

Pension, Benefit and Healthcare Team



DWP



EVERY LITTLE HELPS

While the sun is shining (for the most part!) in Spain, it is easy to forget that living in another country is not all plain sailing. For example, it has been well documented how many UK state pensioners resident in Spain have suffered with the devaluation of the Pound against the Euro.

However, although unable to claim UK pension credit, as this means-tested benefit is only available to those who are resident in the UK, UK State Pensioners should be aware that the Spanish authorities also provide a range of welfare help. For example, you may be entitled to Spanish means-tested benefits from your local town hall or social services, such as a non-contributory pension. Those in a situation of dependence may also be able to get practical and/or financial assistance under the Ley de Dependencia.

So, if you need help, make an appointment with the social worker at your town hall. And remember, if you need to prove your state pension income as part of an application for social help, call the Pension, Benefit and Healthcare Team (PBHT) on 902 103 356 to request a pension confirmation certificate.

ASK THE TEAM!

Laura, from Armagh, Northern Ireland, joined PBHT Alicante in May 2010. With summer holidays on the horizon, she answers a couple of the frequently asked questions the team get about the European Health Insurance Card:

Why should people carry a European Health Insurance card (EHIC) while on holiday?

The EHIC should be a holiday essential. It entitles you to state-provided medical treatment that becomes necessary during your holiday. However, any treatment provided is on the same basis as a resident of the country you are visiting, so you may still have to pay for some costs. We recommend therefore that you also take out travel insurance as although the EHIC will cover most eventualities, it doesn't cover everything!

How can people apply for an EHIC?

UK residents can apply for an EHIC online at www.ehic.org.uk or by calling 0845 606 2030. Spanish residents who access healthcare in Spain through an S1 form (previously an E121, E106 or E109 form) now apply for their EHIC from the UK and can request an application form from the Overseas Healthcare Team in the UK on 0044 191 218 1999. Everyone else should check with their nearest INSS (Social Security) office in Spain to see if they have entitlement to a Spanish-issued EHIC, known as a *Tarjeta Sanitaria Europea*.

WEBSITE OF THE MONTH



If you are travelling this summer, check out our website of the month, www.nhs.uk, which has a section dedicated to the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), which, as Laura explains, provides necessary health cover while abroad in Europe.

And there's more - residents in Spain who want to know if they are still eligible for healthcare paid for by the UK will find lots of useful information in the 'Moving Abroad' and 'Living Abroad' sections of the website, while visitors and residents alike will find Spain-specific information in the country profile.



British Consular
network,
Spain

The British Consular Network, Spain

Consular staff and PBHT Madrid attend "I am not a tourist" fair

On Friday 5th May, members of Madrid's Consular team and Pension, Benefit & Healthcare Team attended the "I am not a tourist" fair run by Expatica. The event is run on a yearly basis in Madrid and is aimed at expatriates in Spain, with companies and organisations participating to promote services and clubs of interest to those living here.

At the event we were able to explain to customers that in addition to helping distressed British nationals (for example, those who have been victims of crime) there are various notarial services we provide to help you with life events here in Spain, such as getting married. Although we cannot get involved in private disputes (for example, over property, employment, commercial or other matters), we can guide you as to who to contact, also providing you with details of local interpreters and English-speaking lawyers or doctors.

There is a lot of useful information, as well as the contact details for your nearest Consulate, on our website (<http://ukinspain.fco.gov.uk>) in the section "Help for British Nationals", or you can call us on 902 109 356.

ACASA - Age Concern Acción Social y Asistencial



ACASA – How we can help you

Age Concern Acción Social y Asistencial (ACASA) aids those over 50 years old or people with a services background of any age.

Angela Keay, ACASA secretary and Costa Blanca regional coordinator, explains how ACASA works. When ACASA is contacted by a client, they will carry out an initial assessment by telephone. "It may be that it can be resolved with information and advice given over the telephone, but otherwise we will arrange for a volunteer to visit the client to make an assessment of their situation."



Above: Angela Keay pictured with Paul Rodwell, British Consul, Alicante.

A casework volunteer conducts the visit and writes a report before sending the information to the Almonisation Officer for further action. "We have been able to source many one-off grants from the military charities for people who cannot afford to replace essential items and, during this time of economic difficulty, this has been a great help to them," said Mrs Keay. "Our links with non-military charities has also meant that we have sourced help for clients who have no military connections. They know we are honest brokers and give a professional service to them and the clients."

Mrs Keay added: "Unfortunately we cannot find financial help for everyone. It is important that people are legally resident and signed on the municipal registry (padrón) as without these they cannot get help from social services."

For more information about our services or to make a donation, please contact Sarah Rogers at CCM@ageconcern-espana.org.



The Royal British Legion

90th Anniversary Benefit Concert – a huge success!

Congratulations to Wendy Dengate, District Welfare Coordinator (North) and all those involved in arranging the 90th Anniversary Benefit Concert which was held on 2nd April in the new Auditorio de Alicante.

Members and supporters of the Legion travelled from all over Spain to attend. Many commented that it was reminiscent of the Festival of Remembrance held each year in the Albert Hall and that it was a superb and moving opportunity to both honour our service men and women, past and present, as well as to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the Legion, as it continues to stand shoulder to shoulder with all who serve.

Award for Legion Caseworker in Spain.

The Legion's Health & Welfare Strategy was launched at the "Shaping our Future Conference" in Telford on 16th & 17th May. At the event, volunteer caseworkers were presented with Regional "Making a Difference Awards".

The very deserving recipient of the award for the Overseas Region was Mr. Bill Radford, a caseworker with the Torre del Mar branch. The award is an acknowledgement of the quality of his case working and his dedication to Legion beneficiaries, who have often expressed their thanks for his "going the extra mile" to assist.

As Mr Radford was unable to attend the conference, he was presented with his award by Mr. Chris Wright, Chairman of The Royal British Legion, District South, on Friday 27th May. Many congratulations to Mr. Radford who said he was "chuffed to bits" with his award.



L-R: Bill Radford, Chris Wright & Donna Wilson, Country Welfare Officer, Spain

For all welfare enquiries relating to serving/ex-service people and their dependants, please contact Donna Wilson at dmwilson@britishlegion.org.uk.

Working in Partnership

The British Consular network & PBHT are coming together to hold a road show event in Javea, Alicante on 29th June to provide information on British residents' rights and responsibilities in Spain. The event is being held in the Casa de la Cultura and starts at 11am. Full details, as well as online booking forms, are available at <http://ukinspain.fco.gov.uk>.

Keep an eye on our website for details of further events as and when they happen in the future.



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For more information on Living in Spain, see <http://ukinspain.fco.gov.uk>