

Information Guide

Off-Island Treatment: Information Pack

Your guide to travelling to the UK for treatment.



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Introduction

If you are going off island for treatment or care the Health Connections team provide:

- Face to face, email or telephone support
- This general Information pack and individual guides for specific Hospitals.

Travelling off-island for medical treatment requires planning and support for whatever your individual circumstances or needs may be. Our off-island hospital packs are designed to help you feel prepared, supported and informed.

This pack includes general guidance. Once you know your referral hospital, you can request a paper copy or download a hospital-specific guide (e.g., Southampton General Hospital) from our website.

We also provide a discharge checklist to assist your recovery. Your liaison or ward nurse will help you understand your treatment.

If you need community services (e.g., District Nurse, Physiotherapist) on return, ensure you have their contact details or call the PEH switchboard at 220000 (available weekends and bank holidays).

If you need further information and support, please contact us:

Health Connections Team

Telephone: 01481 227470

Website: www.healthconnections.gg

Email: travel@healthconnections.gg

Last reviewed: February 2025

Referral Process

Step 1:

Your Guernsey hospital consultant has advised that you need to have an appointment, treatment or surgery in the UK.

Step 2:

You will be contacted directly by the UK hospital that you have been referred to with appointment times and dates.

Note: This may take some time and will be impacted by the waiting times in the UK. Please be assured that the HSC Medical Travel Team will chase this up.

You will need to take an up-to-date list of medication to your appointment. We advise contacting your GP at least a week prior to your UK hospital appointment.

- Will you need Medical Equipment? Please refer to **page 16**.
- Will you need support with meals while you recover from your procedure? Please see **page 13**.

Step 3:

Please Contact the HSC Off-Island Medical Travel team (MTT).

Telephone: 01481 224153

Email: Send a copy of your appointment letter to travel@gov.gg

The team can then commence the process of helping to arrange your travel.

The MTT will book your tickets and talk you through the options for accommodation. Please inform The Medical Travel Team if any of the following apply to you:

- You require assistance when you travel
- You need a wheelchair
- Your medical condition permits a chaperone/escort
- You are taking hold luggage
- You need a child seat

Important: Please let them know if your appointment changes or there are any planned changes to your treatment or travel requirements.

Referral Process

Step 6:

Attend your hospital appointment, treatment or surgery.

General information regarding off-island travel is contained within this pack and you will need to request a specific hospital guide from our team for the hospital you are attending while you are in UK e.g. Southampton Hospital.

To request a specific hospital guide, please contact Health Connections or download it directly from the website.

Telephone: 227470

Email: travel@healthconnections.gg

Website: www.healthconnections.gg/supporting-you/off-island-support

Step 7:

When you return home, please provide your MSG consultant with a copy of any paperwork you have been given.

Source : HSC Travel Team.

For Frequently Asked Questions, please see **page 18**.

Support from HSC Off-Island Medical Travel Team (MTT)

Please remember to contact the HSC Off island Medical Travel Team once you have an appointment.

Telephone: 224153

Email: travel@gov.gg

They can begin the process of organising your travel arrangements for you. There are several advantages to booking through MTT:

- Obtain your appointment on time with flexibility and assurance if any plans change.
- You will be covered by the States of Guernsey Travel Insurance.
- If your appointment is before 11 am, please ask the MTT if it is possible to have an overnight stay. Increased levels of traffic at rush hour in UK cities and any delays experienced by air travellers from Guernsey to the UK may result in missing your appointment.

Guernsey airport has a comprehensive guide. See link below:

<https://www.airport.gg/accessibility-information>

Once you are in the UK, you are entitled to:

- Transport to your appointment and return journey to the airport.
- Transport to your accommodation on the day of travel and to the hospital on the morning of the appointment (if you have an appointment early in the morning, and your flight has been booked by HSC the day before the appointment).
- Radiotherapy patients in Southampton are entitled to a daily return taxi between their accommodation and the hospital.

Patients outside of Southampton may be provided rail, underground and other public transport if appropriate.

Important: HSC will not fund any additional transport outside of the requirements for your treatment.

Travel

HSC travel team will book your return travel

If your discharge date is unknown, travel will be arranged once you or a hospital liaison officer confirm you are fit for discharge.

Do not book your own return flight without consulting the nurse in charge. You will need:

- Fitness to fly form
- Discharge letter
- Any necessary medication

If you extend your stay (arrive earlier or leave later), the Medical Travel Team will book your travel, but you must pay any fare difference. Keep receipts for any additional costs normally covered by HSC to claim reimbursement on return.

States of Guernsey travel insurance only covers up to one day before and after your appointment or inpatient stay. Coverage extends if your stay is delayed due to weather but not if you choose to stay longer.

