

## Access to medications for UK residents currently abroad as a result of Coronavirus

When a patient travels abroad, provision of medicines for the treatment of existing long-term conditions may be provided at NHS expense for up to 3 months. If a patient is travelling abroad for longer than 3 months they are expected to arrange for an alternative supply of medicine at their destination.

Patients travelling abroad should be advised to register with a local practitioner for any conditions that arise while the patient is abroad.

GP prescribing of repeat medication for people stranded abroad is not supported. When doctors prescribe a drug, they are clinically and legally responsible for any results of that decision to prescribe. In view of this, it would not be considered good clinical practice for a doctor to prescribe large amounts of repeat medication to a patient going abroad for an extended period of time, since the prescriber will not be able to monitor the patient.

Patients can be reassured that most medications are available in most countries so they are likely to be able to access a continuing supply of medications for long term conditions.

GMS regulations state that patients should be removed from the practice list where notification has been received that the patient intends to be outside of the UK for more than 3 months. This regulation has not been relaxed currently amid coronavirus pandemic.

The British Medical Association (BMA) has also not updated their guidance. The information on the UK government website is below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-where-you-are-if-you-cannot-return-to-the-uk#if-you-are-running-out-of-your-prescription-medication>

### If you are running out of your prescription medication

Contact your travel insurance company, they may be able to help get your prescription replaced. If they cannot help, seek medical assistance and follow advice from the local authorities in the country you are in.

If you need urgent advice or information, contact the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) by phone 24/7 from anywhere in the world by calling your nearest [British embassy, high commission or consulate](#) or through the FCO line direct on 0207 008 1500.

See also local guidance on prescribing and immunisations for going abroad:

<https://www.thurrockccg.nhs.uk/about-us/document-library/medicines-management/position-statements/4116-travel-advice-sept-2019/file>

Providers commissioned to provide services on behalf of Thurrock CCG and Basildon and Brentwood CCG are reminded that they are required to follow the local joint formulary and prescribing guidance, or relevant Medicines Management agreement.

<b>Position Statement No.</b>	CV01
<b>Title</b>	Access to medications for UK residents currently abroad as a result of coronavirus
<b>References</b>	GOV.UK Guidance, Coronavirus (COVID-19): staying where you are if you cannot return to the UK: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-where-you-are-if-you-cannot-return-to-the-uk#if-you-are-running-out-of-your-prescription-medication">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-where-you-are-if-you-cannot-return-to-the-uk#if-you-are-running-out-of-your-prescription-medication</a>
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