

# Travel health update



The role of nursing associates in travel health continues to pose questions to which the answers are far from straightforward. *Jane Chiodini* has some advice and pointers to useful resources

## NURSING ASSOCIATES AND TRAVEL

I've had several queries about the possibility of Nursing Associates (NAs) undertaking travel health. The RCN competency document stated 'travel should be undertaken by a registered nurse' and since NAs are registered, then I see no reason why they shouldn't undertake the task of travel health if properly trained. A good way to assess competence would be the Competency Assessment Tool, published by the Faculty of Travel Medicine RCPSCG, and available at <https://rcpsg.ac.uk/travel-medicine/good-practice-guidance-for-providing-a-travel-health-service>. However, a problem lies in the fact that currently NAs cannot work under PGDs – the legislation does not allow this. Therefore, to administer any travel vaccines, the only option would be under a PSD. In this situation, a PSD provides a written instruction from a prescriber to another healthcare practitioner to legally authorise them to administer a vaccine directly to a named individual, or to several named individuals. The prescriber is responsible and accountable for the decision to prescribe, which therefore means undertaking the pre travel risk assessment and giving the advice, and is also accountable for any delegation of the administration of the medicine to another health care practitioner. The person accepting the delegation of this duty still needs to be appropriately trained and competent. This dilemma is addressed in the e learning piece I mentioned in the Travel Health Update in the last issue (*Practice Nurse* 2023;53(6):30), and which can be found at <https://janechiodini.learnupon.com/store/3573887-dilemmas-in-delivering-travel-health>

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## THE NHS VACCINATION STRATEGY

A new NHS vaccination strategy was released on 13 December 2023, (see also News) and its introduction states: 'It brings together all vaccination programmes, for the first time, to protect communities and save lives. This strategy is for people and organisations involved in the commissioning, planning and delivery of NHS vaccination services in England. It will shape the future delivery of NHS vaccination and immunisation services'. The COVID-19 immunisation planning and delivery certainly demonstrated new and different options for vaccine delivery. The report provides a number of case studies illustrating novel ways of delivering service, but clearly there will be a considerable amount of work to be undertaken. The report provides a detailed read, but unfortunately includes no information for travel vaccines. Find the report at <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/nhs-vaccination-strategy/>

## NaTHNaC WEBINARS

NaTHNaC have just announced a series of webinars on Zoom throughout 2024, open to all travel health practitioners. The first was on Thursday 25 January 2024 at 1pm and addressed 'Vaccine scheduling challenges'. Each session, will comprise a

20-minute presentation followed by time for discussion in the Q&A. And the good news is that if you are unable to make the live event, the session will be recorded and made available on TravelHealthPro. See <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/news/740/nathnac-getting-to-grips-programme-new-for-2024> for more news.

## MALARIA RISKS TO UK TRAVELLERS



Prompted by the recent publication of the World Malaria Report 2023, which stated that there has been an increase in malaria cases globally, TravelHealthPro has issued a reminder about the risks of travelling to malaria risk areas. To illustrate the increased risk to UK travellers, the UKHSA published provisional UK case numbers for 2022 and 2023. The figures suggest that more cases have occurred in returning travellers, particularly in 2023 (with the year's data collection is not even complete) despite reduced numbers of travellers going abroad. Evidence from the preliminary data from the Office of National Statistics suggest that UK residents' visits abroad remain lower than before COVID-19. All this gives a strong indication of how important it is to provide malaria prevention advice in your pre travel consultations if travellers are going to a malaria risk destination. ♦