

## **Treatment Abroad Unit (National Highly Specialized Referrals Programme)**

### **Structure, Functions and Responsibilities**

The Unit is divided into three sections: one dealing with highly specialized treatment abroad, one dealing with specialized treatment given at Mater Dei Hospital by Visiting Consultants and one dealing with ERNs. Nine persons are currently employed within these sections. This Section reports to the Chief Medical Officer.

The Treatment Abroad Coordination Office was set up to coordinate the National Highly Specialised Overseas Referrals Programme. This programme entails the implementation of a Reciprocal Health Agreement between Malta and the UK through which Maltese patients are offered medical treatment in UK NHS hospitals. Furthermore the office also coordinates the cases of patients referred to European Hospital for treatment under the S2 Route. The logistical arrangements for patients are carried out by the Treatment Abroad Section based at Mater Dei Hospital. Furthermore, this Office is responsible for the coordination and logistical arrangements in relation to Clinics carried out by Overseas Visiting Consultants at Mater Dei Hospital. The Office supports the Chief Medical Officer in carrying out feasibility studies to assess which services can be introduced at Mater Dei Hospital through regular visits by Overseas Visiting Consultants. Recently a person has been recruited to take up the role of Coordinator for the ERNS. European Reference Networks (ERNs) are virtual networks involving healthcare providers across Europe. They aim to facilitate discussion on complex or rare diseases and conditions that require highly specialised treatment, and concentrated knowledge and resources.

Treatment Abroad Coordination Office:

- To offer Secretarial Support to the Treatment Abroad Committee
- To support the Chief Medical Officer in matters related to EU legislative developments in the field of cross-border care (scheduled treatment abroad) and assist in the implementation of administrative obligations resulting from EU regulations, directives and decisions in this area.
- To contribution to the formulation and/or review policies
- To coordinate Visiting Consultants Clinic and support the development of new clinics and/or new training initiatives for local consultants and other clinical staff
- To administer and manage the National Highly Specialized Referral Programme Office
- To carry out reviews in work practices of the National Highly Specialized Referral Programme Office to ensure efficient and effective operational procedures

- To carry out general, organization and communication duties as required by the Health Department Treatment Abroad Section (MDH):
- To give logistical support for patients authorized by government to get further medical treatment under this programme
- To liaise with UK hospitals to obtain earliest admission dates for the patients through the Malta High Commission in London
- To respond to queries made by the public about this programme
- To perform accounting functions related to this programme
- To coordinate the ERNs
- To keep up to date records and statistics related to the functions of this Unit.

### **Other Functions and responsibilities**

- Management of agreements between MEH and voluntary organisations;
- Managements of agreements between MEH and Private Health Care Providers;
- Management of agreements between MEH and Service providers overseas.
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### **General Description of the Categories of Documents Held**

- Databases
- Standardised Operation Procedures
- Policy Documents

Description of all manuals and similar types of documents which contain policies, principles or rules or guidelines in accordance with which decisions or recommendations are made in respect of members of the Public:

- Treatment Abroad Committee Terms of Reference

### **Contact Details of the FOI Office of the Treatment Abroad Unit**

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