

Position Statement for prescribing selected vaccines on the NHS for travel abroad

NHS Southwark CCG is committed to delivering best value by ensuring that we use our resources well. Therefore, **NHS Southwark CCG no longer supports the routine prescribing of the following vaccinations on the NHS for travel abroad:**

- Hepatitis B (single agent)
- Meningitis ACWY135
- Yellow fever
- Japanese B encephalitis
- Tick-borne encephalitis
- Rabies vaccine

Which vaccinations can be provided under the NHS?

NHS patients are entitled to receive free advice on travel vaccinations, however, only some vaccinations required for travel abroad are available on the NHS. These vaccinations are:

- Hepatitis A
- Typhoid
- Combined hepatitis A and typhoid
- Combined tetanus
- Diphtheria and polio
- Cholera

These vaccinations for travel abroad are remunerated by the NHS as part of Additional Services under General Medical Services (GMS) and Personal Medical Services (PMS) contracts. No fee may be charged by the practice to a patient registered for NHS services with that practice for the process of administration of the vaccine or prescription writing.

Where a practice does not hold stock of these vaccines due to infrequent use, the practice may issue the patient with an NHS prescription to be dispensed at a pharmacy. If the patient usually pays for their prescriptions, the standard NHS prescription charge would apply.

Other vaccines such as hepatitis B, meningitis ACWY 135, yellow fever, Japanese B encephalitis, tick-borne encephalitis and rabies vaccine, for travel abroad, are not remunerated by the NHS as part of Additional Services under GMS and PMS contracts. These vaccines should not be prescribed on NHS prescription. Practices may charge a registered patient for travel vaccines not available on the NHS if requested for travel abroad.

Can the combined hepatitis A and hepatitis B vaccine be prescribed on the NHS?

The combined hepatitis A and hepatitis B vaccine is prescribable on the NHS because it contains hepatitis A. For the purposes of travel, because hepatitis B is not commissioned by the NHS as a travel vaccine, NHS Southwark CCG does not support the routine prescribing of this combination vaccine on NHS prescription. Patients requiring both hepatitis A and B for travel purposes should receive the vaccines separately, receiving the hepatitis A on NHS prescription and the hepatitis B on a private prescription. If the patient requests the combined vaccine this should not be prescribed on NHS prescription. The patient should be advised to obtain this privately.

Is there a cohort of patients with additional lifestyle risks and/or specific medical conditions who are travelling abroad who may still receive the hepatitis B monovalent vaccine under the NHS?

Patients with additional lifestyle risks and/or a medical condition that is listed in the Green Book (hepatitis B, chapter 18) are entitled to NHS provision of hepatitis B whether or not they are travelling. In these circumstances, hepatitis B vaccination should be given as part of their general medical care on the NHS.

If an NHS prescription for hepatitis B vaccination is issued for a patient where there is a lifestyle risk and/or medical condition in addition to travel requirement, it is recommended that a record of the reason for the issue is maintained.

NHS England and Public Health England have developed Patient Group Directions to support practices in administering the hepatitis B monovalent vaccine to this cohort of patients. Please refer to: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/london/our-work/immunis-team/>

Can a patient requesting vaccination for occupational health purposes receive these under the NHS?

It is the view of the British Medical Association's General Practitioners Committee that there is no obligation under the GMS regulations for a practice to provide occupational health services for patients. That responsibility rests with the employer under Health and Safety Legislation, and in occupations where there is a risk to health from any form of work related infection, it is the employer's duty to assess that risk and, if present, to protect the workforce. Further information is available here:

<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/gp-practices/service-provision/hepatitis-b-immunisations>

Does this guidance affect the complete routine immunisation schedule?

This guidance does not change or affect the complete routine immunisation schedule. For further information on the schedule and NHS England and Public Health England Patient Group Directions to support delivery of the schedule please refer to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-complete-routine-immunisation-schedule>

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/london/our-work/immunis-team/>

Guidance for prescribers

- Ensure patients are fully informed of the importance of appropriate travel vaccination in order to reduce the risk of disease.
- Information on which vaccinations are necessary or recommended for the areas your patients will be visiting is available from:

[Travel Health Pro](https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries) <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>

[Travax](http://www.travax.nhs.uk/malaria.aspx) <http://www.travax.nhs.uk/malaria.aspx>

[Fit for Travel](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice.aspx) www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice.aspx

- The patient may either be given a private prescription to obtain the vaccines, or they may be charged for stock purchased and held by the practice. An FP10 must not be used to provide these vaccines.
- A charge may also be levied for the process of administration of the vaccine and private prescription writing. The level of charges should be determined by the practice.
- If a vaccine is provided privately to a patient, the vaccine and administration costs may not be claimed back from the NHS
- Practices should give the patient written information on the vaccination schedule proposed and the charges involved at the outset

- If a private prescription to obtain the vaccines is being provided, patients should be advised to compare prices as there may be variation in the amount that individual pharmacies will charge to supply the vaccination.
- There may be further charges incurred after vaccination depending on where the patient is travelling. These charges should be arranged privately and funded by patients and not the NHS.
- If a practice does not wish to provide a private service for the above mentioned vaccines, patients should be advised that they may obtain advice and travel vaccinations from private travel clinics. Some community pharmacies also provide travel healthcare services.