



Public Accounts Committee

Samantha Jones
Permanent Secretary
Department for Health and Social Care

By email

30 June 2025

Cost of NHS care for overseas patients

Dear Permanent Secretary,

Given the pressure on NHS budgets, the importance of efficiently and effectively recovering money spent on treating patients from overseas has arguably never been greater. This issue will likely be of interest to my Committee as we continue our ongoing scrutiny of the Department for Health and Social Care.

I am therefore requesting that you provide my Committee with the following information:

Estimates of the amounts that should be chargeable for NHS care

- For the most recent year, what are your estimates of the amounts that should be chargeable for NHS care provided in England to:
 - a) patients whose costs are recoverable from other countries under for example reciprocal healthcare arrangements, and
 - b) other overseas patients who are liable to pay the charges themselves?If you are not able to estimate this, please explain why.
- For the most recent year, how much was actually charged and how much was collected for each of the two categories of patient described above?
- What are DHSC and NHS England doing to ensure that high proportions of the amounts chargeable are actually charged for and collected?

Recovery of costs of NHS treatment for overseas visitors

At the time of the PAC's 2017 report [Recovering the cost of NHS treatment for overseas visitors](#), the Department of Health was aiming by 2017-18 to recover up to £500 million a year from treating overseas visitors.

- How much progress have you made since then?

It has been reported in the media that there is a very substantial gap between the money paid by the UK to other countries for care provided to UK nationals and the amount paid to the UK for NHS care provided to foreign nationals.

- What are the reasons for this gap?



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- How much of the gap is due to factors other than differences in the numbers of people visiting or living as ex-pats here and in other countries?
- Have the reciprocal healthcare agreements reached as part of UK withdrawal from the UK led to any improvements in the ability of the UK to recover costs for treating patients from overseas?

Please provide the information requested within **three weeks** of receiving this letter. The Committee publishes formal correspondence it receives. Please indicate clearly in your response if you are providing any information in confidence, and if you expect the information to be publishable at a later date. I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee.

Yours Sincerely

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP,
Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts