

nent resident in Spain, you must look into registering for state healthcare in another way in order to make sure you are fully protected. Please see the options mentioned above, or go to the following websites:

For further information on accessing healthcare in Spain, see [www.gov.uk/healthcare-in-spain](http://www.gov.uk/healthcare-in-spain)

For further information on the EHIC, visit [www.healthcareinspain.eu](http://www.healthcareinspain.eu).

Treatment, coverage and costs under the public healthcare system...

If you are a temporary visitor to Spain and you incur any costs while being treated under the state healthcare system, you may be entitled to a refund. Contact the Overseas Healthcare Team (OHT) for more details.

## Doctors

State-provided healthcare is generally free of charge. If you need to call out a doctor in an emergency, make sure you have a valid EHIC or Spanish health card and ask to be taken to the local public health centre.

Alternatively, if you need to be taken to a hospital for treatment and you wish to be treated under the state healthcare system, make sure it is a national health (public) hospital and not a private clinic or centre.

Please be aware, if you ask a hotel to call a doctor on your behalf, they may call a private doctor to see you.

## Dentists

Dental treatment is generally not available under the state healthcare system. If you require dental treatment, you will

need to be seen privately. Please be aware that costs are non-refundable.

## Hospital treatment

You will need a doctor's referral for any hospital treatment, except in emergencies. However, you should try to go to a public hospital as only these hospitals offer treatment free of charge.

Make sure you can present your EHIC or Spanish health card on admission or you may be charged as a private patient. Costs incurred for private treatment are non-refundable, however exceptionally you may be able to get a refund or partial-refund if you are a visitor under the Cross Border Directive. See the NHS Choices website for more information at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk).

## Prescriptions

Medicines prescribed by health service practitioners can be obtained from any pharmacy (farmacia). Spain uses a patient contribution (co-payment) system where residents are required to pay a percentage of the cost of their prescription medication.

For more information on prescriptions and costs, visit [www.gov.uk/healthcare-in-spain](http://www.gov.uk/healthcare-in-spain).

## Pre-arranged treatment as a temporary visitor

The most common conditions that have to be pre-arranged before you travel are oxygen therapy and kidney dialysis. For all other condi-

tions, you should consult your doctor to ask whether treatment needs to be organised in advance. Remember, for all medical treatment abroad, you must present your EHIC.

### ■ Oxygen therapy

Contact the Spanish regional health authorities which cover the area you are travelling to at least one month in advance to make the necessary arrangements before leaving the UK. Oxygen therapy arranged through the public health system will be covered under the EHIC.

For further information on the provision of oxygen in Spain, including a list of the documentation required to complete your request and contact details of the regional health authorities, visit [www.healthcareinspain.eu](http://www.healthcareinspain.eu).

## Dialysis

Speak to the co-ordinator of your Dialysis Unit in the UK who will contact the Dialysis Unit in Spain nearest to where you will be staying. Please note, the provision of dialysis will be subject to availability in Spain. As with oxygen therapy, dialysis should be arranged at least one month in advance of your trip.

Kidney dialysis will be covered under the EHIC.

### Useful Contacts

Overseas Healthcare Team (OHT): 0044 191 218 1999

International Pension Centre (IPC): 0044 191 218 7777

Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC): 0044 191 203 7010

INSS (Spanish social security office): 0034 900 166 565



# Dr Hilary Jones visits the Family Medical Centre

The Family Medical Centre in Albir had a very special visitor recently. The well known and loved Dr Hilary Jones from ITV's Lorraine Kelly show visited the centre to discuss health care provision for expats and holiday-makers.

Dr Hilary was also very interested to find out how and why nurses Dawn and Amanda came to set up their own medical centre.

Amanda explained: "Dawn and I have worked together with GPs here in Spain for the last eight years. When our last job ended due to retirement of the doctor we decided to set up our own practice. We had a very clear idea of the type of environment we wanted to create and services we wished to provide for the community."

Nurse owned medical centres are not something that you come across every

day and you certainly get the feeling that there is something different about this place. From the warm and welcoming décor to the lively, chatty atmosphere in the waiting room. Dr Hilary fitted in perfectly!

Many people including expats are struggling financially at the moment. Expat pensioners have seen their pensions shrink and many workers are on minimum wage. Dawn and Amanda explained that in light of this they decided to set the consultation fee at €38 to see a GP, nurse or midwife.

Dr Hilary asked about SIP cards and EHIC cards. Dawn and Amanda explained that although many people are entitled to health care on the Spanish health system they come to the Family Medical Centre for a variety of reasons.

Dawn explained: "The main reason our patients feel so comfortable is that we are all English speaking. Many holidaymakers tentatively come

into reception and very slowly say 'Do... you... speak... English?' and when we answer 'Yes, I am English, how can I help you?' their relief is immeasurable!

Also, for our 'resident' patients who are entitled to care on the Spanish healthcare system, they often prefer to speak to a doctor or nurse in their own language, especially if their problem is of a sensitive nature.

### Some questions frequently asked at the family medical centre

■ Will my right to use the UK NHS be lost if I see a doctor in Spain? No. If you reside in Spain for less than six months per year (i.e. you are non-resident) and need to see a doctor here it will not in any way affect your right to NHS care when you finish your extended holiday and return to the U.K.

■ Can I be on both the Spanish and the UK NHS at the same time? No. To be entitled to social healthcare either in Spain or the UK you have to be a resident of that country. You cannot be resident in two places at one time!

■ As a resident in Spain and holder of a Spanish SIP card, if I have a

consultation at a private clinic will I then lose my right to Spanish social health care? No. Many patients 'mix and match' between their Spanish social doctor and a private GP. There are occasions when a patient prefers to speak to a doctor in their own language and not via an interpreter (especially if health issues are of a private nature).

■ If I consult a private GP and am diagnosed with a serious illness which I then cannot afford to continue with private care, can my care be

### ADVERTORIAL

transferred to the NHS either in UK or Spain? If a patient unfortunately finds themselves in this position, a private clinic cannot transfer a patient directly into the NHS. However, we give the patient a detailed written report (including all test results) for the patient to take directly to their NHS doctor. This often saves crucial time in reaching a diagnosis.



AS SEEN ON TV!

**Family Medical Centre**




**British Medical & Dental Centre**

- Family Doctor
- Nurse
- Midwife **38€**

Tel: **966 865 072**

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