



When Staying Local Isn't Best: Coordinated Travel for Select High-Impact Care

THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF TRAVEL AND LOGISTICS IN PATIENT CARE

When it comes to serious conditions like heart disease or cancer, *where* a patient receives treatment can be just as important as *when* they receive it. For complex diagnoses, outcomes significantly improve when care is delivered by top-ranked specialists with access to advanced technologies, surgical expertise, and coordinated, patient-centered care. That's why thousands of patients travel to Cleveland Clinic each year for life-saving treatment—and why travel and logistics are foundational elements of the Centers of Excellence (COE) program.

Cleveland Clinic's Heart, Vascular & Thoracic Institute has consistently been ranked among the best in the nation for heart care since 1995. When timing is critical—such as in cases of aortic valve disease or atrial fibrillation—getting patients quickly and efficiently to the right team makes all the difference. The same is true for cancer care: as a National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated comprehensive cancer center, Cleveland Clinic offers leading-edge treatments, clinical trials, and multidisciplinary expertise that can significantly increase survival rates and quality of life.

Yet, for many patients, the idea of traveling for medical treatment can be overwhelming. From arranging flights and hotel accommodations to navigating an unfamiliar city, these logistics can add stress to an already difficult time. That's why Cleveland Clinic's COE program integrates comprehensive travel coordination as a core component—ensuring that patients get timely access to world-class care with minimal hassle.



Some Conditions Are Worthy of Travel

For complex conditions like cardiac and cancer care, traveling to a top-ranked, accredited hospital means better outcomes. Cleveland Clinic treats patients from all 50 states and over 185 countries, handling travel and logistics to make world-class care accessible.

For employers who partner with Cleveland Clinic's Centers of Excellence, facilitating access to the best care means prioritizing the full patient journey—not just the clinical encounter. Whether patients are traveling from across the state or across the country, a streamlined travel and logistics experience removes barriers to care and improves health outcomes.

Timely arrival for appointments, procedures, and post-op follow-ups is vital. Missed or delayed care can lead to complications, treatment disruptions, or extended recovery times. With a dedicated travel coordination team, patients benefit from end-to-end support—from transportation and lodging to mobility accommodations and local orientation—so they can focus solely on healing.

IMPROVING THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE

At Cleveland Clinic, delivering exceptional outcomes starts with delivering an exceptional experience. The Centers of Excellence (COE) program is designed to remove barriers to care and support the whole patient—clinically, logistically, and emotionally—no matter where they're coming from. Cleveland Clinic treats patients from all 50 states and more than 185 countries, providing each individual with a carefully coordinated, personalized care journey.

Patients arriving through the COE program benefit from comprehensive concierge support, including:

- Travel and lodging arrangements close to the hospital campus
- Mobility assistance and wheelchair-accessible accommodations
- Language interpretation and translation services
- Dietary considerations and care for religious or cultural preferences
- A dedicated point of contact to navigate every step of the process

This level of preparation ensures that patients arrive on time, well-informed, and ready for treatment, significantly reducing stress and confusion.

Cleveland Clinic Consistently Ranks in the Top 10% Nationally for Patient Satisfaction.

- 92% of patients rate their overall experience as "excellent" or "very good".
- 95% of patients say their care team showed empathy and compassion.
- 94% say they were involved in decisions about their care.
- Patients report a 30% higher likelihood of adhering to treatment plans compared to national averages.

These positive experiences translate into measurable health and business outcomes. Patients in the COE program are more likely to complete treatment without disruption, resulting in fewer complications, shorter recovery periods, and lower readmission rates. For employers, this means faster returns to work, reduced absenteeism, and long-term cost savings.

By placing equal emphasis on world-class medicine and whole-person care, Cleveland Clinic creates an environment where patients not only get better—they feel better cared for every step of the way.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONAL BENEFITS

In addition to improved patient outcomes and satisfaction, a well-coordinated travel and logistics strategy is a powerful driver of operational efficiency—delivering measurable benefits to both employers and healthcare providers.

