

NHS Choices: revised information for patients

Contents

Introduction	2
What to do before going for medical treatment in another European country	2
Where to start	3
Do your research	3
How to contact a local health commissioner	4
What is the S2 route?	5
How to apply	5
S2 route eligibility criteria	6
Maternity	6
What is the EU Directive route?	7
How it works.....	7
How to apply	7
Entitlements	8
Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs).....	8
NHS England	8
Respect the way in which the foreign system works	8
EU Directive route eligibility criteria.....	9
Review and appeal.....	10
Key differences between the S2 route and the EU Directive route.....	11
Your treatment abroad checklist.....	15
Things to consider.....	15
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	16
Giving birth outside the UK.....	18
Applicants resident in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland	18
Dialysis.....	19
Dialysis outside the EEA	19

Introduction

NHS England has recently published new guidance on seeking healthcare treatment in another European country. These changes will come into effect from 1 May 2016. This document sets out information on these changes. NHS Choices will be updated on 1 May 2016 to reflect the new guidance.

What to do before going for medical treatment in another European country

If you're thinking about having medical treatment in another European country, it's important to understand how it works and the risks involved. If you don't follow the correct procedures, you may end up being responsible for the full cost of treatment yourself.

For example, your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) does not cover going abroad for medical treatment. The EHIC is for emergency treatment that becomes necessary while you're abroad. Find out more about [what the EHIC covers](#).

As an NHS patient, if you satisfy certain criteria you may have the right to receive NHS-funded healthcare anywhere in the European Economic Area (EEA).

The European Economic Area (EEA) is a free trade zone between countries of the European Union (EU), Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein. Your [EHIC](#) will also cover you for healthcare that becomes necessary during a trip to Switzerland. However, if you want to go to Switzerland for treatment, this must be authorised in advance under the S2 route. It is not possible to claim funding for treatment in Switzerland under the EU Directive route.

There are two ways to access NHS-funded healthcare in other EEA countries:

1. **The S2 route (formerly E112)**

This is a direct funding arrangement between the NHS and the state healthcare provider in the country of your choice. In many cases, you will not be required to pay anything towards the cost of your treatment, although some countries may require you to pay a proportion of the costs. If you wish to use this route you must apply for – and be granted - authorisation of your treatment from NHS England before receiving treatment before you travel.

2. **The EU Directive on cross-border healthcare (the EU Directive route)**

This is a funding arrangement between you and the NHS. Generally, using this route means you will have to pay the costs of your treatment abroad upfront and then claim reimbursement of eligible costs from the NHS when you return. Depending on the treatment you wish to receive, it may be necessary for you to obtain authorisation from NHS England before receiving treatment.

Further information about these two routes is provided below.

Where to start

If you're planning to have treatment abroad it's important to discuss your plans with your GP before making any final decisions about travel or medical arrangements.

Other than in exceptional circumstances, you will need to apply for authorisation prior to treatment if:

- you are seeking funding via the S2 route, or
- you are seeking funding via the EU Directive route and the treatment for which you are seeking funding requires prior authorisation. Find out what types of treatments require prior authorisation (PDF, 72kb).

If you are still not sure whether prior authorisation is required, contact NHS England by emailing england.europeanhealthcare@nhs.net.

Although applying for funding prior to treatment is not mandatory for all treatment abroad, we do recommend that you contact NHS England or apply for funding before treatment in all cases. This will enable NHS England to confirm your eligibility and the funding or reimbursement process.

Do your research

Going for medical treatment abroad isn't easy and your GP or NHS England can only do so much to help you. You will have to make the arrangements yourself, including finding a healthcare provider and making all the travel arrangements.

Therefore, it's important to do some research and gather enough information to make an informed choice. You should consider:

- any language barriers
- whether you know enough about the people who will treat you and the facilities available
- communication between medical staff abroad and in the UK, such as exchanging medical records and arranging aftercare back home
- how to make a complaint if things go wrong (the NHS is not liable for negligence or failure of treatment)

You'll need to be aware of how your aftercare will be provided when you return home and understand the conditions under which you will be treated abroad.

You should also ensure that you have adequate insurance. Most travel insurance policies will not cover you for planned treatment abroad, so you may need specialist cover.

Please also note that NHS England does not reimburse travel or accommodation costs related to healthcare funded via the S2 or EU Directive routes.

How to contact a local health commissioner

- In England, contact NHS England on 0300 311 22 3 or england.contactus@nhs.net
- In Wales, contact your local health board.
- In Scotland, contact your local NHS board.
- In Northern Ireland, contact the health and social care board

Going outside Europe for treatment

Neither the S2 route nor the EU Directive route applies to treatment outside the EEA (save for treatment in Switzerland, under the S2 route). However, if you want to have treatment outside the EEA, such as in Canada or the USA, please speak to your local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Find [your local CCG](#).

What is the S2 route?

The S2 (formerly E112) route may entitle you to NHS-funded treatment in another European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland.

Other than in exceptional circumstances, treatment will only be funded under the S2 route if it is treatment that would normally be provided under the NHS to an individual in your circumstances, but cannot be provided to you under the NHS within a time period that is medically justifiable. There are also certain qualifying criteria that need to be met.

You will need to provide written evidence that an EEA clinician (i.e. a clinician who is based in the UK or another EEA country or, for these purposes, Switzerland) has carried out a full clinical assessment to demonstrate that the treatment is appropriate to your condition. They must provide a written statement specifying what they consider to be a medically justifiable time period within which you should be treated, based on your circumstances and supported by objective reasons.

If your application under the S2 route is approved, the treatment you receive in the other EEA country or Switzerland will be provided under the same conditions of care and payment as for residents of that country. This could mean you have to pay a percentage of the costs personally.

For example, in some countries, patients cover 25% of the costs of their state-provided treatment. This patient contribution is known as a 'co-payment charge'. The state covers the other 75%. If you received treatment under such a healthcare system, you would be expected to pay the same co-payment charge as a patient from that country. For example, for an operation that costs £8,000 of which you're expected to pay a standard patient co-payment charge of 25%, you will pay £2,000. The NHS will pay the remaining £6,000 to the healthcare provider treating you. However, you may be able to claim back some or all of your contribution when you return to the UK. To apply for a refund of your contribution, you will need to contact the Department for Work and Pensions Overseas Healthcare Team on 0191 218 1999 or overseas.healthcare@dwp.gsi.gov.uk.

In some countries, as in the UK, healthcare is completely free. This means an approved S2 will cover 100% of the costs of your healthcare, so you would not be required to pay any treatment costs. Please note that the treatment covered by an S2 cannot be experimental treatment or a drug trial. Furthermore, the S2 route does not cover emergency treatment.

How to apply

For your healthcare to be funded under the S2 route, you will need to [apply for funding \(PDF, 102kb\)](#) prior to treatment. Please ensure that you are using the latest available form (as provided on NHS Choices) before submitting your application. Applicants using an outdated form may be asked to supply further information or resubmit their application.

S2 route eligibility criteria

NHS England will consider your application and will need to be satisfied that the following criteria are met:

- You are ordinarily resident in England and entitled to treatment under the NHS.
- The requested treatment would normally be provided under the NHS to an individual in your circumstances.
- An EEA clinician has carried out a full clinical assessment to demonstrate that the treatment is appropriate to your condition, and has provided a written statement specifying what they consider to be a medically justifiable time period within which you should be treated, based on your circumstances and supported by objective reasons.
- Taking into consideration the information provided by the EEA clinician, NHS England has determined that the same or equivalent treatment cannot be provided to you under the NHS within a time period that is medically justifiable.
- The requested treatment is available under the treating country's state health scheme.
- The requested treatment is not experimental or part of a drug trial.
- The requested treatment is not emergency

An application should include evidence demonstrating that the above criteria are satisfied, as well as full details of the type of treatment and the proposed provider (including admission and discharge dates and estimated costs), and your National Insurance or NHS number as appropriate.

NHS England is not obliged to approve an S2 application that does not satisfy the above criteria; however, in exceptional circumstances it has discretion to do so.

If NHS England approves your application, you will be issued with an S2 guarantee form, which you will need to present to the healthcare provider in the country in which you will be receiving treatment. For more information, [contact NHS England](#).

Maternity

S2 applications relating to maternity care in another EEA country or Switzerland are processed differently. For more information see the section below on [Giving birth outside the UK](#).

What is the EU Directive route?

The EU Directive on cross-border healthcare was passed in 2011.

The EU Directive grants to all EEA citizens a fundamental right, in certain circumstances, to purchase healthcare in another European Economic Area country and to apply for reimbursement of such healthcare costs from their home healthcare system. The EU Directive route to accessing healthcare in Europe is similar to [the S2 route](#), but there are some important differences.

How it works

The EU Directive route may entitle you to purchase healthcare in another EEA country and to apply for reimbursement of the cost of that healthcare from the NHS.

The EU Directive route is available for treatment either in the state sector or private sector in the other country.

In most cases, you will have to pay the costs upfront. You can then seek to claim reimbursement when you return, up to the amount the treatment would have cost under the NHS. However, you will bear the financial risk of any additional costs which may arise.

For some types of treatment, you will be required to obtain prior authorisation from the NHS before having the treatment. The process of obtaining prior authorisation will confirm whether you are entitled to the treatment and the level of reimbursement you can expect. It will also ensure that you are aware of all the possible treatment options within the NHS, which may be more convenient for you than going abroad. Find out what [types of treatment require prior authorisation \(PDF, 72kb\)](#). Please note that this is not necessarily a definitive list.

For more information and to ensure you don't have any difficulties when claiming back your money, [contact NHS England](#) before making any arrangements abroad.

How to apply

If you need to seek prior authorisation for a treatment or wish to apply for funding (in advance of treatment) or reimbursement (after treatment), you will need to complete the [application form \(PDF, 102kb\)](#). When applying for reimbursement, original receipts and proof of payment must be supplied. If your receipts and supporting documentation are in a different language, you will need to provide English translations of your documents.

You will need to provide a letter from an EEA clinician (i.e. a clinician who is based in the UK or another EEA country) that describes your condition and diagnosis, and confirms, based on a full clinical assessment, the medical need for the treatment(s). The letter must clearly state why the treatment received will be, or was, needed. You must also satisfy the criteria for reimbursement, set out below.

Note: Please ensure that you are using the latest available form (as provided on this site) before submitting your application. Applicants using an outdated form may be asked to supply further information or resubmit their application.

Entitlements

Under the EU Directive route, other than in exceptional circumstances, you are only entitled to funding for treatment in another EEA country that is the same as or equivalent to one that would be made available to you under the NHS. If you are unsure whether or not you are entitled to funding for a particular treatment, please contact NHS England or your local CCG.

Within England, different aspects of healthcare are commissioned by different organisations and your entitlement to funding will depend on the services that are commissioned for patients in your area and any criteria that apply.

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs)

CCGs commission:

- most hospital services, excluding dental services, antenatal and newborn screening services and specialised services
- community health services, such as rehabilitation services, provided outside of acute hospitals

To find out more about what your CCG commissions contact your local CCG. You can also find out how your local CCG performs.

NHS England

NHS England commissions:

- Specialised and highly specialised services. One of the eligibility criteria for a specialised service in another EEA country is prior authorisation ahead of treatment. Find out what treatments may require prior authorisation (PDF, 72kb).
- Primary care services such as GP, dental, community pharmacy and high street optometry services.
- Other dental services.

For more information contact NHS England on 0300 311 22 33 or england.contactus@nhs.net.

Respect the way in which the foreign system works

Although the NHS may approve funding for your treatment abroad, the country you want to go to is not obliged to accept you as a patient. If you are refused treatment in an EEA member state, they will have to explain their decision to refuse treatment.

You cannot expect to receive treatment in preference to a patient already within the country's state healthcare system. This means you may have to observe local waiting times or the country's guidance on particular treatments.

Note: an agreement to fund your treatment abroad by the NHS does not mean the NHS is liable for the treatment you receive.

EU Directive route eligibility criteria

NHS England will consider your application and will need to be satisfied that the following criteria are met:

- You must be ordinarily resident in England and entitled to treatment under the NHS.
- The treatment is the same as or equivalent to one that would be made available to you under the NHS.
- The proposed healthcare provider is based in an EEA country other than the United Kingdom and provides the treatment in question.
- The treatment is necessary to treat or diagnose a medical condition.
- You have provided a letter from an EEA clinician that describes your condition and diagnosis and confirms, based on a full clinical assessment, the medical need for the treatment(s). The letter must clearly state why the treatment received will be, or was, needed.

An application should include evidence demonstrating that the above criteria are satisfied. If you are seeking reimbursement for treatment that has already taken place, you will need to provide full details of the type of treatment and the provider (including admission and discharge dates and costs), proof of payment and original receipts to confirm payment for the treatments received. If you are seeking prior authorisation for treatment that has yet to take place, you will need to provide full details of the type of treatment and the proposed provider (including proposed admission and discharge dates and estimated costs). All applications should include your National Insurance or NHS number, as appropriate.

Applications that satisfy the above criteria will be granted if the treatment is not one that requires prior authorisation. If your application is for a treatment that does require prior authorisation then, as long as your application satisfies the above criteria, your application will be approved in most cases, although NHS England may refuse your application if:

- a) You will be exposed with reasonable certainty to an unacceptable patient-safety risk;
- b) The general public will be exposed with reasonable certainty to a substantial safety hazard as a result of the treatment;
- c) The healthcare is to be provided by a healthcare provider that raises serious and specific concerns relating to its respect of standards and guidelines on quality of care and patient safety; or
- d) The healthcare can be provided on the NHS in a medically justifiable time period.

Under the EU Directive route, whether or not the requested treatment can be provided on the NHS within a medically justifiable period is only potentially relevant to treatments that require prior authorisation. You do not need to provide this

evidence if your application relates to treatment that does not require prior authorisation.

Applications that are for funding of a treatment that requires prior authorisation and are made on the basis that the required treatment cannot be provided without undue delay must be supported by a written statement from an EEA clinician, specifying what they consider to be a medically justifiable time period within which you should be treated, based on your circumstances and supported by objective reasons. Taking into consideration the information provided by the EEA clinician, NHS England will determine whether the same or equivalent treatment can be provided to you under the NHS within a time period that is medically justifiable.

If your application is for funding of a treatment that requires prior authorisation, the above eligibility criteria are satisfied, and the requested treatment **cannot** be provided on the NHS within a time period that is medically justifiable, then, unless NHS England refuse your application on the basis of any of a) – c) above, your application will be approved.

If your application is for funding of a treatment that requires prior authorisation, the above eligibility criteria are satisfied, but the requested treatment **can** be provided on the NHS within a medically justifiable time period, then, unless NHS England refuse your application on the basis of any of a) – c) above, NHS England may approve your application.

In exceptional circumstances, NHS England may fund treatment in another EEA country under the EU Directive route where the eligibility criteria are satisfied, but the treatment is not the same as or equivalent to one that would be made available to you under the NHS. Such funding will only be reimbursed if you have obtained prior authorisation from NHS England.

Review and appeal

If you're unhappy with the outcome of your application for treatment abroad, you can request a review of the decision if you have additional information / evidence which was not provided as part of the original application and which you believe may impact on the rejection decision.

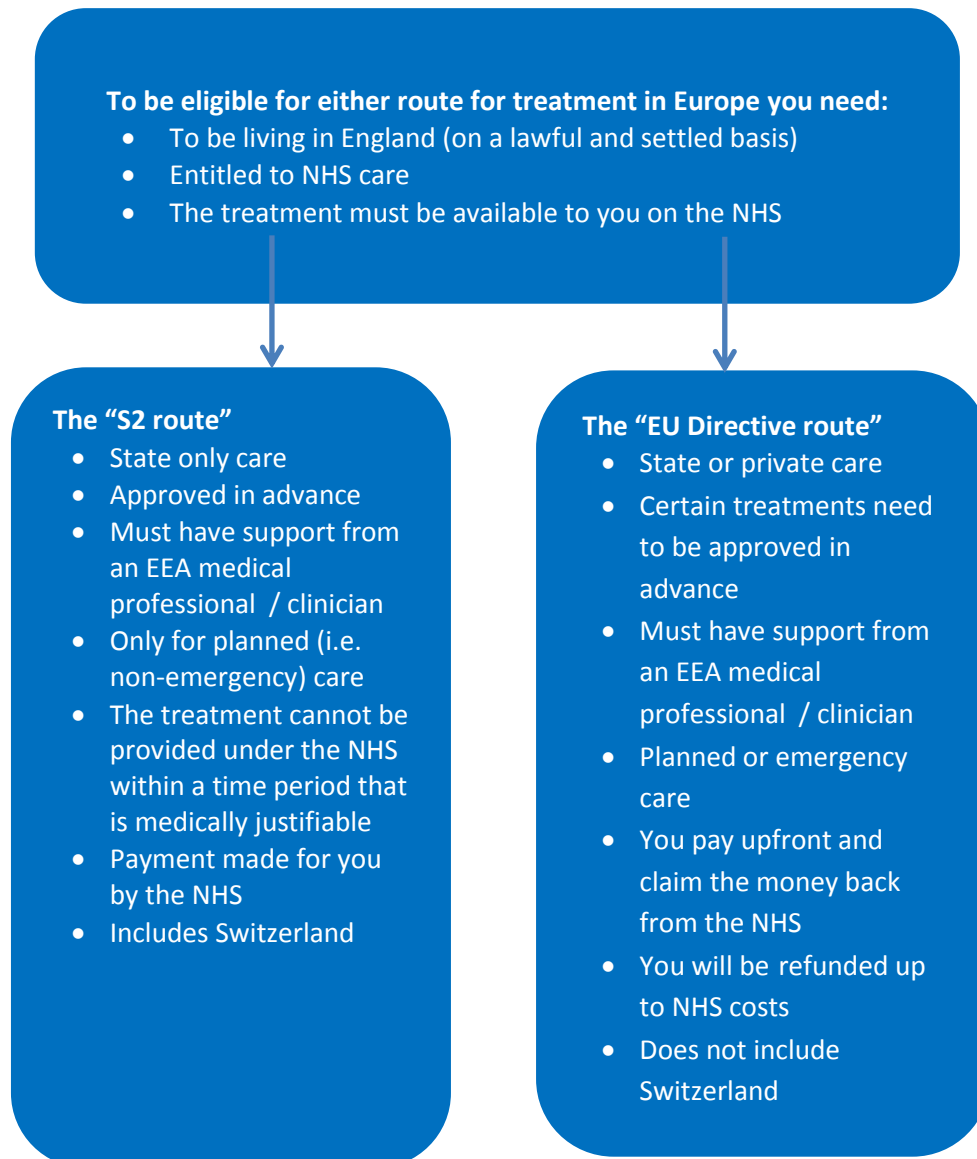
A formal appeal should be requested if you do not agree with the rejection decision but have no additional information / evidence to submit.

If you would like the decision to be reviewed or appealed, please email england.europeanappeal@nhs.net, quoting your unique reference number (provided when you were informed of the outcome of your application).

Key differences between the S2 route and the EU Directive route

There are some key differences between the two application routes and these are set out below.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA



	S2 route	EU Directive route
Payment conditions	<p>The NHS will cover the cost of your treatment through a direct arrangement with the state healthcare provider in the country of your choice.</p> <p>However, you may have to pay a contribution towards healthcare costs, depending on what the common practice is in the country of your choice.</p> <p>You may be able to claim back some or all of the contribution when you return to the UK.</p> <p>To apply for a refund of the contribution, you will need to contact the Department for Work and Pensions Overseas Healthcare Team on 0191 218 1999 or overseas.healthcare@dwp.gsi.gov.uk.</p>	<p>You will normally have to pay treatment costs upfront and get reimbursement of eligible costs from NHS England.</p> <p>Reimbursement will be limited to the cost of the same treatment under the NHS.</p>
Treating sector	The S2 route is only available for treatment in the state sector of the other country.	The EU Directive route is available for treatment either in the state sector or private sector of the other country.
Application process	<p>Fill in the application form provided (PDF, 102kb) and send it to NHS England.</p> <p>Please ensure that you are using the latest available form (as provided on this site) before submitting your application. Applicants using an outdated form may be asked to supply further information or resubmit their application.</p> <p>Once they have received your application form, NHS</p>	<p>Fill in the application form provided (PDF, 102kb) and send it to NHS England.</p> <p>If you are claiming reimbursement, you'll need to supply original receipts and proof of payment and may be required to provide a translated version of these documents if the originals are not in English.</p> <p>If you are considering going abroad and claiming reimbursement following treatment, we recommend</p>

	S2 route	EU Directive route
	<p>England will consider your application in light of the applicable criteria and determine whether or not to approve it.</p> <p>If your application is approved, you will be issued with an S2 guarantee form, which you will need to present to the healthcare provider in the country in which you will be receiving treatment, such as the hospital or dentist, when you're admitted.</p> <p>For more information, contact NHS England england.europeanhealthcare@nhs.net.</p>	<p>that you contact NHS England england.europeanhealthcare@nhs.net to confirm your eligibility.</p> <p>For some types of treatment, you will be required to obtain prior authorisation from the NHS before having the treatment. Find out what types of treatments require prior authorisation (PDF, 72Kb). Please note that this is not necessarily a definitive list</p>
Limit to funding and reimbursements	<p>The NHS will cover the full cost of the treatment, even if the cost is more than the treatment would have been under the NHS, save for any patient contribution that may be required from you.</p> <p>You would have to pay any such patient contribution up front, but you may be able to claim back some or all of the contribution when you return to the UK.</p> <p>To apply for a refund of the contribution, you will need to contact the Department for Work and Pensions Overseas Healthcare Team on 0191 218 1999 or overseas.healthcare@dwp.gsi.gov.uk.</p> <p>Please note that NHS England does not refund travel or accommodation costs under the S2 route.</p>	<p>You'll have to pay the cost up front and seek reimbursement when you're back in the UK.</p> <p>You can only claim back as much as the treatment would have cost on the NHS. If the treatment is more expensive than on the NHS, you'll have to cover the additional costs. If the treatment was cheaper than under the NHS, the amount you will be able to claim back will be limited to the actual cost of the treatment.</p> <p>Please note that if the treatment would be subject to NHS charges such as prescription charges then these will also apply and be deducted from any reimbursement.</p> <p>Please also note that NHS England does not refund travel or accommodation costs under the EU Directive</p>

	S2 route	EU Directive route
		<p>route.</p> <p>Reimbursement under the EU Directive route, or the issuing of an S2 guarantee form under the S2 route, will not usually be retrospectively authorised if you should have applied for prior authorisation, but failed to do so, unless in exceptional circumstances. This will be determined by NHS England on a case-by-case basis.</p>

Your treatment abroad checklist

Before you book your treatment abroad, use the checklist and FAQs below so you can feel confident that you're making the right decision.

All types of medical treatment involve some element of risk. It's important to get as much information as possible about your treatment options so that you can make informed choices. Read more about the most common problems when going abroad for treatment, and how to avoid them.

Things to consider

Your reasons

Have you thought carefully about your reasons for going abroad? Make sure your decision is based on the quality of the medical care you would like to receive and not on how appealing the destination seems for a holiday.

