

Dear Friends and Relatives,

Yesterday I learned about the cost of my hospital visit, paid for by our host school, not any insurance. The school wants to keep its American guest teachers in good health. I will itemize what I can remember and you can compare that with costs in the American health care system.

Two taxis to hospital, a short distance, unknown cost, but likely less than \$1.00 each.

Emergency room entrance at about 9 PM

Examination by doctor - he asked questions, applied pressure to front and back of my body in various locations to check for any pains (none), asked about medications I had been taking. We mentioned likely dehydration, vomiting before the visit. He did not want me to drink any more water.

Blood pressure test (normal)

Blood test - extracted one vacutainer of blood from my arm (normal)

Ultrasound of my abdomen, several locations (normal)

Return to the doctor for his recommendations, paperwork

Assignment to hospital bed for overnight

Temperature measurement (slight fever)

Start of IV injection - 2 or 3 small bags of fluid overnight, into vein of left hand

I think they gave me a 1 cc injection into my right arm, unknown content

Periodic visits by nurse overnight to check IV flow

Removal of IV system at 5:20 AM

Our woman interpreter and a young man from the dormitory stayed in an adjacent bed overnight to keep watch on me, provide a waste basket when I had to vomit twice. Four other beds in the room had one or two people in them.

No further paperwork or consultations. We three simply walked out of the hospital at 6:30 AM without seeing anyone. The emergency room had no one present. We caught a taxi back to the campus.

Total cost, not including taxis: 300.0 Yuan, or about \$45.00. Are you amazed? The cost for Chinese citizens might be even less than for rich foreigners.

Ed Holroyd