

Crickhowell Group Practice

Advice to Patients Travelling Abroad

This advice note outlines the practices procedures for supporting our patients who intend to travel abroad and provides general advice for patients travelling abroad for short and long periods of time.

NHS Policy

By law, the NHS ceases to have responsibility for the medical care of patients when they leave the UK. As a result, our clinicians are not required by their terms of service to provide prescriptions for the treatment of a condition that is not present and may arise while the patient is abroad. Also, our clinicians have no indemnity cover to provide a consultation or clinical advice to patients who are abroad.

The NHS does accept responsibility for supplying ongoing medication for temporary periods abroad of up to 3 months. However, if a person is going to be abroad for more than 3 months, then they are only entitled (at NHS expense) to a sufficient supply of regular medication in order to get to their destination, where they should find an alternative supply of that medication.

The NHS requires that patients residing abroad for a period of more than 6 months be considered for removal from the registered patient list.

Prescriptions

Travelling out of the country for less than 3 months

For patients who inform us they will be out of the country for less than 3 months, we will provide sufficient medicines for an existing condition (e.g. asthma, diabetes) for the period while the patient is away - where it is safe to do so. Drugs that require frequent monitoring may not be prescribed where there are safety concerns. 1 months supply only will be issued for drugs normally available over the counter, such as paracetamol.

Travelling out of the country for more than 3 months

Patients who inform us they will be leaving the country for more than 3 months will be prescribed sufficient medication to enable them to make alternative arrangements at their destination (up to 3 months supply where safe to do so).

Patients and relatives are advised against seeking medication for themselves while they are abroad as this constitutes NHS fraud.

Prescriptions for medicines in case of illness while abroad.

Clinicians will only prescribe NHS prescriptions in this case for exacerbations of pre-existing illnesses; e.g. antibiotics for patients who have frequent infections secondary to an underlying lung condition.

GPs may provide private prescriptions if it is clinically appropriate, and they can be self-administered safely without medical assessment while abroad. These prescriptions are not free.

Patients should be aware that some drugs commonly prescribed in the UK may be illegal in certain countries and you should check with that countries embassy before you travel.

Vaccinations

If you are planning to travel outside the UK, you may need to be vaccinated against some of the serious diseases found in other parts of the world. Some of the 'standard' UK vaccinations, such as those provided by the childhood vaccination programme, may protect you against some diseases found abroad but they are not likely to cover you against the infectious diseases found in all overseas destinations.

You can find out which vaccinations are necessary or recommended for the areas you will be visiting by accessing these websites:

<https://www.travelhealthpro.org.uk/>

[Foreign travel advice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Alternatively, you may also be able to obtain travel advice from Tour Operators.

Some countries may require you to have an International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP) before you will be allowed to enter a country.

Also, some countries will not accept travellers from an area where there is yellow fever, unless the traveller can prove that they have been vaccinated against it.

Getting Vaccinated

Having worked out which vaccinations you require it is worth contacting the practice to ask the practice nurse to confirm if your current 'standard' vaccinations are up to date. The practice nurse may also be able to provide other travel advice such as protecting yourself against malaria.

It is worth planning travel vaccinations ideally eight weeks before the date of travel to allow for vaccines to become effective and/or enable the completion of a course of vaccines.

Please note that the practice will only be able to provide first course or booster jabs for the standard UK recommended vaccines such as diphtheria, polio, tetanus, typhoid, cholera etc. These are likely to be free on the NHS.

Other 'non-UK standard' vaccinations (for example rabies, meningitis, yellow fever) are not available from the practice and instead should be obtained from private Travel Vaccination Clinics; a variety are available across South Wales and prices vary so it may be worth 'shopping around' for the best price.

Not all travel vaccination clinics are able to provide yellow fever and this link will enable you to find the closest provider [Yellow fever - Vaccination - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk).