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Det Grønlandske Sundhedsvæsen

04 April 2024

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Introduction

The Greenlandic Healthcare System is present in all settlements in Greenland. However, many contacts occur via telemedicine, and there is a significant difference in the specific healthcare services available in different parts of the country. Some places only offer minor consultations, while others have small hospitals that lack resources to care for severely ill patients. The healthcare system in Greenland cannot be compared to other European healthcare systems, and the same services cannot be provided.

This memo specifies what the Greenlandic Healthcare System can provide in terms of emergency medical assistance to tourists traveling in Greenland.

Receiving healthcare services requires payment.

Procedure for requesting assistance from the Greenlandic Healthcare System

(This does not apply to evacuations via the Joint Arctic Command. For evacuations, follow the Radio Medical Denmark, SAR procedure.)

If medical assistance is needed for a cruise tourist, follow these steps:

1. The ship's doctor calls Radio Medical Denmark, +45 75 45 67 66.
 - a. Radio Medical Denmark will then contact:
 - b. the on-call doctor at Queen Ingrid's Hospital, +299 55 99 55,
 - c. and provide the patient's name, date of birth, and a contact phone number.
2. The ship's doctor sends the completed "*Patient information form*" (Appendix 1) with all required information to turist@peqqik.gl and to the port agent.
 - a. All communication regarding the finances of healthcare services will be handled by the healthcare system's finance department and the paying party.
3. The on-call doctor devises a treatment plan and assesses where the patient should be treated.
4. The on-call doctor informs the receiving hospital that the tourist is on their way.
5. If the patient needs to be transferred, the on-call doctor contacts the patient travel coordination department.

Healthcare Services

The Greenlandic Healthcare System can only provide healthcare services to tourists at the same level as those provided to the country's citizens. Therefore, it is not possible to order or purchase other diagnostic measures or treatments in the healthcare system, apart from those offered to the country's citizens or as referred to by a doctor employed in the Greenlandic Healthcare System.



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It will always be the healthcare system's doctors who decide the course of treatment, regardless of what the ship's doctor or insurance company may wish.

Settlements

It is not possible to receive healthcare services in the settlements. There are no doctors or nurses present. Contact with the healthcare system takes place via telemedicine over the phone.

If a tourist becomes seriously ill in a settlement, it should be expected that the individual will need to be transported to the nearest town. To ensure the best possible treatment, it is expected that there has been contact with the medical hotline at Queen Ingrid's Hospital, +299 55 99 55, to guarantee that the patient will be sent to the right place.

Towns

- Qaanaaq
- Upernavik
- Uummannaq
- Qeqertarsuaq
- Qasigiannuguit
- Kangerlussuaq
- Maniitsoq
- Paamiut
- Narsaq
- Nanortalik
- Tasiilaq

There is usually a doctor present at the health centers in the towns. However, there may be shorter periods when there is not a doctor in town. Therefore, only basic healthcare services can be offered at the health centers.

Tourists cannot be hospitalized in these facilities but are instead transferred to either a regional hospital or the national hospital in Nuuk. Please contact the medical hotline at Queen Ingrid's Hospital for assistance, +299 55 99 55.

Transportation expenses are paid by the tourist or the tourist's insurance company. Patient transfers and destinations are solely determined based on medical indications. The tourist or insurance company may not choose.

Regional Cities

The Greenlandic Healthcare System has five regional hospitals:

- Ilulissat
- Aasiaat
- Sisimiut
- Qaqortoq
- Tasiilaq

Surgical readiness cannot be guaranteed at regional hospitals, so acute and severely ill patients will be transferred to Nuuk based on medical indications. The regional hospitals can provide primary healthcare services in the form of medical consultations, skeletal and thoracic x-rays, and certain laboratory services. There are no CT scanners available.



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Nuuk

Queen Ingrid's Hospital is the national hospital and serves the entire country with specialized treatment. It has medical and surgical wards, a maternity ward, an intensive care unit, and an intermediate care unit. There are operating rooms for emergency procedures.

Queen Ingrid's Hospital has both an MRI scanner and a CT scanner. Scans are performed solely based on medical indications and cannot be ordered by insurance companies.

Patient Transfers and Evacuations

Patient transfers can occur by ship, helicopter, or plane. If it is not an acute case, the regular transportation network is used. However, patients requiring a stretcher for transport are primarily transferred using the Healthcare System's ambulance plane. The Greenlandic Healthcare System only has one ambulance plane, a King Air with room for 2 stretchers. The plane is used for patients throughout the country, and emergency evacuations are prioritized. Therefore, it is not possible for insurance companies to book transfers with the King Air. Transfers and evacuations are done solely based on medical indications.

Disembarkation of Ill Passengers

Disembarkation of ill passengers should not occur without prior agreement with the Greenlandic Healthcare System. This is to ensure that ill passengers do not disembark in places where necessary medical treatment cannot be provided. Disembarkation should only be carried out after prior agreement and discussion with the medical hotline at Queen Ingrid's Hospital. In the case of an emergency evacuation, contact with the healthcare system will be made through the Arctic Command, which is in contact with Radio Medical Denmark, SAR.

Evacuation to Home Country from Kangerlussuaq or Narsarsuaq

There are only 2 airports in Greenland that can accommodate ambulance jets: Kangerlussuaq and Narsarsuaq. There are no hospitals in these locations, therefore no hospital wards or 24-hour care available.

If an insurance company wishes to transfer a tourist from Greenland to their home country using an ambulance plane, it can be done from Kangerlussuaq (Søndrestrøm SFJ) International Airport. Transportation from the regional hospital/national hospital to Kangerlussuaq will be by charter. If the King Air is available, it can possibly be used. If not, transportation will be by Dash 8, provided there is available capacity with Air Greenland.

If the patient can be transported to Narsarsuaq from the Regional Hospital in Qaqortoq, it can be done either by helicopter (charter or regular service) or by boat (charter or regular service).

The Greenlandic Healthcare System can assist in arranging domestic transportation or transportation to Copenhagen. This requires a payment guarantee from the insurance company.



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Death/Mortuary Procedures

If a guest passes away aboard a cruise ship, it should be noted that repatriating the deceased from Greenland will take a long time. This can be done either by ship via Denmark and then to the home country or by flight to Copenhagen and onward from there. If the Greenlandic Healthcare System is to handle this task, it requires a payment guarantee from the insurance company, as well as the signature of the next of kin to accept the lengthy transit time.

Medication

Prescription medication can ONLY be obtained at a regional hospital or at Queen Ingrid's Hospital in Greenland. Payment is required upon receipt. There is a highly limited list of available medications, so it should not be expected that the specific medication one normally uses will be available.

There is a limited selection of over-the-counter medication available in grocery stores.

The National Dentistry

The National Dentistry can assist with emergency dental treatment. However, specialized dental treatment is not available.

If emergency treatment is needed, please contact the administration of National Dentistry at +299 34 40 16 between the hours of 08.00-16.00 on weekdays. The information in Appendix 1 should be provided when contacting the administration of National Dentistry.

Emergency dental treatment is possible if a dentist is present. District dental clinics are located throughout the country.

The tourist is responsible for arranging transportation and covering transportation expenses to the designated treatment location. Additionally, there will be expenses for the emergency treatment itself.