For Those Travelling with the Patient:

You are not covered by HSC Travel Insurance. While Guernsey has a reciprocal healthcare arrangement with the UK, it only covers emergency care. Personal travel insurance is strongly recommended.

If your stay is extended for clinical reasons, HSC will amend bookings and cover costs. If discharge occurs on a weekend, ward staff can contact Click Travel (01215 102 269, 24/7 service) to arrange transport using provided Guernsey order numbers.

Each discharge is managed individually.

Long-term treatment

If you need to receive treatment in a UK hospital for more than five weeks you are entitled to either:

- Additional return flight (and associated travel costs) will be covered by HSC for the patient to return to Guernsey.

Or

- A friend/relative to visit the patient in the UK.

Useful travel resources

UK Bus Checker (app)

- Download from Google Play (on Android) or App Store (Apple).

Citymapper

Website: www.citymapper.com

- Download from Google Play (on Android) or App Store (Apple).

Trainline

Website: www.thetrainline.com

- Download from Google Play (on Android) or App Store (Apple).

Railcards

We know that Travelling in the UK can be expensive. This is why we have included information about railcards.

- 16-17 Saver: If aged 16 or 17, save up to 50% on rail travel.
- 26-30 Railcard: A digital-only Railcard for ages 26-30.
- Disabled Persons Railcard: Offers 1/3 off rail travel for eligible individuals and a companion. It costs £20 for 1 year or £54 for 3 years.
- Family & Friends Railcard: Four adults get 1/3 off and up to four children (aged 5 to 15) get 60% off - and as the name suggests, the users do not need to be related, you just need to travel together.
- Network Railcard: Covers London and the Southeast. Enjoy a 1/3 off off-peak travel for £30 per year.
- Senior Railcard: For those aged 60 and over, save 1/3 on rail fares.

Travel Expenses

Travel Expenses Assistance Scheme (TEAS)

If you require financial support, HSC's TEAS may be able to assist with additional travel costs incurred when travelling for off-island medical appointments.

Note: It is a means-tested provision that is assessed on a case-by-case basis, depending on your incomings and outgoings. Savings need to be below £5000 in order to qualify.

- TEAS covers the cost of travel for a non-medical escort authorised by your doctor or specialist to assist you to/from your medical appointment in the UK and/or for necessary accommodation or other travel related costs that cannot be covered by other means.
- If you need a copy of the means test form or need further information, please call the HSC patient travel team on 222510.

Additional financial support

Victoria Hospital Incorporated (vhi.org.gg) is a charity that supports people from Guernsey when they cannot afford health expenses.

They may be able to help cover the cost of the following:

- Medical bills and equipment
- St John Ambulance Bills
- Travel costs
- Nursery fees
- Respite care
- Dental costs (not cosmetic)

The Guernsey Society for Cancer Relief helps with travel costs for relatives/ carers accompanying a patient for treatment in the UK.

Download from: <http://www.cancerrelief.org.gg>

Travel Escorts & Chaperones

Permitted Non-Medical Escort

In certain circumstances, HSC will meet the travel costs of a non medical chaperone/escort. This would cover the cost of the following.

This will apply on the following basis only:

1. When there is a clinically assessed need for the patient to be accompanied
2. When the patient is over 6 years old and under 18
3. When the patient is under 6 years old, they are entitled to two escorts
4. When the patient is 18 and older, non-medical escorts can be provided under the Travelling Expenses Assistance Scheme only.

Note: This is means tested.

The escort needs to be fit and able to assist the patient so they can travel safely. The HSC patient travel team will book the escort's flight at the same time as making the booking for the patient.

If you feel you want a travel companion but do not meet these criteria, you will need to fund this yourself. However, HSC patient travel team can book on your behalf and take payment by phone. It may be possible to get financial assistance from relevant charities.

HCS does not fund food or accommodation costs for escorts.

Accommodation

Overnight Stay

When an overnight stay is required due to the appointment time or length of treatment, patients are expected to use one of HSC's preferred accommodation providers. The HSC travel team will also book this for you.

Should you need to use other accommodation, you will be refunded up to an agreed amount:

- Hotel/accommodation rate for patients: £110 for accommodation in Central London.
- Hotel/accommodation rate for patients: £85 for accommodation, NOT in Central London (all other areas).

For longer stays

In Southampton, HSC accommodation providers are:

- DoubleTree by Hilton for hotel accommodation (generally for stays of 5 nights or less).
- Vittrum Self-catering apartments - Deanery Court (used for stays of 6 nights and longer).

For other hospitals, do contact HSC travel team to see if they have a preferred hotel/accommodation.

