

Ecuador Health Care

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One of the most important issues we have when considering a move to another country is health care and the quality thereof. When considering Ecuador we have already resolved other issues such as cost of living, government stability, cultural tolerance, etc. The health care industry in Ecuador is state-of-the-art. With doctors versed on all the latest procedures (including cutting edge procedures introduced from Europe). This applies to physicians and dentists.

I would like to relate a true life incident that occurred on our latest visit to Ecuador in September 2008. I was joining my wife who had been in Ecuador a few weeks overseeing our Ecuador Real Estate projects. I arrived for a week accompanied by a friend of ours who will retire soon and was considering Ecuador for a retirement country. It was his first visit to the country. After spending the first night in Quito, we stayed at a friend's place in the community of San Miguel in Cotacachi. The following evening my wife went to bed early complaining of nausea and upset stomach. She had been going full speed every day when I arrived and I assumed it had all caught up with her. By around 11 pm she was very sick running a temperature of 102 with chills and extreme nausea. Our friend called a local Dr. Ibarra at home just as he was going to bed. He came out to the house (are any of you old enough to remember "house calls" in the U.S.?), and did a thorough examination. He then administered an injection that brought her fever to normal after 15 minutes. The nausea and chills also subsided. He then made a trip to his office for antibiotics and other meds and returned a second time with medication instructions. All this special treatment cost \$40 U.S. He was very courteous and kind despite us rousing him from bed. This is typical of our experiences with medical services in the country. Most of the physicians are trained in the U.S. minus the bedside manner instilled in most doctors here.

The following evening guess what happened. Our friend came down with the same symptoms. He is a very healthy 55 year old marathon runner who never gets ill. This occurred in the middle of the night around midnight. We called the same doctor who again came out (repeat of last night). Had him feeling right as rain in no time. I joked with the doctor that I wouldn't be calling him late tomorrow (fingers crossed). Again a \$40 charge for all this special care. My point is that health care here is 21st century but administered with the friendly bedside manners of the 1950's. Back when the family doctor was a "part of the family". We can put a big positive checkmark next to affordable quality available health care on our list of why Ecuador is a great choice of residency.

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