## Healthcare in Spain

## European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

If you are travelling to Spain, you should ensure that you have a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). The EHIC is normally valid for three to five years and covers any medical treatment that becomes necessary during your trip, because of either illness or an accident.

The card gives access to state-provided medical treatment only, and you'll be treated on the same basis as an 'insured' person living in the country you're visiting. In some cases this might not cover all the things you'd expect to get free of charge from the NHS in the UK and you may have to make a contribution towards the cost of your care.

## Travel Insurance

For short term trips, it is advisable to acquire travel insurance as this can be obtained for a very reasonable cost. It will supplement the EHIC card by covering additional costs such as translation services as most doctors will not speak English.

The NHS operate a website providing comprehensive information about healthcare abroad at For more related information from the official government website: http://www.dh.gov.uk/travellers.

## Healthcare if Relocating to Spain

The Spanish state health care scheme (INSALUD) is very similar to the UK's National Health Service in that the quality of care available is incredibly high for emergency, basic health care and treatment.

As a rule of thumb the state health care system in Spain will cover all your doctor appointments, ambulance and hospital costs as well as medical tests, it subsidises the cost of medication, covers basic dental treatment and covers complete ante and post-natal care.

People relocating to Spain will often supplement the free services offered by the state with the purchase of private health insurance. This is because the state system will sometimes only cover up to 75% of the cost of treatment, leaving patients to find the remaining amount.

Private Health Insurance

A private health insurance policy can prove to be good value as it will cover the additional costs, speed up waiting times and bed shortages, and of course, provide for translation of consultations with medical staff. Most will also cover the cost of dental treatment and most importantly, annual health checks.

Working in Spain

If you are intending to work in Spain, you will need to sign up for the Spanish state healthcare scheme and contributions will be deducted automatically from your wages. An application should result in you receiving your social security card and number in a few weeks later and you can use this whenever you need medical attention.

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