

# Planet Hospital promotes medical tourism

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A California couple is matching up U.S. residents willing to travel abroad with overseas hospitals offering top care at bargain basement prices.

Valerie Capeloto and her husband Rudy Acharya established Planet Hospital after an experience in Thailand taught the couple foreign healthcare can be excellent, the Los Angeles Daily News reports.

Valerie, who suffers from lupus, received such good care during an emergency hospitalization in Thailand that she began to share her story with friends.

Of great importance was the fact that the bill for her three-day hospital stay was only \$411.

Realizing U.S. residents might be willing to travel abroad for medical care, Valerie and her husband set about establishing partnerships with 20 hospitals in eight countries.

"People are discovering that going overseas is a viable option," Acharya says.

With 40 million Americans lacking medical insurance, healthcare economists believe medical tourism is a reasonable option for some people, the Times said.

One California man who lacks health insurance traveled to Belgium for

hip replacement surgery that cost half as much as it would have in the United States.

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