe are spending astronomical amounts on their health care. A dental appointment in a developed country like Canada or the United States, for example can require that a patient wait for weeks or even months. This is so unlike the Philippines where one can be a walk-in patient at a dental clinic.

Long waiting times for doctors' appointments are true for other medical treatments in developed countries. Patients there not only have to wait months, sometimes years, before they get treatment—they also have to pay very high prices for these treatments.

For example, a basic dental check-up may cost from US\$300 to US\$500 in the foreign patient's home country. In the Philippines, that same consultation costs about US\$50.

A general medical check-up in the United States costs US\$5,000. In the Philippines, it would cost US\$500 to US\$1,000. An aesthetic procedure like breast augmentation would cost around US\$5,000 while in the Philippines, the same treatment would cost around US\$1,500 to US\$2,500.

Towards global health care

The Philippines has much to offer the world as health care becomes more globalized. Yet, the benefits are not one-way. Transforming the Philippines into a hub of health and wellness travel will result in more income for the national economy as well as more jobs for Filipino medical professionals and those in the travel and service industries. Healthcare standards in the Philippines will also improve even more, as hospitals, clinics and spas adopt international standards.

Health and wellness travel in the Philippines is a big topic. The encouraging stories like Jim Sullivan's are numerous and inspiring. There are so many good stories and so much information to be had. This is why this special section, aptly titled "Philippines Health and Wellness Travel" has been created. This section is a source of credible and reliable information for all stakeholders in health and wellness travel—from patients to healthcare professionals to healthcare facilities, to local governments, national officials and policy-makers.

This is just the beginning. Thank you for joining us in this journey towards health and wellness for everyone, Filipinos and healthcare travelers alike.