The most advantageous part of asset protection is risk management, avoiding and limiting predictable risks before they happen. Last month, I covered some of the seasonal and family related risks that affect physicians at home and times like spring break and summer vacation. This post will highlight some precautions that should be taken when you are away this summer. But first, here are two new travel risks related to current events and politics.

Source: Physicians Practice

Travel Risk – Devices and Information
There have been numerous reports from around the country about smartphones, tablets and laptops being seized by U.S. customs, travelers being detained and both device log-in information and social media passwords being demanded. If you have personal information including email access, personal photos, private messages or financial, legal and even HIPAA protected information (you have a professional duty and liability to protect) on your devices, consider removing that information and anything else you wouldn’t want copied by strangers before you travel.

Travel Risk – Immigration Controls and Travel Bans
International and domestic travelers including those with visas, legal resident alien status (green card holders), and U.S. citizens have been detained and in some cases denied entry to the U.S. and other countries. In some cases race, religion and ethnicity do create an additional risk factor, as boxer Muhammad Ali's son recently discovered when returning home from vacation in Jamaica. Consider these factors a part of your travel plans and have a plan and someone to call if you are detained.

Secure Your Finances
• Limit the number of credit cards you travel with and avoid traveling with your debit card if possible. Make sure you have adequate available credit on your cards (as well as international cash advance/ATM access) to cover your projected expenses as well as a comfortable extra margin for emergencies. Make a short list of toll-free customer service numbers and partial card numbers in case your cards are lost or stolen. Many credit card carriers offer travel related assistance and emergency help as well, don't forget about this underutilized resource if you have a problem.
• Consider setting up text and/or email alerts on your accounts where possible that will inform you of basic transactions and any issues with your cards. Do this with your business accounts as well, in many cases internal fraud and embezzlement occur when employees think you are distracted or unable to respond.
• Be wary of the serious security risks of both public wi-fi and public computers when you travel. Pay your online bills in advance in order to avoid logging in to your accounts while travelling, except for emergencies.

Secure your home and office
If your office is going to be closed and dark while you're away, take the same precautions you would to protect your home during an extended absence. Don’t forget the basics including physically securing the property, addressing mail and package delivery (to avoid both the appearance of any empty structure and the risk of having mail stolen), setting alarms, having automatic lights and security cameras with remote access, and perhaps most importantly, an emergency contact that can act in your absence if there's a problem. Make sure your home, business, and their contents are
adequately insured for both liability and loss (including theft) before you leave.

**Protect Health and Safety**

Remember that access to healthcare and medication varies wildly in foreign countries. Make sure vulnerable members of your family have an extended supply of any required medications and that any vital life sustaining drugs can be replaced, we've seen insulin lost on a remote safari and children injured on family adventure tourism trips that required airlifting and other expensive solutions. Protect yourself by having adequate insurance coverage on these issues, which may mean buying special international travel insurance for occurrences your traditional health insurance will not cover.

As always, this is just a starting point, but a little defensive thinking can help avoid many problems and make the ones that slip through easier to manage.

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