

# INFO SENIOR



Information Bulletin from DG HR

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2015

#7

## Agreements with hospitals in Brussels

Good news for JSIS members receiving treatment in Brussels. The list of hospitals with which the PMO has signed an agreement is getting longer. In other words:

- the Cliniques Universitaires Saint-Luc,
- the Institut Bordet,
- the Cliniques de l'Europe (Saint-Michel and Sainte-Elisabeth)
- Hôpital Erasme,
- UZ Brussel and

have agreed to limit the additional fees they can charge patients occupying a private room. This will save you money as the amount which you have to pay

after having been reimbursed by the JSIS will be lower. To take advantage of these agreements, all you have to do is prove that you are a JSIS member with primary or top-up cover by producing a **certificate of cover** or the **direct billing** agreement. On admission to hospital, you should ask for the price of the room and, if possible, request a quote for the cost of surgery. This means that the hospital will have to be more open about its prices and allow you to compare rates between hospitals.



**Important:**

- No quote is now necessary for hospitals with which the JSIS has concluded an agreement.
- If you choose to stay in a 'double' room, you cannot be asked to pay any additional fees (except for the outpatient clinic).

### Be aware of excessive costs!

At its meeting on 20 and 21 May, the Sickness Insurance Management Committee (SIMC), a joint committee composed of representatives of the administration and staff of all the Institutions, adopted a **resolution** regarding the **agreements** signed by the PMO and several hospitals in Brussels.

The PMO therefore advises its members to be aware of the quotes which they must attach to their direct billing requests issued by hospitals in the Brussels Region which have not signed an agreement with the PMO. In some cases, the amount to be paid by the member may prove to be significant when the reimbursement ceilings and the possible application of an element of excessive costs are taken into account.

**i JSIS online**

**i PMO CONTACT online**

**TEL. + 32 2 299 77 77 (MONDAY TO FRIDAY, 09.30 TO 12.30)**

## Additional fees in Belgium



In Belgium, in the course of a hospital stay, day surgery or during treatment, if you choose a single ('private') room the doctor (surgeon, anaesthetist, etc.) is free to set his or her fees within the limits laid down by the Accord médico-mutualiste 2015 (2015 agreement between doctors and sickness funds). Any amount you pay on top of the **fees authorised by INAMI** is an additional fee.

Additional fees are expressed as a percentage. An additional fee of 100 % therefore signifies that the patient is being billed an extra 100 % compared to the basic rate. He or she will therefore pay twice the basic rate.

As a result, if you choose a single room, the amount of medical fees for the same hospital treatment can therefore double or triple (or even quadruple in certain establishments such as CHIREC Group hospitals, with which the PMO does not have an agreement).

**i PMO CONTACT online**

**TEL. + 32 2 299 77 77 (MONDAY TO FRIDAY, 09.30 TO 12.30)**

## Thermal cures



A **thermal cure** is a stay (of minimum 10 days and maximum 21 days) at a specialist establishment providing treatment under medical supervision using water taken from a spring (before it has lost its biological properties which derive from its richness in ions and oligoelements).

The procedure requires **prior authorisation**. At least six weeks before beginning the cure, you must obtain a medical prescription from the doctor (independent of the cure centre) as well as a medical report specifying:

- the patient's medical history and details of treatments undergone during the previous year for the medical condition for which the cure is necessary. The report must describe

the most recent progress in the patient's condition and explain the medical grounds for prescribing the cure;

- the duration of the cure, the nature of the thermal treatment to be followed and the type of cure centre given the disorder in question. Only a centre approved by the national health authorities may be considered.

Where necessary, you should also request a medical prescription explaining why the patient needs to be accompanied.

You should then scan these documents and upload to **JSIS online** following the procedure for requesting prior authorisation. If you do not have access to JSIS online, follow the traditional paper-based method and fill in a **prior authorisation request** form. Do not forget to attach the original copies of the necessary supporting documents (keeping a copy for yourself) and send everything to your **Settlements Office** (the address can be found on the form).