Additional Accommodation

For a list of recommended accommodation near to the hospital you are referred to, please see our Health Connections specific hospital guides.

Meals

Outside of Southampton, HSC may fund the cost of breakfast, but only if it is offered as part of your accommodation booking.

Note:

1. The refund cap for accommodation applies to the total rate, including breakfast.
2. If you are staying in Vittrum accommodation in Southampton, you will be responsible for funding all of your meals.
3. If you are staying in The DoubleTree by Hilton, then your meal allowance is:
 - 1 night: No food allowance
 - 2-5 nights: Breakfast included
 - 6+ nights: Breakfast + £18 in-hotel spend towards a main meal (only available in Southampton)

You may choose an evening meal that exceeds this limit; however, you must pay the difference in full upon checkout.

Please ensure that you advise the hotel if you have any specific dietary requirements.

Additional Support

Travelling to receive medical treatment can be stressful at times and you may wish to have some additional support.

Sunflower Lanyards

The Sunflower Lanyard indicates the wearer may need a helping hand, understanding, or more time in shops, work or when travelling or public space.

A Sunflower Lanyard can be collected from the following locations:

- Health Connections Office at the Princess Elizabeth hospital, opening times: 9:30 - 14:30 weekdays
- Smith Street Health Connections Shops, opening times: 10:00 - 16:30, Mon - Sat
- Tourist Information Office in St Peter Port, opening times: 9:00 - 17:00 Monday-Saturday and 10:00 - 14:00 on Sunday*.

**(Sunday = Summer Months only)*

Autism support at Guernsey airport

Guernsey Airport has prepared a visual guide and tips for travellers in conjunction with Autism Guernsey:

<https://www.airport.gg/sites/default/files/uploads/Autism%20Information%20Leaflet%20D10.pdf>

Comfort Items

When preparing for a hospital stay if you struggle with sensory over stimulation, consider bringing items that provide comfort, safety, and calmness. Here are some suggestions:

- Sensory Items - Music or films
- Weighted Blanket
- Noise-Canceling Headphones
- Fidget Toys - Something to help manage restlessness
- Aromatherapy - Soothing fragrance
- Soft Textures - Item of clothing or blanket
- Visual Comfort - A book, photograph or drawing.

Paediatric Patients

When your child is going into hospital, there are several ways you may be able to help them cope with the experience:

Open Communication

- Talk to your child about the hospital visit. Explain what to expect at the hospital and reassure them that there are people there to help and support them. Be honest and answer any questions they have.

Virtual Tours

- Some hospitals provide a virtual tour of the hospital to familiarise your child with the environment and the different wards. Knowing what to expect can reduce anxiety.

Identify worries

- Find out if there are specific things concerning your child. Some children worry about sharing a room with someone they don't know. Most rooms at hospitals are for one person only, plus a parent.

Stick to routine

- Try to maintain usual routines, such as mealtimes and bedtimes. Familiarity provides a sense of safety for your child.

Useful links:

- The Childrens Trust: www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/
- NHS (Staying with a child in hospital): www.nhs.uk/
- The Prialux Premature Baby Foundation: ppbf.org.gg/

Books that can help your child prepare for hospital

- "Curious George Goes to the Hospital" by H.A. Rey and Margaret Rey.
- "Franklin Goes to the Hospital" by Paulette Bourgeois: Franklin
- "Going to the Hospital" (Usborne First Experiences) by Anna Civardi
- "Peppa Pig: Peppa Goes to Hospital" by
- "Topsy and Tim: Go to Hospital" by Jean Adamson
- "Get Well Soon, Spot" by Eric Hill

Medical Equipment

After your surgery, you may have been recommended equipment to support you as you recover. These can be supplied by:

Guardian Medical Supplies

Fox House
Les Bas Coutils
St Sampsons
GY2 4BH

Telephone: 01481 200548

Email: shop@guardianmedicalsupplies.co.uk

Website: <https://guardianmedicalsupplies.co.uk/>

They Hire out many items, including:

- High back chairs with adjustable legs
- Walking aids
- Wheelchairs
- Knee scooters (for those that cannot put weight on their foot)

Guardian Medical Supplies are also agents for:

- Stannah Stairlifts and Stilz Home Lifts
- Tena Range (incontinence pads)
- Cosy Feet Slippers and footwear - specially made wider fitting footwear for those with bandaged feet.

Shopping and food

Each Specific hospital guide provides you with shops close to or in your UK hospital. After your procedure you may have been advised not to drive for a certain period, or be unable to get to the shops. Here are some useful contact details:

Meals on Wheels

If you know you will struggle to prepare food when you get home after your procedure, you can order meals on wheels to be delivered.

To order Meals on Wheels, please contact your GP surgery or other health professional or social worker.

