

**Position Statement for Prescribing Selected Vaccines on the
NHS for Travel Abroad**

Part of NHS Lambeth CCG's "[Healthier Together](#)" [Five Year Strategy](#) is to deliver best value by ensuring that we live within our means and use our resources well. Therefore to help us deliver our strategy **NHS Lambeth CCG no longer supports the routine prescribing of the following vaccinations on the NHS locally, for travel abroad:**

- hepatitis B (monovalent vaccine and combination vaccine with hepatitis A)
- meningitis ACWY135
- yellow fever
- Japanese B encephalitis
- tick-borne encephalitis
- rabies vaccine

Why are we doing this?

- To standardise local prescribing practice, reduce variation and increase consistency in available NHS services.
- To help contain the costs of medicines on the local NHS budget
- To free up clinician time for people who have more complex healthcare needs and who need more active support in managing their health
- To ease the pressure on NHS services by reducing demand on prescriber consultation time to support vaccination recommendations/requirements for voluntary travel abroad
- To reduce reliance on prescribers to provide prescriptions for vaccinations that are clinically effective but due to the nature of the product, are deemed a low priority for NHS funding as their use is associated with voluntary travel abroad

Further information can be found in our NHS Lambeth CCG Governing Body Meeting in Public Report [Proposals for local guidance on NHS Prescribing in Lambeth. June 2016](#)

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 vaccine, typhoid vaccine, combined hepatitis A and typhoid vaccine, combined tetanus, diphtheria and polio vaccine and cholera vaccine. 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 e.g. cholera vaccine, or immediate requirement by the patient, the practice may issue the patient with a 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. However, because hepatitis B is not commissioned by the NHS as a travel vaccine, NHS Lambeth 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 Associations 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/>

Additional 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>)
(previously known as National Travel Health Network and Centre, NaTHNaC)
 - Travax (<http://www.travax.nhs.uk/malaria.aspx>)
 - Fit for Travel (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; it is advisable to develop a practice protocol available to patients in the form of a leaflet or section on the practice website.

- If a vaccine is provided privately to a patient, the vaccine and administration costs may not be claimed back from the NHS.
- Practices should also give the patient written information on the vaccination schedule proposed and the charges involved at the outset of the process.
- 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:
 - Post-vaccination serological testing in the case of Hepatitis B administration, if performed for travel reasons.
 - Provision of certification of immunisation (for example, confirmation of Meningitis ACWY135 administration).

Practices should note that 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.

Guidance for patients, carers and guardians

- NHS patients are entitled to receive free advice on recommended vaccinations for travel abroad.
- Seek travel health advice at least 4-6 weeks before travel, but even if time is short it's never too late to get advice.
- For travel vaccines not available on the NHS, a charge may be applied by your GP practice for the following:
 - The vaccine
 - Administration of the vaccine
 - Writing the private prescription
 - Post vaccination serological testing in the case of hepatitis B administration, if performed for travel reasons
 - Provision of certification of immunisation, for example to confirm meningitis ACWY135 administration

The level of charge applied is at the discretion of the GP practice.

- If a private prescription is obtained, compare prices as there may be variation in the amount that individual pharmacies will charge to supply the vaccination.
- Travel vaccinations are also available at travel clinics; and some pharmacies provide a travel vaccine service.
- Advice related to vaccinations, malaria prevention and travel health is also available from:
 - Travel Health Pro (<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>)
 - Fit for Travel (www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/advice.aspx)
 - NHS Choices (<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions>)
 - Gov.uk – Foreign travel advice (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>)
 - NHS Lambeth CCG (<http://www.lambethccg.nhs.uk/your-health/keeping-well>)

Comments or complaints

We do all we can to provide good quality health services, but sometimes things don't go as they should. We welcome people telling us about how we can improve, or make a complaint about the service they have received from NHS Lambeth CCG.

We are also very pleased to receive positive feedback and compliments about our work or the quality of health services received as a local resident.

North East London Commissioning Support Unit (NEL CSU) complaints team is responsible for managing the complaints process on behalf of NHS Lambeth CCG.

The team can also give you general advice about the complaints procedure.

Tel: 0800 4561517

Email: NELCSU.SEcomplaints@nhs.net

Write to: NEL Complaints Team, 1 Lower Marsh, London, SE1 7NT

References:

- British Medical Association General Practitioners Committee Focus on travel immunisations Guidance for GPs. November 2012.
<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/gp-practices/service-provision/travel-immunisation>
- British Medical Association General Practitioners Committee Focus on hepatitis B immunisations. August 2012.
<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/gp-practices/service-provision/hepatitis-b-immunisations>
- PrescQIPP Travel vaccines (DROP-List) Bulletin 74. September 2014.
<https://www.prescqipp.info/resources/send/123-travel-vaccines-drop-list/1474-bulletin-74-travel-vaccines-drop-list>
- GMS Regulations (Schedule 2, paragraph 4 and Schedule 5, paragraph 1 (g)) 1st March 2004
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/291/schedule/2/made>