
Germans Sink Their Teeth into McTooth Dental Chain

The roughly 90 percent of Germans insured under the statutory health system have after recent reforms been forced to pay much more of doctors' bills out of their own pockets. This is because the statutory insurers only meet about half of the total costs, and the patients have to pay the rest.

The amount the patient has to pay can vary, depending on treatment. Patient-footed bills are particularly high for dental treatment, where the statutory health insurance only covers the run of the mill procedures. Germans who need crowns, bridges, implants or dentures are thus stuck with paying a hefty bill.

It's against this background that a dental discount chain called McZahn -- or McTooth -- has started operations in Germany.

McTooth plans nationwide expansion

The McTooth dental discount chain started up operations in the western German town of Krefeld and is poised to have a total of some 30 branches throughout the country by the end of the year. It keeps laboratory costs to a minimum by outsourcing all precision work on crowns, bridges and the like to China.

For patients, the cheaper cost is the main factor for them to go to McTooth. Dirk Frank, one of the discounter's first patients in Germany, said he had been considering seeking dental treatment in Poland, where the costs are also considerably lower than in Germany.

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