A second opinion

Have you spoken to your GP, dentist or clinician? There are several reasons why it's a good idea to involve your doctor in your decision. Your doctor can give you a valuable second opinion as well as advice about treatment options and whether it is necessary. As your doctor could be involved in your aftercare, discuss with him or her how to transfer medical notes to the overseas team.

Research

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Have you done your research?
- Have you checked the qualifications of the medical team treating you?
- Have you been able to ask them questions about your treatment?
- Are you satisfied with the facilities and standards at the clinic or hospital where you will be treated?

Read the articles below as a guide to what to ask about your treatment and aftercare.

- Questions to ask your doctor
- Questions to ask your dentist
- Talk about your medicines

UK availability

If the treatment you are seeking in another European country is not available to you on the NHS in the UK, you will not be eligible for funding through either the S2 or EU Directive routes. If you still decide to proceed with self-funded treatment abroad you may want to think about why it is not available here. For reassurance, you may want to consider:

- Whether the treatment is licensed by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).
- Whether the treatment is approved by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

- Whether the treatment is being offered as part of medical research listed within the international clinical trials database.
- Information from sources other than from the organisation that is offering the treatment abroad. This could help you to verify what you are being told by whoever is offering the treatment and can provide you with questions to ask of your chosen treatment provider.

Effects of treatment

Do you understand the possible complications and side effects that could arise from your treatment?

Aftercare

Are you clear about how your aftercare will be co-ordinated?

Finance

Have you done the maths? If your main reason for going abroad is to save money, make sure you've factored in fluctuating exchange rates, the possibility of extending your stay if necessary and the cost of possible return trips. If you are expecting the NHS to fund the treatment in another EEA country or Switzerland, it's also important that you've checked your entitlement and, if necessary, applied for funding in advance of treatment. Find out more about your funding options for treatment in Europe.

Insurance

Do you have appropriate travel insurance? Have you informed your insurer of your plans to have treatment abroad?

Trust

Do you trust the people you are dealing with?

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Do I need prior authorisation to have treatment in another EEA country?

It depends on the funding route and treatment that you are planning to receive. If you are applying under the S2 route, prior authorisation is always required. Under the EU Directive route, only certain specified types of treatment require prior authorisation. However, we recommend applying for funding in advance of treatment in all cases, to ensure you understand your entitlement in advance of treatment.

- Find out what types of treatments require prior authorisation (PDF, 72kb)
- Compare funding options

How do I find out which funding route I should apply for?

The most appropriate route will depend on a number of factors, as the rules governing each route differ.

However, if you're still unsure which route to apply for after reading the information, you can still apply by selecting the box 'I'm unsure which route to apply under' on the application form (PDF, 102kb). Please note that this option is only relevant if you're applying before treatment, as the S2 route requires prior authorisation in all cases.

Please note that if you make an application for prior authorisation of treatment under the EU Directive route, NHS England will, in the first instance, determine whether or not you meet the requirements of the S2 route. If you satisfy the criteria for approval under the S2 route, you will be granted authorisation via that route, unless you specifically request to use the Directive route – for example, to access the private sector abroad. This is because the S2 route is generally more attractive, as it means that, subject to any co-payment required, you do not have to pay the healthcare costs upfront and you may be covered for costs that exceed the NHS equivalent.

Note: Please ensure that you are using the latest available form before submitting your application. Applicants using an outdated form may be asked to supply further information or resubmit their application.

How do I apply for funding?

Once you've done your research and read up on and compared the EU Directive and the S2 routes, you can complete the [application form for treatment abroad \(PDF, 102kb\)](#).

Please send your completed form and accompanying documents to the following address:

European Cross Border Healthcare Team
NHS England
Fosse House, 6 Smith Way
Grove Park, Enderby
Leicester, LE19 1SX
Or email: england.europeanhealthcare@nhs.net

It can take up to 20 working days for an application to be processed and a decision to be made. However, it may take longer if your application is not complete and additional information is required. If you have already had the treatment and your application under the EU Directive route is approved, the reimbursement itself can take an additional 30 working days to be processed.

