



MEDICAL EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Medical "evacuations" can be divided into two groups:

- (a) **Emergency medical evacuation** can take place within the same country, to a neighbouring country offering more sophisticated health services or to the delegate's home country. It is determined by a severe health situation requiring immediate professional health care of a type and quality not locally available.
- (b) **Medical repatriation** to the delegate's home country is carried out with a commercial carrier in non-life-threatening situations.

Local arrangements for delegates going to a third country for laboratory tests or medical check-up are not to be considered medical evacuations unless the treating physician has ordered/recommended it and there is a character of urgency to it.

Regardless of the type of "evacuation" we are dealing with, the following points apply in all cases:

- (a) Medical evacuation/repatriation can be implemented as soon as:
 1. the need is confirmed following medical consultation and is put in writing by the treating physician; and
 2. you have received the agreement of the insurance company.
- (b) In cases of serious illness or injuries, where the life of a delegate is in imminent danger the Country Representative (CR), after getting written confirmation by a qualified medical doctor, can authorise the charter of a special aircraft to the nearest location for adequate medical treatment.
- (c) The HR Health Officer in Geneva will immediately be informed by the CR or designate on any health emergency. International SOS to be contacted directly by the CR or designate person if it concerns Local/National staff on mission, workshop/training etc **outside** their home country or/and any Federation contracted delegate/family members. The HR Health Officer is responsible for ensuring immediate and round-the-clock communication between the delegation, the contracting National Society and -- in the case of Federation-contracted delegates -- the insurance company. Next of kin will be contacted by the delegate's National Society and, for Federation-contracted delegates, by the HR Health Officer.

1. Emergency Medical Evacuation within the country / to a neighbouring country / to home country

In the development of a plan for emergency medical evacuations remember the following main points which will always apply regardless from where and to where the evacuation is taking place:

- Guidelines must be as short and concise as possible
- They must indicate the steps to be taken in their chronological order





- They must indicate both practical procedures (such as contact telephone numbers) and notification procedures (inform Geneva)
- They must clearly indicate who is responsible for what
- They must include provision for within-country evacuations
- They must include contact numbers of airport authorities providing flying and landing clearances. (Some charter and medevac companies require that the Delegations organise the clearances).

It is the responsibility of the CR or designate to identify available referral hospitals and charter companies or air-ambulance services to be used in case of emergency and to include their names and contact numbers in the Plan.

In regions where health services for the expatriate community are offered by UN-based structures, contacts will be made accordingly.

2. Medical Repatriation to Home Country

The medical repatriation is mentioned in this paper as it is the most frequent type of "evacuation" taking place in Federation delegations and needs to be carefully co-ordinated with the insurance company concerned.

A medical repatriation to the delegate's home country can usually be organised within two or maximum three days from the date of the doctor's recommendation. Depending on the health status and the treating physician's recommendations, a medical escort and/or the use of a stretcher might be required. Under such circumstances the carrier will require the treating physician to fill in a medical form called MEDIF. It is at the carrier's discretion to accept or refuse a medical case on board.

In the organisation of a medical repatriation, co-ordination with the insurance company is essential in order to guarantee the refunding of both the transport and medical expenses the patient will incur in his home country. In any case, the CR or designate must inform the HR Health Officer, in Geneva, who will then take appropriate action (e.g. contact the delegate's National Society, who informs the insurance company). The insurance company will in turn contact the treating physician before agreeing to the repatriation and its modality. The insurance company has to agree to the repatriation **prior to** its taking place.

Note 1: Repatriation without medical escort and/or stretcher

Unless otherwise agreed with the insurance company, it is the responsibility of the Delegation to take care of the booking and, if required by the carrier, have the medical forms filled in by the treating physician. Repatriations are affected in economy class unless otherwise agreed with the insurance, or they will not reimburse the ticket.

Note 2: Repatriation with medical escort and/or stretcher

The need for a medical escort will be discussed and agreed between the insurance company and the treating physician. It will be the insurance company who decides if the medical escort is locally identified or if they send their own medical staff. In such situations the insurance company will normally organise the complete repatriation from collection of the patient from the hospital to his/her admission to the hospital in the country of destination.





Medical Evacuation Plan

1. In case of severe illness or injury, the delegate should be admitted as soon as possible to one of the following Hospitals:

PRIMARY HOSPITAL

Clínica Bíblica Hospital
Address: 10th Avenue, diagonal to the Pacific Railroad Station
San Jose
Tel: 506 2522-1000

SECUNDARY HOSPITAL

Calderón Guardia Hospital
Address: 200 meters from the National Park
San Jose
Tel: 506 2212-1000

TERTIARY HOSPITAL

San Juan de Dios Hospital
Address: Paseo Colon
San Jose
Tel: 506 2257-6282

2. If the illness or injury takes place in the field, report immediately to the HoD based in Costa Rica (+506 87083899). If the condition of the delegate is severe and does not allow for road transport, the HoD can require an air-evacuation. Air evacuations are rare in Costa Rica and are managed directly by the Ministry of Security.
3. The HoD will inform the HR Health Officer (**Mobile +41 79 217 33 19**) at the Federation Secretariat in Geneva according to the Security Regulations and will also provide the name and contact telephone number of the treating physician (once available).
4. It is the responsibility of the HR Health Officer, to inform the delegate's National Society, who will then contact the next of kin and the insurance company. The HoD will be the point of contact for HR Health Officer for any update on the delegate's health status until his/her discharge from hospital or evacuation. For information purposes only, the HoD or his/her designee will inform Walter Cotte Director of the Regional Office in Panama
5. The doctor at the hospital will advise if the delegate requires an evacuation, and the information will be forwarded via the HR Health Officer, to the delegate's insurance company who will liaise directly with the treating physician for the co-ordination of the evacuation.
6. In extreme emergencies, where immediate action is required and the situation is deemed one of "life or death" by a physician in the field, the HoD, on the advice of the attending physician, has the authority to evacuate a delegate and should take the necessary steps.