- They supply a hot meal and dessert at lunchtime.
- The cost is £4.10 per meal.
- It is delivered between 11am-1pm Monday to Saturday.
- They require 48 hours notice.
- Please note their office hours are 09:00 – 13:00, so if the request is after this time, it will take slightly longer.

Some shops that deliver to your home:

Manor Farm Foods

- **Website:** www.manorfarmfoods.com
- **Telephone:** 01481 734433 (order before 11 am for same day delivery).
- **Delivery:** Monday-Saturday.

Coop:

- **Website:** ggshop.channelislands.coop/

Forest stores:

- **Delivery:** Island-wide for £5
- **Email:** foreststores@cwgsy.net
- **Telephone:** 01481 238395

Please note that they prefer to have 48 hours notice. If you know when you will be back, you can order before you leave the island, for your return.

Frequently Asked Questions

What will I need to take?

We have created a simple checklist for you to help remember all the important things to take with you & one for after your treatment. (See separate sheet)

Can I take a Chaperone?

HSC will only pay for a chaperone or escort if the patient's condition needs support and has been authorised by their Guernsey consultant (see criteria on **page 11**). If you are still unsure, contact the HSC Off Island Travel Team:

Telephone: 01481 224153 / 224158

I don't have a passport or a Driving Licence, what do I do?

You can apply for a UK ID card Online - National ID card for the UK:

<https://www.citizencard.com/apply-for-a-uk-id-card-online>

- Prove your age and identity.
- Use as Voter ID.
- Buy age-restricted goods in shops and get discounts online.
- It is recognised by Border officials when traveling to the UK as well as police and retailers.
- Anyone can apply.

I get anxiety when I travel. Can you help?

You are not alone. Lots of people feel anxious when they travel. If you struggle with anxiety or have any other 'hidden disabilities', we supply Sunflower lanyards free of charge. The lanyards are recognised by airport staff and signal your additional needs.

I can't afford for my partner to travel to the UK to support me for treatment. Is there any financial support available?

See Travel Expenses **page 10**.

My partner is coming with me. Can HSC help me book them onto the same flight?

Yes. See, **page 11** escorts and chaperones for more details.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I use my mobile phone in the UK?

Yes, but you will incur roaming charges, so it's recommended that you turn data roaming OFF before leaving Guernsey.

The term "Roaming Charges" refers to the higher price that mobile networks typically charge for using your phone overseas. This applies when traveling from Guernsey to the UK.

How can I access the internet if I have turned Mobile Data off?

You can access the internet anywhere where there is available wifi. Look at buying an e-sim to cover the time in the UK.

Can I take my medical cannabis with me to the UK?

If you have a prescription for medical cannabis, you can take a trip abroad and carry a 30-day supply of medication with you. Specifically, Bedrocan's nabiximoles sublingual spray, dronabinol capsules, nabilone capsules, and five varieties of cannabis flowers are authorised medical cannabis products for most European travellers. However, it's essential to follow proper procedures and check with the UK embassy for the most up-to-date information as this is subject to change at any time.

Discharge checklist

Question	Yes	No
Have you been given a discharge letter?		
Has someone gone through this with you?		
Will you need any medication ordered from the Pharmacy? Ensure this has been ordered and will be ready before the Taxi is booked and takes you to the airport.		
Have you been given your completed Fitness to fly form?		
Do you have a contact number if you have any queries/ concerns after discharge?		
Have you been told you will need a District Nurse?		
Have you got stitches or clips to be taken out?		
Do you have dressings that need changing?		
Will you need catheter care?		
Will you need a physiotherapist?		
Will you need an occupational therapist?		

Discharge checklist (cont.)

Question	Yes	No
Will you need dietitian input?		
Will you need Social Services support?		
Will you need meals on wheels?		

Checklist for surgical patients

Here are a few things that may be useful to take with you:

Item	Yes	No
Comfortable clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clean underwear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pyjamas (remember hospitals are warm so ensure they are lightweight, unless you feel the cold)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dressing gown and slippers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small hand towel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toiletries (soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glasses or contact lenses (case for glasses)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have dressings that need changing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sleep mask	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Earplugs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Important items

Make sure you remember to take these things with you:

Item	Yes	No
Photo identification (driver's license, passport etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ticket & vouchers. IMPORTANT: If you have an internet booking remember to print off a copy OR have a copy on your phone or device	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supply of all your medications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Debit/Credit card (for payments)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small hand towel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
UK money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glasses or contact lenses (case for glasses), if needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hospital Information and accommodation details	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mobile phone and charger (UK Sim card)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Entertainment e.g. Notepad and pen, books, music, headphones, tablet/laptop, crosswords, puzzles, art supplies etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>