

# Travel health update



It has been a busy couple of months in the travel health world, with a major international conference tackling, among other hot topics, the impact of the global climate emergency on travellers. *Jane Chiodini* brings us up to date

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## CLIMATE CHANGE AND TRAVEL HEALTH



I was at the International Society of Travel Medicine (ISTM) conference in Basel in May, a four-day event and the first real opportunity to gather post-pandemic, with over one thousand delegates, which was very exciting. There were a number of sessions dedicated to the impact of climate change and there is no doubt this is important for the health of travellers. For example, the heatwaves in Europe will have significance, particularly for young children and the elderly. A recent paper published in the *Journal of Travel Medicine* on heat-related illnesses described clinical illness, first aid treatment and prevention of heat stroke in vulnerable travellers to hot climate destinations in comprehensive tables which are worth viewing at <https://academic.oup.com/jtm/article/30/4/taad072/7177946>.

Rising global temperatures are affecting areas where mosquito-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue, and chikungunya are increasing in case numbers and spreading to areas previously unaffected. For example in the USA, dengue has recently become locally acquired in Arizona, and malaria cases locally acquired in Texas and Florida. Dengue cases in the Americas are already higher than the data collected for the whole of 2022, according to Pan American Health

Organization and World Health Organization, and dengue is also in many parts of Europe, particularly Spain and France, where there were many locally acquired cases in 2022.

Other issues due to climate change include natural disasters such as hurricanes and flooding both of which would threaten increase of food and water borne disease. Poor air quality, e.g. from wild fires, is another example, resulting in other health issues. Remember to use the various news items and fact sheets on TravelHealthPro and Fitfortravel to inform your travellers and to provide prevention advice where possible. If this topic is of great interest to you then access a recent paper from *The Lancet* on health and climate change found at <https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S0140-6736%2822%2901540-9>

## PALUDRINE DISCONTINUED

The malaria chemoprophylactic drug paludrine (proguanil hydrochloride) has recently been discontinued in the UK. Proguanil was rarely used alone in recent years, but it was also available in the Anti-Malarial Travel Pack of Paludrine/Avloclor (proguanil hydrochloride, chloroquine phosphate). As a result, where country information advised this combination of drugs, alternative options have been recommended by the Advisory Committee for Malaria Prevention. The number of destinations affected isn't large, but please make sure in your pre travel consultation when reviewing the malaria information on TravelHealthPro, that you read the chemoprophylactic advice carefully as it may have changed.

## NaTHNaC ADVICE LINE CHANGE

A small alteration to the opening hours for

the helpline came into effect at the beginning of August. The Wednesday afternoon session is now open from 2.30pm to 5pm. For more details see <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/contact.php>

## TRAVEL AND CANCER

I had the pleasure of reviewing the latest edition of the Macmillan Travel and Cancer publication, available at <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/stories-and-media/booklets/travel-and-cancer>. It's an extremely comprehensive booklet covering numerous helpful topics, for example in the section 'Travelling with long-term treatment effects', it addresses lymphoedema, splenectomy, stoma, bowel or bladder problems, tracheostomy and laryngectomy.

## MASTERS DEGREE IN TRAVEL MEDICINE

While I was Dean of the Faculty of Travel Medicine we mapped out a brand new educational pathway for those who wished to undertake formal training in this subject, underpinned by the guidance document 'Good Practice Guidance for Providing a Travel Health Service' (<https://rcpsg.ac.uk/travel-medicine/good-practice-guidance-for-providing-a-travel-health-service>). Work began on a Professional Certificate in Travel Medicine followed by the RCPSG Postgraduate Diploma in Travel Medicine, and now a Masters pathway is also available through a joint initiative of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow and Glasgow Caledonian University. More details can be found at <https://rcpsg.ac.uk/travel-medicine/qualifications-in-travel-medicine> where you'll also be able to read about an International Postgraduate Diploma in Expedition and Wilderness Medicine. ♦