

A few stocking fillers — full of resources!

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I was recently reflecting on the early days of my practice in travel medicine while preparing for a lecture and came across an image of a very helpful vaccine chart which used to appear in *Practice Nurse* in the 1990s. We would use this to inform of the disease protection at a destination and in some situations the chart was posted on the wall in the GP reception area which the receptionist would consult and then book an appointment with the practice nurse for said vaccines! Risk assessment wasn't really performed and advice was also limited. At this time I had no access to the Internet, helpful publications such as the Green Book had one page dedicated to hepatitis A and the malaria guidelines were published in the BMJ, but little known about by practice nurses. How things have moved on and a chart – albeit so innovative at the time – would no longer be advisable when one has the amazing websites of TravelHealthPro from NaTHNaC and TRAVAX from Health Protection Scotland. These today are two of my key sources of information but here are a few reminders of other essentials!

TRAVEL AWARE

This Foreign and Commonwealth Office site is packed full of helpful information to allow your travellers take greater responsibility – from details of travel advice for 232 countries; checklists of things to do before travelling

Times have changed, and while once a 'cut out and keep' chart was the only resource available to travel health practitioners, now we have access to a wealth of online resources. *Jane Chiodini* wraps up the year with a reminder of some of the essentials

abroad; travel insurance explained; preparing for winter sports; adventure travel and volunteering abroad; entry requirements; how to stay safe and healthy during your gap year overseas and mental wellbeing and travel abroad.

There are also some short impactful videos worth watching including my favourite 'Checkin Travelaware' – not only informative but also funny and useful to show while I'm preparing the vaccines if my traveller is nervous – it provides quite good distraction. Take a look at <https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk/>. Did you also watch the recent series on the work of the FCO on BBC 2 'Inside the Foreign Office'? Episode 3, shown on 29 November, was about Brits who find themselves in difficulty overseas and included the story of one young girl who was being forced into marriage. She was given help on her 18th birthday to successfully flee Baghdad to safety in the UK. It was a fascinating insight and the episode is available on the iplayer for 28 days from the live broadcast. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b0bt7s-d2/inside-the-foreign-office-series-1-3-brits-in-trouble>

MALARIA

Guidelines for the prevention of malaria in UK travellers has just been revised and the 2018 edition will hopefully be available online before the end of the year. Look out for it at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/malaria-prevention-guidelines-for-travellers-from-the-uk>, and I'll write about the changes next month. The World Malaria Report has also just been published at <http://www.who.int/malaria/media/world-malaria-report-2018/en/>. In 2017 there were 219 million cases of malaria with an

estimated 435,000 deaths. There are many challenges in the global efforts to reducing the burden of malaria – more details can be read in the report or easier to review by looking at a free app from the WHO: details are found on the webpage given above.

FGM

I wrote about this last month and now have the link to the free of charge e learning course. This short module will help provide you with the confidence to address the topic of FGM within a travel consultation when the facts lead you to a suspicion a child under the age of 18 is being taken abroad for the purpose of FGM. You must address the issue so take a look at the resource at <https://rcpsg.ac.uk/elearning/product/female-genital-mutilation>. It includes some great tips and resources and you'll receive a certificate upon completion.

MY 2018 PRIZE WINNER

This would be the Vaccine Update – it gets better and better with all the information, graphics and great links. Issue 282, the August rabies special edition was a favourite perhaps but every issue is of great interest and an essential read! <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/vaccine-update>

FINALLY, JUST FOR FUN

I hate writing postcards when I'm away but have found a website where I can upload favourite images, write the text so it's legible and they will even send them out for you, to avoid having to find out what the local postal rate is and posting abroad! Go to <https://www.cardsinthepost.com>

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!