Once prior authorisation has been granted, you may proceed with the cure. You can then submit a **request for reimbursement** by attaching the detailed invoice and sending everything to your Settlements Office.

### Reimbursement conditions

To qualify for reimbursement, the cure must:

- be authorised in advance by the Settlements Office after consulting the Medical Officer and take place in a centre approved by the national health authorities;
- include at least two appropriate treatments per day and may not be interrupted.

**Authorisation for a cure is limited to:**

- one cure per year, up to a maximum of eight cures in the lifetime of the beneficiary, for the following conditions:
  1. rheumatism and sequellae of trauma to bones or joints
  2. phlebology and cardio-arterial diseases
  3. neurological disorders
  4. disorders of the digestive tract and related structures, and metabolic disorders
  5. gynaecological disorders and disorders of the kidneys and urinary tract
  6. dermatological and stomatological disorders
  7. diseases of the respiratory tract
- one cure per year in connection with the treatment of a **serious illness** or in the case of severe psoriasis which does not respond to conventional treatment.

The authorisation for a cure may be renewed in the event of a relapse or a new illness.

Treatment costs are reimbursed at 80% with a ceiling of EUR 64 per day (in the case of serious illness: 100% with a ceiling of EUR 80 per day).

Exceptionally, the costs of a person accompanying the patient may be reimbursed in certain well-defined cases.

The costs of travel, subsistence, accommodation, meals, costs ancillary to treatment and certain treatments which are not eligible under the joint rules are never reimbursed.

Thalassotherapy and fitness cures are not considered to be thermal cures and so are not reimbursed.

## Allowance extensions: Caution! The school year is coming to an end...

It will not be long before you receive the forms for requesting an extension for **dependent child allowance**, **education allowance** and the **orphan's pension**.

These forms are also available on the website:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/pmo/education-allowances.htm>

They must be returned:

- either by ordinary mail to **PMO.4 – Pensions Unit**  
**Office: AN88 – 04/30**  
**B-1049 Brussels**



- or preferably by email to **PMO-PENSIONS-EDUCATION-DECLARATION@EC.EUROPA.EU**

### If you are an orphan who has reached the age of majority:

The forms will be sent to you at the beginning of June 2015.

In order to avoid a significant suspension of payment, you should send back these documents, duly completed, dated and signed, **as soon as possible**.

### If you receive allowances on behalf of your child who has reached the age of majority:

The forms will be sent to you in August 2015.

These documents, duly completed, dated and signed, must be sent back by **31 October 2015**.

**i** **PMO CONTACT online**

**i** **CONTACT : your pension manager whose name appears on the top-left of your pension statement**



### Date of pension payment: important reminder

According to Article 45 of **Annex VIII** of the Staff Regulations, pensions are paid monthly in arrears.

The pensions are paid on the last working day of the month. However, it can happen that the payment is made before this date - this is an exceptional situation, please keep it in mind for your payments.

It is not necessary to contact the pensions department unless the payment has not been made by the first day of the following month.

**i** **CONTACT : your pension manager whose name appears on the top-left of your pension statement**

## Declaring your spouse's 2014 income

If you receive the **household allowance** on the basis of your spouse or recognised partner's income, do not forget to send PMO a declaration of your spouse or partner's professional activity or income, even if he/she has no income. The same applies if your spouse or partner is covered by the **Joint Sickness Insurance Scheme**. This cover expires on 30 June each year. You should declare your spouse's income to avoid being refused a reimbursement of his/her medical expenses.



### How can I do this?

**i** **PMO CONTACT online** select the domain 'Sickness Insur/Accidents/Occup disease' and then select the sub-category 'Membership/Certificates'. Then click on 'Contact PMO' at the bottom of the screen.

**i** **CONTACT : your pension manager whose name appears on the top-left of your pension statement.**

## The impact of same-sex marriage



Legislation relating to the conditions for access to marriage for same-sex couples is changing. It is therefore important to understand the consequences of possible changes for people in civil partnerships.

