

PROMED's Information Kit

The Council for the International Promotion of Costa Rica Medicine-PROMED, is the private not-for-profit organization that coordinates the efforts carried out to ensure the quality of services provided by the private health industry in Costa Rica and their international promotion, with the purpose of consolidating the country as a center for global medicine and a major destination for medical tourism.

See more...

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Institutional Summary

The Council for the International Promotion of Costa Rica Medicine-PROMED, is the private not-for-profit organization that coordinates the efforts carried out to ensure the quality of services provided by the private health industry in Costa Rica and their international promotion, with the purpose of consolidating the country as a center for global medicine and a major destination for medical tourism.

This organization was born out of the need by both the private sector and the State to supervise the quality of services rendered to medical tourism patients with the purpose of guaranteeing the sustainable growth of this industry.

To realize this goal, PROMED develops regulatory standards and promotes the certification of service providers, with the support of international bodies and the training of local certifiers.

PROMED's other roles are to:

- Secure Costa Rica's position internationally as a medical tourism and retirement destination based on its high-quality medical services and the hospitality sector that already distinguishes the country.
- Open access to new international markets by comprehensively

promoting its health and medical tourism.

- Support the efforts of domestic and international health authorities in standardizing medical services.
- Participate actively in the development of national strategies for promoting and attracting investment that benefits both the tourism and health industries.
- Educate and support the development of a more highly professional and specialized human capital within both the tourism and health industries; thus improving their global competitiveness.

PROMED brings together health service providers, health professionals, tourism service providers, academia, and other marketers of goods and services related to health and tourism.

As a reference body in the medical tourism sector, PROMED drives the coordination between the private and public sectors to attain Costa Rica's international consolidation, and it does so through its private role in the medical tourism cluster.

In the same way, it leads the implementation of the actions necessary to strengthen the offer of health tourism services to reach greater international competitiveness.

FAQ about PROMED and their answers

What does PROMED do?

PROMED implements specific policies to help ensure that health services offered to international patients coming to Costa Rica comply with defined parameters, helping assure they meet international standards of quality.

In addition, PROMED promotes Costa Rica as a world-class destination for medical tourism and as a high-quality medical services center.

Who does it group together?

- Public and private hospitals
- Specialty clinics and physician offices

- Businesses related to health and wellness
- Health professionals
- Boarding and lodging companies
- Travel agencies
- Tour operators who specialize in medical tourism
- Transportation companies
- Public and private universities
- Medical and pharmaceutical research centers
- Training centers with careers related to health and well-being
- Pharmaceutical companies
- Manufacturers of medical equipment
- Providers of healthcare industry materials
- Dental laboratories
- Pharmacies
- Clinical laboratories
- Medical tourism infrastructure developers

How does it carry out its work?

PROMED's decision making process is composed of a Board of Directors that makes final decisions, and six specialized committees: Marketing, Regulations, Ethics, Legal, Admissions, and Education; each of which is charged with developing policies and procedures to recommend to the Board.

Who made up PROMED?

- UNIBE Clinic
- Costa Rica Medical Holding
- Medical Services of Costa Rica
- MED Travel Costa Rica
- Health Choices Costa Rica
- Homewatch Caregivers
- CIMA Hospital
- Clínica Bíblica Hospital
- UCIMED
- La Católica Hospital Hotel
- Grupo Casa Conde
- Safer Medical Group

Where does PROMED concentrate its efforts?

In high-potential niche markets such as:

- Medical treatments and surgical procedures
 - Dentistry

- Ophthalmology
 - Plastic and aesthetic surgery
 - Urology
 - Cardiovascular
 - Orthopedics
 - Otolaryngology (ENT)
 - Bariatric surgery
 - General surgery
 - Postoperative care, physical therapy and rehabilitation
 - Checkups
- Care for retirees
- Wellness
 - Thermal centers
 - Spas
 - Beauty centers
 - General wellness centers
- Tourist assistance- safe destination

Medical tourism X-ray

1. Definition

Medical tourism is the practice of traveling to another country to receive professional medical attention at a cost lower than in the country of origin. This includes both elective procedures and specialized surgeries.

2. Main medical tourism destinations

- Costa Rica
- Mexico
- Panama
- Brazil
- Hungary
- India
- Thailand
- South Korea
- Taiwan
- Singapore
- Malaysia

- South Africa
- United Arab Emirates

3. Relevant figures in medical tourism

- The medical tourism industry grosses about US\$60 billion worldwide.
- In 2010, the global bill will rise to US\$100 billion per year.
- It is projected that by 2015, the United States will spend over 20% of its annual GDP on medical services.
- By 2015, the potential market in the United States will include 220 million individuals over the age of 50.
- Currently, nearly 11,000 individuals turn 50 daily.
- Presently, 47 million Americans do not have health insurance or are under-insured.
- 108 million Americans do not have dental insurance.
- In 2007, an estimated 750,000 Americans traveled to another country for medical attention.
- It is estimated that in 2010 over 6 million Americans will travel abroad to get medical attention.

Opportunities and advantages

Medical tourism represents a great business opportunity for Costa Rica; one that is accentuated by the advantages that the country already possesses.

Advantages of Costa Rica

- Strategic location in relation to its principal target markets.
- Political and economical stability.
- High quality-of-life standards.
- Hospitals that are internationally accredited by the Joint Commission International (www.jointcommissioninternational.org).

- Use of state-of-the-art technology.
- Health professionals who are internationally recognized for their skills.
- Internationally renowned tourist destination.

Opportunities for Costa Rica

- The medical tourist spends on average 5 times more than the vacationing visitor.
- In 2008, an estimated 25,000 medical tourists traveled to Costa Rica.
- The United States and Canada are the main source of Costa Rica's medical tourists.
- The average stay of medical tourists who come to Costa Rica is 11 days.
- The most common medical services provided to medical tourists are:
 - Dental work – 36%
 - Surgeries – 22%
 - Medical treatments – 14%
 - Aesthetic surgeries – 12%

Benefits of Medical Tourism for Costa Rica

- Higher direct foreign investment and services' exportation.
- More and higher quality opportunities for Costa Rican health professionals.
- Higher earnings for the health and tourism industries and for their associated value chains.
- Continuous improvement of healthcare standards.
- Internationally competitive prices.
- Development and growth of social health projects.

