



Good Health

Why more and more Britons are choosing surgery abroad No waiting lists. Spotless hospitals. Brilliant after-care.

INCREASING numbers of people are choosing to go abroad for surgery — encouraged by cheap air fares, lower surgery costs, lower incidences of MRSA and daunted by long NHS waiting lists and the spiralling cost of private treatment in the UK. Many countries also have state-of-the-art hospitals

and highly-qualified surgeons — so it's no wonder that in the past decade medical tourism has become a multi-billion-pound industry.

KNEE SURGERY: POLAND

Why: With prices between a half and a third of similar treatment in the UK, orthopaedic procedures such as knee surgery are becoming increasingly popular for medical tourists from Britain. Polish surgeons use the same Johnson & Johnson DePuy prostheses as are widely used in the UK. In addition, the Jagiellon University Orthopaedic Hospital in Krakow also offers an excellent physiotherapy unit where patients can stay for several weeks, providing much more extensive treatment than the seven to ten days generally given both privately and on the NHS in Britain.

Why not: Although Polish hospitals are proficient, they're not up to the standards of Belgium, France or

Germany. Not all staff speak English, so you may need a translator.

How: Barbara Thurgood & Co, Medical Services offers a 28-day package to the Jagiellon University Orthopaedic Hospital, including flights, door-to-door escorted service, English-speaking coordinators and all operation, accommodation and physiotherapy costs. Contact 020 8651 5443 or visit www.barbarathurgood.com

Cost: £6,750 (per knee) for a knee replacement operation, £8,750 for a knee revision (repairing or replacing earlier implants).

Down time: One month.

UK cost: Knee replacement £12,000-£17,000; knee revision £15,000-£20,000.

NHS waiting time: Up to 12 months.

Barbara Thurgood & Co

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