**Registered non-marital partnerships** can enjoy the same rights as married couples if they fulfil all the following conditions:

- the couple produces a legal document issued by any competent authority of a Member State, acknowledging their status as non-marital partners;
- neither partner is married or in another non-marital relationship;
- the partners are not related (parents, children, grandparents, grandchildren, brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, sons-in-law and daughters-in-law);
- **the couple do not have access to legal marriage in a Member State.**

Access to marriage is assessed on the basis of the national legislation applicable to the couple in accordance with their nationality or place of residence.

Following the opening of marriage to people of the same-sex in a country, the length of the partnership would be recognised provided that the person is married within six months after the entry into force of this new law. By way of exception, this period can be extended at the request of the staff member if the administrative formalities for marriage cannot be fulfilled within six months.

After this period of time, the **household allowance** will be suspended and may be granted again from the first day of the month of marriage if the couple gets married at a later date.

### **N.B.**

If the retired member of staff does not marry within the six months, the partnership period will not be taken into account. Consequently, the right to a **survivor's pension** will only be granted if the marriage lasts for at least five years.

**i** **PMO CONTACT online**

**TEL. + 32 2 299 77 77 (MONDAY TO FRIDAY, 09.30 TO 12.30)**

## Obtaining access to JSIS online



Do you wish to obtain access to **JSIS online** so as to manage your reimbursement applications from your computer? Do you have difficulty travelling or do you live somewhere other than Brussels, Ispra or Luxembourg? Does the 10-step procedure via **PMO Contact online** seem too difficult for you? Please note that you can also receive assistance by telephone. If you call, have your mobile phone and your email open near you. The PMO colleague will verify your identity before carrying out the 10 steps with you!

To obtain access to **JSIS online**:

- **BRUSSELS** : every day from 9.00 to 12.00 and from 14.00 to 16.00, NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY  
27, rue de la Science - 00/03  
tel. + 32 2 297 68 88 - + 32 2 297 68 89
- **ISPRA** : every Wednesday from 9.30 to 12.00 BY APPOINTMENT  
JRC Club House, Via Esperia 467, Ispra  
[paolo.bardelli@ec.europa.eu](mailto:paolo.bardelli@ec.europa.eu) – tel. + 39 0332 78 90 26
- **LUXEMBOURG** : every day from 9.00 to 12.00 and from 14.00 to 16.00 BY APPOINTMENT  
12, rue Guillaume Kroll in Gasperich – Drosbach Building B1/070  
[Florent.charton@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Florent.charton@ec.europa.eu) – tel. + 352 4301 36100

## Tips for using JSIS Online



- To search for a document: click, in the space 'My files', on 'My documents' OR click on 'Search' in the menu bar
- In 'My account sheets', you can search for a document using different criteria: payment, amount, date etc.
- The status of applications undergoing conformity checks will change from 'Awaiting documents' to 'Documents received' once the manager has acknowledged receipt of the supporting documents.
- Staff who are moving to another country and forget to register a new mobile phone number before removing their old one can use the '**panic button**' in ECAS:

1. Log in at <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/cas> (without your telephone number, just login/password)
2. At the top right of the screen, select 'My Account'
3. Click on STOP 'Delete all my mobile phone numbers and eID (PANIC)'
4. Be aware that all your registered mobile phone numbers will be deleted. The link between your ECAS account and your electronic ID will also be removed. You will lose access rights to some applications. You will be logged out from ECAS.
5. Click on the 'Delete' button.
6. You have logged out of ECAS. Doing this does not sign you off from any applications – to do so, log out of each one or close all browser windows.
7. Log in again.
8. At the top right of the screen, select 'My Account'.
9. Click on 'Manage my mobile phone numbers'.
10. Finalise the procedure as you did when you created your account.

**i** JSIS online

**i** CONTACT: EC-CENTRAL-HELPDESK@ec.europa.eu - TEL. + 352 4301 35035

**i** AIACE helpdesk for JSIS online

## 112, the only emergency number

If you find yourself in an emergency situation, call **112**. It is **free of charge**.

The operator will ask you some questions to decide what type of help you need. He/she will reassure you and send an emergency team out to you as soon as possible (medical team, fire service, police, etc.) Keep calm and explain clearly: where you are, what has happened and if anyone is injured.

