



## **NEW AMA GUIDELINES ON MEDICAL TOURISM**

The AMA advocates that employers, insurance companies, and other entities that facilitate or incentivize medical care outside the U.S. adhere to the following principles:

- (a) Medical care outside of the U.S. must be voluntary.
- (b) Financial incentives to travel outside the U.S. for medical care should not inappropriately limit the diagnostic and therapeutic alternatives that are offered to patients, or restrict treatment or referral options.
- (c) Patients should only be referred for medical care to institutions that have been accredited by recognized international accrediting bodies (e.g., the Joint Commission International or the International Society for Quality in Health Care).
- (d) Prior to travel, local follow-up care should be coordinated and financing should be arranged to ensure continuity of care when patients return from medical care outside the US.
- (e) Coverage for travel outside the U.S. for medical care must include the costs of necessary follow-up care upon return to the U.S.
- (f) Patients should be informed of their rights and legal recourse prior to agreeing to travel outside the U.S. for medical care.
- (g) Access to physician licensing and outcome data, as well as facility accreditation and outcomes data, should be arranged for patients seeking medical care outside the U.S.
- (h) The transfer of patient medical records to and from facilities outside the U.S. should be consistent with HIPAA guidelines.
- (i) Patients choosing to travel outside the U.S. for medical care should be provided with information about the potential risks of combining surgical procedures with long flights and vacation activities.