When patient arrivals are predictable and aligned with clinical schedules, healthcare teams can plan with precision. Providers can proactively allocate operating rooms, specialist time, and inpatient beds, reducing costly inefficiencies caused by delays, no-shows, or last-minute cancellations. This predictability helps improve clinical throughput and shortens wait times for other patients, maximizing the use of resources across the care continuum.

For employers, the Cleveland Clinic Centers of Excellence (COE) program offers an opportunity to control healthcare costs through bundled payments and negotiated care pathways. But additional savings come from the logistics side:

- Preferred lodging rates near Cleveland Clinic's main campus.
- Streamlined ground transportation that reduces time and complexity for patients.
- Optimized travel routing that ensures patients arrive rested and on time for procedures.
- Reduced reliance on emergency or last-minute travel, which often comes at a premium.

These efficiencies can lead to savings of up to 30% per episode of care compared to traditional fee-for-service models, especially for high-cost procedures like aortic valve replacement or cancer treatment.

Moreover, these savings don't just benefit the bottom line—they can be reinvested into broader health initiatives. Employers can expand access to Centers of Excellence for additional conditions, introduce early-detection and prevention programs, or enhance post-treatment support.

BILLY'S JOURNEY OF LIFE-SAVING CARE

By investing in Cleveland Clinic's Cardiac Center of Excellence, which includes a comprehensive travel and coordination support system, Billy's journey was made as smooth and stress-free as possible.

Billy faced a critical need for an aortic valve replacement surgery. The collaboration with Cleveland Clinic's Cardiac Center of Excellence transformed his life through a successful valve repair surgery.

Billy and his wife were transported to their accommodations and provided with all the information they needed to navigate their stay. They are incredibly grateful for how easy and well-coordinated the process was.

Moreover, employers who offer Centers of Excellence see a marked improvement in treatment adherence and recovery times, thanks in part to the reduced stress and seamless care experience.

[Watch Billy's Story](#)



SUPPORT THAT CONTINUES AT HOME

A seamless travel and care coordination model also supports faster recovery and return-to-work timelines. With patients receiving care at Cleveland Clinic—recognized globally for its leadership in cardiology and oncology—they are less likely to experience complications or require readmissions. In fact, Cleveland Clinic’s virtual aftercare program contributes to an 11% lower hospital readmission rate, helping ensure that the care delivered is not only excellent—but lasting.

Ultimately, the value of Cleveland Clinic’s COE program extends far beyond the hospital walls. It’s a holistic strategy that reflects a shared commitment to quality, efficiency, and the long-term well-being of employees and their families.

A REFLECTION OF CARE AND COMMITTMENT

An effective travel and coordination program is more than just a logistical convenience—it’s a reflection of your organization’s commitment to employee well-being. By investing in high-quality care and making it truly accessible, employers show they value their people—not just as patients, but as whole human beings.

This level of care strengthens trust, drives better outcomes, and elevates your organization's reputation as an employer of choice.



One of the World’s Best and Largest

Cleveland Clinic consists of 80,642 caregivers, 23 hospitals and 276 outpatient facilities in locations around the globe. We provide advanced, high-quality, compassionate care for millions of patients annually, while also conducting life-changing research and educating future caregivers.

Cleveland Clinic Centers of Excellence

In the Cleveland Clinic Centers of Excellence program, travel coordination plays a pivotal role in supporting access to world-class care. By streamlining travel arrangements and providing comprehensive logistical support, healthcare providers can significantly enhance the patient's experience, reduce stress, and ensure timely access to necessary treatments. The benefits are far-reaching, from increased patient satisfaction to operational efficiencies and cost savings.

A well-coordinated travel program not only supports patients but also reflects the organization's deep commitment to providing the highest quality of care. In doing so, it helps create a healthcare experience that is truly centered on the needs and well-being of each individual patient.

To learn more about how Cleveland Clinic's Cardiac Center of Excellence can provide life-saving care to your employees, [request a consultation](#).



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