NB: for non-emergencies, it is best to call the local police, fire service or your doctor.



**i** **112: for free from a landline or mobile, 24 hours a day, seven days a week**

## Your grandchildren and Europe



The **Kids' Corner** on the Europa website features a selection of games for children and teenagers aged from 6 to 18. The games are available in 22 EU languages and were developed by the EU Institutions.

The games are organised by age range, making it easy to find games that are suitable for your grandchildren. Their content is based around the different activities of the EU. The range of games is varied: quizzes, puzzles, action games etc. They make a fun way for your grandchildren to discover Europe and are a great way for you to share your knowledge with them!

**i** [http://europa.eu/kids-corner/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/kids-corner/index_en.htm)



## Yammer After EC: your social network



**Yammer After EC** is an internal social platform for discussion and exchange in a secure environment, reserved for retired staff of the European Institutions.

Yammer After EC allows you to remain in contact with your former colleagues and other retired members of staff. By going through the list of members, you will find people with whom you lost touch and will be able to contact them directly by leaving them a private message.

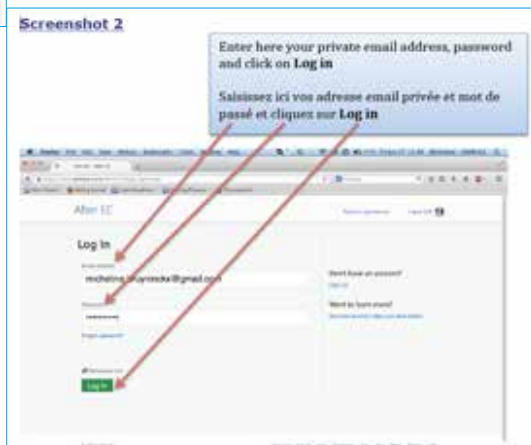
Yammer After EC facilitates the circulation of ideas and organises exchanges in the form of interest groups which you can choose to join or not. You can also create your own group, launch a discussion and ask for other people's opinions.

So don't delay, join Yammer After EC!

- 📧 Send an email to [micheline.bruyninckx@gmail.com](mailto:micheline.bruyninckx@gmail.com) (AIACE correspondent)  
Or register directly at <https://www.yammer.com/afterec/>

### Are you a member of Yammer EC but are experiencing difficulties?

Normally the following link <https://www.yammer.com/afterec/> takes you to the input screen (screenshot no 2). However, if you are taken to this other screen (screenshot no 1), you must NOT enter your email address in the first available box entitled 'Enter your work mail'. Look closely at the screen: two lines below the box requesting your office email address, there is a link 'Have an account? Log in'. Click on the link and you will be taken to the correct input screen (screenshot no 2). You must always input your PRIVATE email address only (even if you are asked for your professional address!)



## AIACE: Conferences in Bratislava



The **AIACE** (International Association of Former Officials of the European Union) held its **annual conferences** in Bratislava (Slovakia) from 2 to 8 June 2015. Approximately 200 members participated in this event which also marked the end of the presidency of Richard Hay after a four-year mandate. At the meeting on 5 June, the members of the Board of Directors (made up of 15 national branches) elected **Bernhard Zepter** as the new international president and Francis Wattiau, former president of the Luxembourg branch, as the new vice-president. It falls to the new president to form a team (secretary general, treasurer, members of the International Bureau) which he will present at the next meeting of the Board of Directors in the autumn of this year.

The former president Richard Hayes presented the Association's activity report during the General Assembly of 4 June, after a welcome speech given by the mayor of Bratislava. In the afternoon, the representatives of the Commission's administration (Janette Sinclair and Monique Théâtre for DG HR, Marc Lemaître, Giuseppe Scognamiglio and Bruno Fetelian for the PMO) broached the current topics directly concerning retired staff. The following day, three thematic workshops (Sickness insurance, Pensions and Social services) were organised during which the participants were able to speak more directly with the administration and debate topics of concern to them. The members of the AIACE, who could not attend, were able to follow the General Assembly of 4 June via streaming.

