Paranoia in Barcelona

April 30, 2016 By Greg Jefferys

I've just re-read a couple of posts that I made from Barcelona and it reminded me how sick I was with the flu and also how worried I was about something going wrong there. I have not been that paranoid for many years, back in the early 1970's when I smoked way too much grass was the last time I felt that paranoid.

Now I am home and safely out of Spain I can tell you why the paranoia.

Apart from attending the EASL Liver Conference visiting Barcelona offered another great opportunity to help people with Hep C.
Particularly people from Italy with Hep C.
For some reason Italy has terrible rules for importing medicines for personal use. It is okay to fly to India and bring medicines back to Italy on one's person but you can not have them mailed to you.
We tried several times and everytime had the shipments seized by Italian Customs.

So usually for people in Italy I just give them contact for people in India and they fly there, buy their Hep C medicines and fly home.
But there are also many Italians who can not fly to India to get their generic Harvoni, or whatever Hep C treatment they need, because of poor health or because of the cost.

So going to Spain meant that I was able to co-ordinate the mass importation of Hep C medicines for people from Italy.
I asked a few doctors that I knew who have access to generic Harvoni, Sofosbuvir and Daclatasvir to bring what they could to Barcelona and I organised with people in Italy either to fly to Barcelona or to arrange some other way to get the Hep C meds.
Obviously a lot of Italians have friends or family in Spain so I was able to organise for the medicines to be left with them.
It took a bit of organising (which I am not good at) but in the end I was able to help 8 different Italians access generic Hep C medicines through my trip to Barcelona. Some got APIs and some got generic Harvoni from India.
All have now begun treatment.
So that is why I was a little paranoid in Barcelona... I was worried about a knock on the door with a few Spanish policemen standing there wanting to know what I was doing.
I'm sure if someone tried they would find a law that I was breaking by getting life saving medicines to desperate people.... yes breaking a law to help people get cured from a terrible disease.
What kind of stupid law is that?

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