

SOUTH AFRICA A FIRM GLOBAL FAVOURITE FOR CHEAPER MEDICAL PROCEDURES

- **Medical tourism to South Africa up 256% in past two years**
- **Patients coming from as far as the UK, Australia and the US**
- **Dental Implants the most popular treatment for international patients, with enquiries up 222% in past year alone**
- **Overseas enquiries for Breast Implants more than tripled (257%) in past year**
- **Liposuction in the US almost 3 times more expensive than in South Africa**

Monday 22 September 2014 - South Africa is quickly becoming a top destination for medical tourism, with patients coming from as far as Ireland and Canada to get cheaper procedures, according to a new research by private healthcare search engine WhatClinic.com. Clinics here have received over 6,000 enquiries from overseas patients in the past year alone, and the country is one of the top 10 medical tourism hotspots for Britons, Australians and Americans.

Many patients from surrounding African countries such as Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia and Mozambique are looking at South Africa for medical procedures, due to a higher quality of care in the country. But the research also found that people are coming from as far as the UK, Australia, and the US to undergo surgery in South Africa. Britons are the number 3 overseas patients after Batswana and Zimbabweans, with enquiries from the UK up 72% in the past year.

In a survey of more than 532 clinics all over South Africa, it was revealed that patients were predominantly travelling to South Africa for dental and plastic surgery

procedures. Overseas enquiries for dental treatments have gone up 159% in the past year alone, and enquiries for plastic surgery procedures are up 115%.

Patients can save as much as 70% on the cost of their medical treatments, which is one of the many reasons for the growth in medical tourism. Coupled with the lure of luxury holidays and the expertise of medical professionals - it's no surprise that the market is booming.

According to WhatClinic.com, the most popular treatment for overseas patients is Dental Implants, with Australian demand soaring by 453%. The procedure costs on average 27,989 ZAR (2,813 AUD) in Australia, while it only costs on average 58,793 ZAR in South African clinics, which is more than three times cheaper.

Breast Implants come in a close second, with Brits' enquiries up 657% in the past year alone. The surgery costs on average 3,783 GBP (67,114 ZAR) in the UK, and is approximately 50% cheaper in South Africa where the average cost is 33,748 ZAR.

Liposuction has also seen a massive rise in demand from medical tourism patients, with enquiries from Americans up 300% in the past 12 months. The procedure costs an average of 6,047 USD (64,703 ZAR) in the US and South African countries will charge about three times less, with an average fee of 21,694 ZAR.

Other popular treatments for overseas patients include Tummy Tuck (up 421% in the past year), Rhinoplasty (287%), Dental Crowns (121%), Facelift (229%), Dentures (196%) and But lifts (950%).

The table below shows the ten most popular treatments for medical tourism patients, based on enquiries from the past 12 months, and the increase in enquiries over the past year:

Top 10 most popular procedures	Increase in enquiries
Dental Implants	222%
Breast Implants	257%
Liposuction	71%
Breast Reduction	83%
IVF - In Vitro Fertilisation	24%
Tummy Tuck	421%
Scar Removal	91%
Rhinoplasty	287%
AI - Artificial Insemination	49%
Dental Crowns	121%

The table below shows the top ten countries of patients that are coming to South Africa for medical procedures and the increase in enquiries from those countries over the past year:

Top 10 countries of medical tourists	Increase in enquiries
Botswana	148%
Zimbabwe	94%
UK	72%
Zambia	117%
Australia	149%
US	96%
Mozambique	156%
Namibia	139%
Nigeria	44%
Tanzania	246%

South Africa has also seen a growing demand for Fertility treatments, with overseas enquiries up 122% in the past year for a Fertility Specialist Consultation, and up 24% for In Vitro Fertilisation procedures, which can be half the cost in South Africa than elsewhere.

Caelen King, CEO of WhatClinic.com, comments:

“South Africa is fast becoming one of the top destinations for medical tourism among patients in the UK and overseas. International patients can make massive savings when we compare average prices. South Africa offers a wealth of activities for visitors, and many clinics are putting together packages for patients that may include safari, spa trips and golf outings, to enjoy before and after treatments. Medical tourism in South Africa is a growth area, and is driving investment, job creation and market growth. However, it is important to ensure that overseas patients are fully informed about recovery times, possible risks and insurance requirements so that they can get the best possible outcome from their visit.”

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About WhatClinic.com

WhatClinic.com is a clinic comparison site that lists over 100,000 clinics globally. In 2013 15.7 million people visited the site to find, compare and book treatments across a wide range of elective, self-pay medical treatments. WhatClinic.com’s mission is to give the patient, as an empowered consumer, access to all the information they need to make an informed choice, including price, availability and reviews. WhatClinic.com was founded in 2007 by tech entrepreneur Caelen King, and is in operation in 127 countries.