

Reconstructive surgery international trips are cost effective and sustainable

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(HealthDay)—International trips for specialty plastic surgeries can be

cost-effective or very cost-effective for several conditions, according to a study published in the September issue of *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery*.

Jacob S. Nasser, of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and colleagues gathered data on trips by the organization ReSurge International to low- and middle-income countries for surgeries between 2014 and 2017. The authors collected data on trip information, cost, and clinical characteristics of patients, and measured cost-effectiveness using the cost per disability-adjusted life year (DALY) as defined using World Health Organization (WHO) Choosing Interventions That Are Cost-Effective criteria.

A total of 756 patients participated in 22 medical trips to eight countries during the study period. The researchers found that based on WHO standards, 21 out of the 22 trips qualified as cost-effective or very cost-effective. Approximately 1,720 DALYs were averted by the trips, and the [cost-effectiveness](#) of the trips varied from \$52 to \$11,410 per DALY. The average number of DALYs averted was greatest for patients with malignancy-related surgical conditions, cleft lip and/or palate, and hand conditions. The total economic benefit for the 22 surgical trips was \$9,795,384.

"Moving forward, other plastic [surgery](#) outreach organizations must implement a policy to attempt to alleviate as much disability as possible when performing surgical trips," the authors write. "Economic analyses will help provide policymakers with the necessary information to develop an [effective strategy](#) to decrease cost and improve the outcomes of the interventions performed in low- and middle-income countries."

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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