Also ensure that you are using the latest available form (as provided on this site) before submitting your application. Applicants using an outdated form may be asked to supply further information or resubmit their application.

How much reimbursement will I receive for dental treatment carried out in another EEA country?

You need to be entitled to treatment under [the EU Directive route](#) to claim any reimbursements. How much you'll receive will depend on the type of treatment carried out. NHS dentistry in England operates a patient co-payment system and the level of co-payment depends on the treatment that is needed. Any reimbursement issued under the EU Directive route will only cover what the treatment would have cost the NHS. The calculation of this cost will include a deduction for any co-payment that would have been payable to the NHS.

- [Learn more about NHS dental services](#)

- Get help with dental costs

Can I get reimbursement for treatment received on a cruise ship?

No. Treatment required during a cruise is not covered under any healthcare agreement that the UK has with other countries in the world, including EEA countries.

Make sure you have appropriate travel insurance and have informed your insurer of your plans to have treatment abroad, such as dialysis.

Does the funding include my travel and accommodation costs?

No. NHS England does not reimburse travel and accommodation costs that you incur while seeking medical treatment in another EEA country.

Can I get funding for vaccinations in another EEA country?

No. Both the S2 and EU Directive funding routes only apply to medically necessary treatment and not preventative measures such as vaccinations or immunisations.

Giving birth outside the UK

If you want to give birth in another EEA country or Switzerland, you will need an S2 guarantee form to cover the birth and a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) to cover any immediately necessary treatment that arises.

Generally, you should contact NHS England if you plan to have medical treatment in Europe.

However, to apply for an S2 covering maternity care, you need to write to the Overseas Healthcare Team in Newcastle explaining why you want care outside the UK and enclosing the following information:

- a maternity certificate (MATB1) or a letter from your UK GP or midwife showing your expected date of delivery
- your NHS number or National Insurance number
- your date of birth, full UK address and dates of travel

Indicate whether you will be returning to the UK after you have given birth and whether you have already left the UK for the other country.

Applicants resident in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland

Fill in the Maternity S2 application form (DOCX, 35kb) and send it together with your MATB1 and all other required documents to the Overseas Healthcare Team:

Overseas Healthcare Team
Room MO401
Durham House
Washington
Tyne & Wear

England
NE38 7SF
Tel: 0191 218 1999 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm)

Even if you plan to give birth in the UK and you're only going for a short trip abroad, you're advised to take a valid EHIC with you. The card will provide cover for all medical treatment linked to the birth if the baby is born unexpectedly.

Dialysis

Although your EHIC covers the provision of oxygen, renal dialysis and routine medical care, you'll have to arrange and book medical treatment before you go. You should always consult your GP or hospital before travelling. Also, ensure you are not booked with a private healthcare provider, as these are not covered by the EHIC. However, if you've done your research and there are only private dialysis providers available you can [apply for funding/reimbursements \(PDF, 102kb\)](#) under the EU Directive route but this needs to be done **before you travel abroad for treatment**.

Note: Please ensure that you are using the latest available form (as provided on this site) before submitting your application. Applicants using an outdated form may be asked to supply further information or resubmit their application.

You need to speak to the co-ordinator in your UK dialysis unit, who will contact the dialysis unit in the EEA country you will be staying in. You can [look up UK renal units](#) on The Renal Association website.

Ensure you make your arrangements according to your UK schedule. There may also be different guidance depending on what type of dialysis you receive. Make sure you speak to your doctor before you travel. In addition, visit the National Kidney Federation website, which offers [general advice about travelling with a kidney disease](#), as well as specific guidance for haemodialysis patients, peritoneal dialysis patients and guidelines for transplant patients.

Dialysis outside the EEA

Dialysis is not routinely funded by the NHS for patients travelling to a non-EEA country, unless the UK has a reciprocal agreement with the country in question. For more information, please contact NHS England (england.contactus@nhs.net).