7. Before contacting the air-ambulance (Ministry of Security) service make sure you have the following details ready:
 - You need an evacuation from (patient's location) to (Capital City, neighbouring country, third country)
 - Name, DOB, age, sex and nationality of the patient
 - Reasons for requesting evacuation (severe illness, accident)
 - Details on patient's condition. If patient is already in hospital give physician's name and contact number.
 - In case of medical evacuation from the field towards the Capital City or neighbouring country, be aware of the time required for the patient to reach the airstrip (this information is required if the flying time of the air-ambulance is shorter than the road transport time to reach the airstrip).
8. Make sure you have patient's passport and vaccination card ready and, if possible, the insurance card.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL EVACUATION

Notification Procedures and Geneva Contact Numbers

1. At field level the HoD has the final responsibility in ordering an evacuation based on the information he/she receives from the treating physician or, when no medical doctor is available, by any health professional dealing with the case. The information must be given in writing.
2. The HoD will inform the HR Health Officer (**mobile +41 79 217 33 19**) in Geneva according to Security Regulations. HoD will also provide the name and contact telephone number of the treating physician/health professional (if possible). International SOS Alarm centre Geneva (+41 22 785 64 64) or nearest ISOS alarm centre) to be contacted directly by the HoD if it concerns a Federation contracted delegate/family member or Local/National Staff. The International SOS will contact the Health Officer in HR/Security.
3. It is the responsibility of the person contacted in the Secretariat in Geneva to forward the information to all relevant parties.
4. It is responsibility of the HR Health Officer to inform the delegate's National Society, who will then contact next of kin and the insurance company. Delegates must be familiar with their insurance procedures vis-à-vis medical evacuation, that is whether they need to contact the insurance company directly (as in case of ISOS) or whether this is to be done by their National Society.
5. The assistance/insurance company will contact directly the treating physician and agree on modality of evacuation (commercial flight escorted/not escorted or air ambulance).
6. The HoD will be the point of contact for the HR Health Office, for any update on the delegate's health status and evacuation plans.





7. In extreme emergencies, where immediate action is required and the situation is deemed one of “life or death” by a physician in the field, the HoD will take the appropriate steps to ensure the immediate evacuation of the delegate. If normal airlines cannot be used and the insurance company cannot be contacted, the HoD can authorise the charter of a special aircraft to the nearest location for adequate medical treatment. The Health Officer will then be advised of progress.

8. Geneva Contact Telephone Numbers

As stated above in case of any health emergency, be it hospitalisation or evacuation, the Health Officer in Geneva has to be immediately informed. If the Health Officer is unreachable one of the following alternatives must be contacted:

- Secretariat Security Officer Mobiles +41 79 217 33 71, +41 79 251 80 15, +41 79 308 98 42

HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

Checklist for Information Sheet to Delegates

Each delegate arriving at the delegation should receive among the briefing papers a set of information with contact telephone numbers and addresses of a reliable known doctor and dentist (if possible), a referral hospital and ambulance (if the service exists). These contacts should be added to the general list of important telephone numbers issued by the delegation:

- **General Practitioner**
- **Dentist**
- **Gyn/Obs**
- **Paediatrician**

Clínica Bíblica Hospital

Address: 10th Avenue, diagonal to the Pacific Railroad Station

San Jose

Tel: 506 2522-1000

- **Hospitals**

PRIMARY HOSPITAL

Clínica Bíblica Hospital

Address: 10th Avenue, diagonal to the Pacific Railroad Station

San Jose

Tel: 506 2522-1000

SECUNDARY HOSPITAL

Calderón Guardia Hospital

Address: 200 meters from the National Park

San Jose

Tel: 506 2212-1000





International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

17, chemin des Crêts, Petit-Saconnex / P.O. Box 372 CH-1211 Geneva 19
Telephone: (41 22) 730 4222 Fax: (41 22) 733 0395 Telex: 412 133 FRC CH

TERTIARY HOSPITAL

San Juan de Dios Hospital

Address: Paseo Colon

San Jose

Tel: 506 2257-6282

- **Ambulance**

If you need an ambulance, please call the Costa Rican Red Cross Communications Department or at 9-1-1, identify yourself as the Red Cross Delegate.

1st Contact: HoD: Andres Morales +506 87083899

2nd Contact: Deputy Director of Rescue and Operations Jim Batres +506 8843-3000

3rd Contact: National Chief of Communications +506 2542-0000

As the medical evacuation contains **confidential personal information** on one's health, all information must be kept highly confidential. Avoid copying any unnecessary people in the emails.

