

- **What is the Cross Border Directive and how does it work?**
- **1) How does this scheme work?**The Cross Border Directive (CBD) allows for patients ordinarily resident in Ireland who require and are entitled to public healthcare services to be referred to another EU/EEA* member state for that care and be reimbursed in accordance with the legislation. It will be a matter for the patient and his/her referring doctor to identify the clinician abroad and satisfy him/herself in relation to the qualifications, quality and safety of the services being availed of in the other jurisdiction. Funding will only be reimbursed for healthcare that is publicly funded and available in Ireland and which is not contrary to Irish legislation. Reimbursement will be made in line with published reimbursement rates available from the National Contact Point (NCP). Reimbursement will only be made to the patient or his or her parents/guardian in the case of a child. A private outpatient appointment in the Republic of Ireland may not be used under any circumstances to exercise rights for the purposes of reimbursement under the provisions of the Cross Border Healthcare Directive. The attendance of a private appointment in Ireland deems the patient a private patient and not a public patient for the purpose of provisions the Cross Border Directive.
- **2) What treatments are available under the scheme?**Any service which is provided by the public health services in Ireland can be availed of under the Cross Border Directive (CBD), for example
 - acute/psychiatric hospital services – day, inpatient, outpatient care,
 - community based outpatient care e.g.:
 - dental/orthodontics services (some exceptions i.e. dental screening services in schools)
 - speech & language services
 - occupational therapy services (some exceptions i.e. assessment for aids at home)
 - psychology services
 - physiotherapy services
 - disability services
 - methadone programme
 - ophthalmic (eye tests etc) services
 - mental health services
- The above is based on current services provided by the HSE and excludes long term care e.g. nursing home care.

- 3) Who is eligible?** Anyone who is entitled to access services as a public patient in Ireland (in general anyone who is *ordinarily* resident in Ireland) is eligible. However, private patients may not access funding under the CBD or the Treatment Abroad Scheme (TAS) i.e. a referral from a consultant whom the patient is attending in a private capacity will not be accepted for the purposes of the CBD. Private patients may revert to public patient pathways in order to avail of their entitlements under the CBD. Please note, under no circumstance will an outpatient appointment in a private capacity in Ireland be accepted for the purpose of accessing healthcare abroad under the Cross Border Directive. Public referral pathways as applicable in Ireland must be adhered to. Public consultant appointments can only be accepted. A private outpatient appointment in the Republic of Ireland may not be used under any circumstances to exercise rights for the purposes of reimbursement under the provisions of the Cross Border Healthcare Directive. The attendance of a private appointment in Ireland deems the patient a private patient and not a public patient for the purpose of provisions the Cross Border Directive.
- 4) Are there restrictions?** The scheme is not applicable to persons seeking:

 - access to services which are not provided for within the legislation of the state
 - access to organ donation/transplant
 - access to long term/ residential care
- 5) How do I find out information on services abroad?** Each country is required to establish a National Contact Point (NCP) which can be contacted to provide information on services in that country. You can contact the Irish NCP (see [contact details](#)) for details of NCP in other member states, which can also be found [here](#).

 - However, to access public health services here in Ireland you must be referred from a suitable clinician e.g. GP, consultant, or HSE clinician, this referral can then simply be used for the service abroad instead. Therefore it is your referring clinician who should assist you in identifying the appropriate service abroad under the terms of the CBD.
- 6) Do I have to be a public patient?** Yes: in general any service provided by the HSE through the use of public funding to public patients can be described as public healthcare for the purposes of the Cross Border Directive. Private patients are not public patients for the purposes of access to health care under EU Regulations and Directives. Private patients should access funding for treatments abroad through their private health insurance. It is of course understood and accepted that any private patient can opt to avail of public patient status but only by following public referral pathways: private status cannot be used as a means of skipping waiting lists for the purposes of prioritised access.

 - Please note, under no circumstance will an outpatient appointment in a private capacity in Ireland be accepted for the purpose of accessing healthcare abroad under

the Cross Border Directive. Public referral pathways as applicable in Ireland must be adhered to. Public consultant appointments can only be accepted. The attendance of a private appointment in Ireland deems the patient a private patient and not a public patient for the purpose of provisions the Cross Border Directive.

- **7) Does the fact that I have private health insurance preclude me from applying for this scheme?**No, patients who have private health insurance can and do opt not to use it in favour of being treated as public patients here in Ireland. It is your status as a public patient which entitles you to opt for services under the terms of the CBD.
- It is of course understood and accepted that any private patient can opt to avail of public patient status but only by following public referral pathways: private status cannot be used as a means of circumventing waiting lists for the purposes of prioritised access.
- Please note, under no circumstance will an outpatient appointment in a private capacity in Ireland be accepted for the purpose of accessing healthcare abroad under the Cross Border Directive. Public referral pathways as applicable in Ireland must be adhered to. Public consultant appointments can only be accepted.
- **8) Do I have to go to a public facility or can it be a private facility?**A patient may avail of healthcare in a public or private facility abroad, but remember reimbursement is up to the cost of that healthcare in the public system of the home country.
- **9) Can I access services outside Europe?**The scheme is governed by EU regulations and is only applicable to services provided with EU/EEA* member states.
- **10) If I am on a waiting list can I apply?**Yes.
- **11) Can I access the information online?**Yes, on the HSE website [here](#). Further webpages of interest can be found [here](#)