

Policy Title: Prescription Requests – Patients Travelling Abroad

Person(s) responsible for review of this Policy	Chris Stoppard – Practice Manager, Dr Emma Green - GP Partner
Date of Last Review	June 2022
Date of Next Review	June 2023

Introduction

This policy outlines the procedure 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. In addition, GPs 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.

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 then find an alternative supply of that medication.

St Thomas Medical Group Policy

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. Supply of any medication is at the discretion of the GP.

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 should not seek medication for themselves while they are abroad as this constitutes NHS fraud.

Prescriptions for medicines in case of illness while abroad.

GP's 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 country's embassy before you travel.