



Deputy Colm Burke T.D.,
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

3rd April 2025

PQ : 16143/25

To ask the Minister for Health to detail the circumstances where air or sea travel fares are covered for patients, or a travelling companion, under the treatment abroad scheme; and if she will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Burke,

Thank you for your parliamentary question referenced above, which was passed to the HSE for response.

In general the Treatment Abroad Scheme (TAS) provides for the funding of a public patient from Ireland to access treatment which is not available in Ireland, in another EU/EEA country, the UK or Switzerland. A core principle of the governing legislation, EU Regulations 883/2004 and 987/2009 is that the patient must apply for and be granted prior authorisation before accessing the treatment. The HSE cannot be held liable for the costs of healthcare, the HSE has not agreed in advance to assume.

EU Regulation 883/2004 does not require patients' home countries to fund the costs of travel or subsistence. However, in recognition that air and sea fares are not costs a patient would incur if the treatment was available in Ireland, the HSE, subject to available funding, will fund the economic air or sea fares of individual patients. In certain circumstances the air or sea fares of a companion/carer are also approved where such companion/carer is necessary to assist the patient. In relation to a paediatric patient the costs of one or both parents/guardians are also reimbursed.

I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Donohoe
Head of Function/Service