



Nurse Practitioner Healthcare Foundation

Improving Health Status and Quality of Care through Nurse Practitioner Innovations

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nurse Practitioner Healthcare Foundation Issues White Paper:

International Traveler Health—A National Prevention Opportunity

Bellevue, WA, April 10, 2007- The Nurse Practitioner Healthcare Foundation (NPHF) today issued a *White Paper* outlining key policy issues related to the health of travelers.

U.S. residents now make almost 62 million international trips each year, equivalent to more than 1 trip for every 5 persons in the country. Travel presents health risks, not only for the traveler but also for the public health. Any traveler can be the infection source spreading disease across national boundaries. Infections are one of many travel health risks, yet most travelers do not seek health guidance before embarking on their trip. Opportunities to prevent health problems created by international travel are often missed. Travelers can benefit from immunizations, antimalarial medication, guidance on the management of chronic diseases while traveling, personal safety protections, and first aid preparation - all tailored to the unique needs of the traveler, destination, and style of travel. Prevention and planning can avert many travel-related health problems but many travelers are unaware of the need for pre-travel health consultations or have difficulty accessing appropriate travel health services.

Travel plans are made, on average, 86 days prior to departure. Hence, travel arrangements linked with messages encouraging travel health preparation can strengthen timely awareness.

Healthcare professionals can play a key role in providing travel healthcare services. Since conditions in destination countries can change quickly, healthcare professionals must keep up to date with global disease trends and resources for travel medicine. Many travel health needs can be met in primary care settings. Convenient care/retail settings may also play a role in increasing access to travel information and services. Where available, travel clinics specialize in meeting complex travel health needs.

The NPHF *white paper* offers five recommendations for improving travel-related healthcare:

1. Raise awareness of the need for travel health care before, during, and after travel.
2. Incorporate travel health education and assessment into routine primary care.
3. Increase primary care providers' knowledge of travel health and safety.
4. Increase access to travel health services.
5. Engage in research on travel health.

By raising awareness of the need for travel health, increasing system capacity to enhance access, and engaging in research to understand and define the scope of need, healthcare providers can improve the overall health of travelers, their communities, and the nation.

View the complete *White Paper* on this issue at www.nphealthcarefoundation.org.

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NPHF, a nonprofit philanthropic organization, strives to improve healthcare and decision making through research and policy analysis.