



The European Health Insurance Card

When going on holidays we make sure to bring our passport with us but how many of us know about another crucial holiday document, the European Health Insurance Card? This document provides you, as a resident of Ireland, with access to healthcare treatment through the public system in countries of the European Union, European Economic Area¹ or Switzerland if you become ill or injured while on a temporary visit to these countries. The treatment will be provided free of charge or at a reduced cost.

The European Health Insurance card has replaced the old E111 form and unlike this form, which had to be applied for each time you went to an EU or EEA country, the card is valid for two years from the date of issue and can easily be applied for or renewed.

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 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 social welfare contributions in Ireland
- Intend to study in any of these countries
- Intend to visit any of these countries for any other type of temporary stay where healthcare is not the primary aim of the visit

If you are travelling to the UK or Northern Ireland you do not need a European Health Insurance Card to get healthcare while there. It is enough to show proof that you ordinarily reside in Ireland (ie driving license, passport or similar document).

What the EHIC does not cover: The card does not cover the cost of treatment in a private setting nor does it cover repatriation to Ireland.

¹ The countries covered by the European Union and the European Economic Area and where you can use the European Health Insurance Card are: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK

How to apply for a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC):

1. You can apply online through www.ehic.ie if you already have either a medical card or a Drugs Payment Scheme (DPS) card
2. You can obtain an application form at your local Health Office
3. You can apply by post for an application form from your local Health Office, Community Care Office or Health Centre
4. You can also download an application form from www.ehic.ie and return it by post to your local Health Office
5. You can renew your EHIC online at www.ehic.ie

For more information on accessing healthcare treatment in Europe see www.eccireland.ie