



# Travel health update

The third edition of *Competencies: Travel health nursing: career and competence development* has just been published. In the update this month *Jane Chiodini* describes some of the important changes, making it essential reading for your travel health practice

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## TRAVEL HEALTH NURSING COMPETENCIES

The RCN's travel health nursing competence document<sup>1</sup> has been a pivotal publication since it was first published in 2007. The 2012 edition was reviewed eighteen months ago,<sup>2</sup> and recommendations were provided to help shape this newly published third edition. The document has therefore been reviewed to include the content considered most useful and helpful, including making the travel risk assessment and management forms available to download as standalone documents from the RCN website at <https://www.rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics/public-health/specialist-areas/travel-health>. These can also still be accessed from items 1 and 2 at <http://www.janechiodini.co.uk/tools/>

Travel health nursing has moved on since 2012. There is more governance in place with GP practices and private travel clinics in England now being inspected regularly by the Care Quality Commission, and travel clinics in Scotland by Healthcare Improvement Scotland (p.9). A statement is included for those who run Yellow Fever Vaccination Centres in the UK acknowledging that whilst YF training is not mandatory for all individuals administering the vaccine, both NaTHNaC and Health Protection Scotland



(HPS) recommend all those responsible for administering YF vaccine complete the training for their own accountability and good practice (p. 9).

The provision of a travel service and funding issues are in a state of flux right now with new developments happening in Scotland, with a decision on the England situation following a PHE evaluation awaited (p.8). Provision of PGDs for the private travel vaccines in a GP setting is described (p.10).

There is now greater awareness of the potential identification of a traveller going abroad for the purpose of FGM or of forced marriage. These topics are included in the sections for young travellers, female travellers and in a separate section on the subjects with links to further resources, and FGM is also included in the risk assessment form (p.12, 15, 29). Similarly, issues for LGBT travellers are highlighted (page 13).

Zika virus (ZIKV) wasn't a particular problem in 2012 but bite prevention advice and sexual health advice play a key role for pregnant travellers and those planning pregnancy travelling to a ZIKV risk areas. There is mention of this in the text and in the travel risk management form (p. 31).

## APPOINTMENT LENGTH

A newly developed appointment guidance section has been developed with greater information to help manage your consultations. A minimum of **20 minutes** is still recommended for a travel appointment with longer if the needs are more complex, and it is now stated that it would be unsafe to allow only **10 or 15 minutes** for a new travel appointment. This section also addresses managing groups of travellers and discusses the challenges of children within an appointment as well (p.18). It is recognised that some GP surgeries in England are 'stopping' their provision of travel health which at the current time is not allowed. Details explain this incorrect and unsafe behaviour (p.19).

Ideas are provided for keeping up to date if it is not feasible to access face to face training (point 6, p. 23) and guidance on training providers is given on page 34.

This new document will be available only in an electronic format so links are provided throughout the text as well as in the references.

We hope the updated publication will be read by those new to travel health and the experienced alike. It has the endorsement of Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, Health Protection Scotland and NaTHNaC. Written for nurses, the document is equally applicable to other qualified practitioners providing travel health services. Please share it widely.

1. Royal College of Nursing (2018) *Competencies: Travel health nursing - career and competence development*, London: RCN. <https://www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pub-006506>

2. Currie L, Russell J, Bayliss A (2017) Executive summary: perceptions of the RCN Travel Health Competencies Document. London: Royal College of Nursing. <https://www.rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics/public-health/specialist-areas/travel-health>