Accreditation Aids Choice for Dental and Medical Tourism in Costa Rica

Timothy Morales  February 21, 2014

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(Newswire.net -- February 21, 2014) Lake Geneva, WI -- Anyone investigating having dental work done outside the U.S. has probably seen the term “international accreditation”. But few realize what the designation really means and how valuable a tool the accreditation can be when choosing an out-of-country provider.

In Costa Rica, AAAHC (Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Healthcare Inc.), and AAAASF (American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities Inc.), both headquartered in the Chicago suburbs, have accredited dental and ambulatory surgery clinics to high standards of professionalism and safety. Joint Commission International (JCI) provides accreditation for larger private hospitals in the country. The accreditations they grant are the first step in choosing providers for medical tourism professionals and patients alike.

Costa Rican Medical Care Inc., a medical and dental tourism facilitator working exclusively in Costa Rica, finds international accreditation a valuable tool for choosing providers for its patients. “Becoming accredited and maintaining that accreditation signifies a commitment to quality and safety that is measured and monitored to a specific standard of excellence. It tells me that a clinic has pride in professionalism at the highest level” said Viki Morales, Patient Services Director of Costa Rican Medical Care, Inc. “Since our company’s inception more than six years ago, we have recognized the importance of a standard of excellence that benefits not only the patients but also the reputation of the excellent medical and dental providers in Costa Rica. While we have our own extensive screening process, accreditation tells us and the patient that they will be treated with high safety protocols and quality materials and equipment, and that the professionals providing the service have the proper training and certification in their specialty. It is far more reliable than just reading glowing recommendations on a website or message board. Since standards must be maintained and results reported, there is the assurance of ongoing measurable quality”, said Morales.

According to AAAHC’s website concerning patient care standards (http://www.aaahc.org/en/my-care/), the accreditation process looks at facilities, materials, care protocols, professional development, patient records, review by peers and much more before granting accreditation. In addition, clinics are surveyed in person by examiners at least every three years.

On their website, AAAHC also provides a space for a patient to comment on an accredited clinic. This, according to Morales, addresses the common fear of patients considering a medical or dental tourism experience. “Patients always worry about what will happen if the work is not satisfactory—‘how I can I have recourse from an out-of-country provider where the laws are different’? The ability to have an independent third party monitoring the situation provides a level of comfort for them and also for the provider in case of a conflict. Strict review policies are in place and patient satisfaction policies are in writing at accredited clinics”.

If you’re considering a medical or dental tourism trip or know someone who is, the seal of international accreditation
can provide a good place to start in the search for a qualified professional. For more information on medical or dental care in Costa Rica, contact Costa Rican Medical Care, 866-210-4040 or visit www.costaricanmedicalcare.com.

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