

Health cover on your holidays



Liam Conway advises students on why they need a European Health Insurance Card, how to apply and when and where they can be used

What is a European Health Insurance Card?

The European health insurance card was introduced on June 1, 2004. The card gives Irish citizens access to the necessary healthcare in the public system of any EU/EEA country or Switzerland if you become ill or injured while on a temporary stay in that country.

Why should you have the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC Card)?

As a member of the EU, each EU citizen is entitled to receive necessary healthcare in the public system of another member EU country. It is free – there are no costs involved for applying or having a card.

You should apply for the European Health Insurance Card if you:

- Plan to go on holiday to another EU/EEA country or Switzerland
- Regularly visit any of these countries, for example on business, as a transport worker or for leisure
- Plan to go to any of these countries to seek work
- Are being sent by your employer to work in any of these countries temporarily but will continue to pay tax in Ireland
- Intend to undertake a course of study in any of these countries but still consider yourself as ordinarily resident in Ireland
- Intend to visit any of these countries for any other type of temporary stay where healthcare in itself is not the aim of the visit.

How do you apply?

That there is no charge for the European Health Insurance Card. Any website attempting to charge you for your card is not connected to the HSE or any State services.

If you already have a medical card or a drug payment scheme card you can apply online at: www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/schemes/EHIC/apply/ The application only takes one minute to complete.

If you do not have a medical card or a drug payment scheme card, you can apply in person by completing an application form at your local health office or apply by post by downloading an application. Complete the application form and return it by post to your local health office.

What personal details do I need to give in order to get my card?

You will need to provide your name, address, date of birth and personal public service (PPS) number. You may be asked to show evidence of your PPS number, such as a P60 or a social services card.

You may also need to show proof that you are ordinarily resident in Ireland. More details are provided on the application form or available from your local health office.

Where can I use my card?

You can use your card to get necessary healthcare while on a temporary stay in all the countries of the European Economic



Area and also in Switzerland. The European Economic Area includes the 28 member states of the EU and four member states of the European Free Trade Association.

Finally, it is always recommended that anyone travelling in the EU should have travel insurance also. Travel insurance is designed to protect your health, belongings and the cost of your trip.

INMO members can get discounted rates on travel insurance with Cornmarket Ltd.

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