

MedJet will transport ill travelers to hospital



Annette Reiff
MIDSTATE TRAVELER

MedjetAssist offers a specialized service that aims to provide travelers with peace of mind. The program provides medical evacuation for sick and injured members who are hospitalized more than 150 miles from home.

The company will fly members to the hospital of their choice in a medically equipped and staffed aircraft from virtually anywhere in the world with no cost limits. For remote locations without suitable landing strips, MedjetAssist utilizes affiliate air medical providers and coordinates all transport from beginning to end.

Helene Singer, president of Singer Travel in Wyomissing, Berks County, has been selling MedjetAssist memberships for seven years. "In this business, we see too many things happening," she said. "For what you get — the peace of mind, it just makes sense. We think it is a great product."

Singer Travel belongs to Virtuoso, a consortium of independent travel agencies that specializes in upscale travel. Virtuoso is a

MetjetAssist partner.

Singer initially purchased her own membership after a colleague who was a MedjetAssist member suffered a stroke in England and was flown back to New York. Amazingly, the same colleague later fell and broke her pelvis in Greece and again used the company's service to fly her home.

Singer said she is grateful that none of her clients has ever had to use the service. She sells a fair number of memberships, mostly to clients who travel a great deal, she said. The agency recommends MedjetAssist to everyone who's traveling far away, particularly those who are taking active trips.

MedjetAssist does not take the place of travel insurance, which covers a host of contingencies, such as trip cancellation, lost baggage and medical bills. While travel insurance policies also usually include medical evacuation, those policies generally limit evacuation to the nearest suitable medical facility except under special circumstances.

Not only will MedjetAssist fly you to your hospital of choice, it will do so for any medical reason as long as you're hospitalized.

Without air ambulance coverage, you can expect to pay an average of \$10,000 to \$20,000 for domestic air medical evacua-

tion and more than \$75,000 for international transports, according to MedjetAssist's Web site.

For regular annual memberships, MedjetAssist charges \$250 for individuals up to age 74 and \$385 for families, which are defined as a primary member plus a spouse or domestic partner and up to five children ages 19 or younger or up to age 23 for full-time students. Travelers between the ages of 75 and 85 can apply for the Diamond Plan, whose annual fee is \$430 per person. Enrollment is not guaranteed.

Short-term plans are available and range from seven days of coverage, at a cost of \$95 for individuals and \$170 for families, to 30 days of coverage, at a cost of \$180 for individuals and \$335 for families.

Last year, MedjetAssist added a program that limits evacuation to within the continental United States. Annual memberships sell for \$175 for individuals and \$305 for families.

MedjetAssist also offers a collegiate program with choices for students in the U.S. or abroad.

To learn more or to purchase a membership, check with your travel agent, visit the company's Web site at www.medjetassist.com or call 800-527-7478.

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