The next international conferences will take place in Trieste in May 2016.

[www.aiace-europa.eu](http://www.aiace-europa.eu)

TEL. SECRETARIAT : + 32 (0) 2 295 29 60

## SEPS



The Association of Seniors of the European Civil Service (**SEPS-SFPE**) was set up as a non-profit-making association ('ASBL' under Belgian law), free from any political, trade union or confessional bias. Its aim is to defend the interests of retired European officials and, as a matter of priority, their social rights: pensions, sickness insurance scheme, allowances etc. and everything related to them such as complementary health insurance from JSIS.

In addition to communicating with its members through a bulletin (sent by post every 5 months) and information meetings open to all, an essential aim of the SEPS-SFPE is to provide assistance and advice (as far as possible) to retired staff who request it by application to the Administration-PMO departments.

The intention of the SEPS-SFPE is to complement the work of the social services of the Institutions and the PMO. Its secretariat will therefore always be willing to explain the correct procedures to follow, give addresses, telephone numbers etc. It will be able to send the necessary forms by post or via the Internet, inform you about insurance etc. The SEPS-SFPE can contact the PMO for you (via PMO Contact online or through the people responsible), if necessary and provided it is important.

The secretariat will reply to you both during the week and at weekends. However, if nobody immediately answers the telephone, please leave a message: if you do not leave a message, you will not be called back.

[info@sfpe-seps.be](mailto:info@sfpe-seps.be)

TEL. SECRETARIAT (7 DAYS A WEEK): +32 (0)475 472 470

## Domestic Workers Convention

**Convention No 189 of the ILO** (International Labour Organisation), which came into force on 5 September 2013, concerns the working conditions of domestic workers. It sets out the fundamental rights and principles and obliges states to take a series of measures in order to make proper work a reality for domestic workers.

To apply the Convention, states will have to ensure that domestic workers:

- enjoy equal treatment regarding benefits and allowances;
- are informed of the conditions and forms of their work;
- are protected against discrimination;
- enjoy decent living conditions;
- can easily access legal remedies.



Convention No 189 defines domestic work as 'work performed in or for a household or households'. This work can include tasks such as housework, cooking, washing and ironing laundry, taking care of children or elderly or ill family members, gardening, caretaking, driving the family around and even taking care of pets.

### Belgium applies the Domestic Workers Convention

A **Royal Decree of 13 July 2014** drastically changed the legislation applicable to domestic staff with the aim of complying with **Convention No 189 on domestic work**.

To summarise, before 1 October 2014, domestic workers whose total number of hours worked did not exceed 24 hours per week for one or more employers were exempt from social security contributions. Since 1 October 2014, the only workers who are exempt from social security contributions are domestic workers who provide intellectual work (childminder, home nurse, companion etc.) if they meet these three conditions: that the services provided constitute occasional work which gives rise to limited compensation and does not exceed a maximum of eight hours per week for one or more employers.

Since 1 October 2014, all domestic workers providing manual household services (cleaning, ironing, laundry, gardening etc.) are henceforth subject to social security contributions without exception and irrespective of the number of hours worked.

**i** [HR-B1-BUREAU-ACCUEIL@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-B1-BUREAU-ACCUEIL@ec.europa.eu)  
**TEL: + 32 (0) 2 296 66 00**

## CSG and CRDS: The Court of Justice takes disciplinary action against France

The Court of Justice has once more taken disciplinary action against France in connection with the levying of **CSG (general social contribution) and CRDS (social debt repayment contribution)** which had been extended to non-residents' income from assets. It states that, within the EU, workers are only subject to the social security scheme of one Member State, in accordance with the principle of a single social security scheme established by **Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71**. However, this Regulation is not applicable to officials and other servants of the European Union since they are dependent upon a social security scheme belonging to the Institutions (JSIS). The Commission challenged France, considering that the principle of a single scheme should apply to officials. Failing to ensure this would create inequality with regard to this group.



**i** [HR-B1-BUREAU-ACCUEIL@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-B1-BUREAU-ACCUEIL@ec.europa.eu)  
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