I am a Canadian and I am not accustomed to going into my wallet to pay for a trip to the Doctor. Although I know that my health care while in Canada is paid through our taxes and is certainly not free, the whole concept of putting a price tag to see a physician was foreign to this Canadian. My experience at San Fernando started recently with a trip to the gynaecologist for my yearly check-up. Before I elaborate, let me say that I was impressed by the treatment and the efficiency of receiving results and feedback. To book an appointment to see a Gynaecologist in Toronto one must be referred through their General Practitioner. This can take months. I have waited 5 months to get an appointment with the doctor and then another 4 months for an appointment for a mammogram.

The gynaecologist at San Fernando in Coronado comes every 2nd Wednesday. She is fluently bilingual, very pleasant and her bedside manner is second to none. She will answer all your questions and makes you feel quite comfortable. I booked my appointment for a mammogram through her, and the receptionist at San Fernando scheduled the appointment for me. It was booked for the following week in the city. I could not believe I was able to pick an appointment that suited my schedule. I took a trip into the city and the whole procedure took only 40 minutes out of my day, and the cost was $87. Just the convenience and the efficiency of the medical treatment were worth the $87. Not only that but my results were emailed to me 3 days later. I understand the cost with a jubilado discount is $50.

A consultation at San Fernando in Coronado is $15. Blood tests and urine tests are equally as inexpensive and the results are provided almost immediately. One night a few months ago, my husband had a car crash. He went to the San Fernando Clinic in Coronado and walked out with an examination and full body x-rays in his hand. The cost for an emergency doctor X-Rays came to $177. We didn’t have to wait for treatment, we were seen immediately and the quality of service once again was beyond our expectations.

I know I can only compare this to my health care back in Canada. I also know that quality is compared to personal experience. I can say however that I no longer worry about how long I am going to have to wait to see a Doctor. I no longer have to worry as to how long it will take to get my tests back and I can say the Moca Cappuccinos in the pharmacy at the Coronado Clinic are delicious and if I do have to wait 5 minutes I welcome the opportunity.

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*Karyn Saunders is a young expat who has been living in the Playa Community for close to 3 years. Her passion for Panama and for her community has been seen through her articles that bring insight and discussion, and often offer useful information on living in the tropics. Karyn is a Virtual Recruiter, Article Writer and has come to specialize in Social Media Marketing. Her passion however is Personal and Professional Life Coaching and Motivational speaking*.