

Medical Matters

Photo by Ed Hill

The new hospital was designed by Devereux of London.

Nobody plans to have a medical emergency while away on vacation, or a business trip. Unfamiliar medical facilities and protocols are more than just unnerving when you are faced with an illness or accident.

Therefore it's not surprising that many travelers check out what's available, medically speaking, before they get on that plane to paradise.

The Turks and Caicos have had an excellent network of government and private practitioners for decades, but today we can offer even more medical support. Two state of the art hospitals opened their doors in April 2010, one on Providenciales and the other on Grand Turk.

They are staffed and operated by InterHealth Canada. In conjunction with the new, mandatory National Health Insurance Plan, these hospitals provide extremely affordable medical care to all who work and live in the TCI.

Of course, if you're a visitor, you too can avail yourself of these fine new hospitals, but you'll have to pay more than the \$10.00 per visit required of Islanders.

The Cheshire Hall Medical Centre on Provo offers CT and MRI scans, mammography, ultrasound, all general radiological services and a full laboratory. The twenty-bed facility also has a major trauma room equipped with defibrillators and resuscitation monitoring. Although there is no Intensive Care Unit, the high dependency unit, which is one step down from ICU, is equipped with monitors, ventilators and staff trained in intensive care procedure.

People having too much fun sometimes take a fall, and when they do, things sometimes break. The Cheshire Hall Medical Centre has a full time orthopedic surgeon, trained in Canada, to set your bones, and mend your breaks.

The hospitals have also established a very good relationship with the American Air Ambulance Service, and can airlift critical patients, including newborns and premature babies, in especially designed incubators, to the USA within hours.

That pretty much takes care of the major emergencies a visitor might experience, from heart attack to major injuries. But there are other reasons why you may want to visit the Medical Centre.

If you are recovering from an injury or illness, what better place to recuperate than in the sunny Caribbean? On Provo you can continue your physiotherapy sessions at the hospital, then soak up the sun to replenish your Vitamin D while floating in our turquoise seas for the rest of the day.

Kidney dialysis is another procedure you may undergo while vacationing and several travelers have already availed themselves of this 'medical amenity' while enjoying the warmth and relaxation of island life.

And mom-to-be, wouldn't you like to totally relax before the big event, knowing that a neonatal unit headed by a top flight neonatal pediatrician is standing by, just in case you experience any problem or have any questions?

Another option for our visitors, which will be available in the not-too-distant future, is cosmetic medical treatments,

such as botox injections and other 'don't need a bed' cosmetic procedures. These outpatient procedures can be performed at the hospital after which you return to your luxury villa to recuperate. Returning home looking ten years younger than when you left is a definite plus in my book.

The new hospitals' policy is never to turn away anyone who requires life-saving treatment, whether they be a resident or a visitor, and their emergency department is open 24/7. But for non-emergencies there is a Family Practice and you can call to book an appointment if you are feeling unwell for any reason during your stay.

Although it's been barely four months since the hospitals began treating patients, at this writing, the hospital administrators have already begun planning to introduce tele-medicine, with twenty-first century communication links to all our sister islands, so that expert medical advice and diagnosis will be possible whether you live on South Caicos or are whale-watching from beautiful Salt Cay.

Thinking of taking a Medical Vacation? It's an idea I'd never have considered thirty years ago. But as the traveling public gets older, it's an idea that is coming of age. Nevertheless, most people would rather not have to go through hospital doors while away, but it is oh so reassuring to know that should that occasion arise, there are trained staff and excellent facilities to take care of what ails you. ■

The main lobby at the hospital

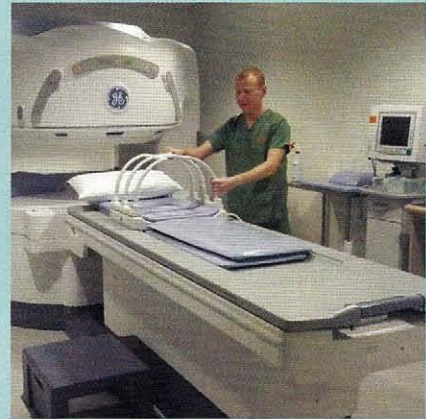


InterHealth Canada is proud to serve the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands and visitors to our shores.

Opened in April 2010, Cheshire Hall Medical Centre and Cockburn Town Medical Centre, collectively the Turks & Caicos Islands Hospital, offer high calibre services in modern surroundings using first class equipment with highly qualified, multinational consultant medical staff.

Services provided include:

- General Medicine, including HDU
- General Surgery, including HDU
- Obstetrics & Gynaecology
- Paediatrics & Neonatology, including a Special Care Baby Unit
- Orthopaedics
- Anaesthesia
- Dental Services
- Radiology / Imaging Services including MR, CT and ultrasound imaging
- Family Practice
- Emergency Medicine
- Clinical Laboratory
- Physiotherapy
- Dietetics
- Dialysis – available to off island visitors by arrangement
- Cardiology lab: opens late 2010



Appointments can be made by contacting the Private Medicine Appointments Desk at:

Cheshire Hall Medical Centre

Hospital Road, Providenciales

☎ 941 2800

Cockburn Town Medical Centre

Hospital Road, Grand Turk

☎ 941 2900

The Emergency Department is open 24 / 7 and can be reached on:

☎ 941 2828

☎ 941 2929

In an emergency call an ambulance

☎ 911

