**EUROPEAN COMMISSION EMPL/01978/20 - EN**

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| **AC 232/20** |
| **UK Intentions for UK-Issued European Health Insurance Cards** |
| **United Kingdom – 16/10/20** |

**Orig. EN**

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION  
FOR THE COORDINATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEMS

Subject: Notification of the UK’s Intention Regarding UK-Issued European Health Insurance Cards

**Note from United Kingdom of 16th October 2020**

**Introduction**

The UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office wrote to the Specialised Committee on Citizens’ Rights on 25 September 2020 regarding the UK’s intention for UK-issued European Health Insurance Cards (EHICs). We now wish to inform the Admin Commission of these intentions and request support in disseminating relevant information in Member States.

As part of the Withdrawal Agreement, there will be no changes to European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) entitlements until the end of the Transition Period. Social security coordination will also continue to apply across the UK at the end of the Transition Period for individuals in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement.

This letter sets out the UK Government’s progress to ensure that people in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement can access their EHIC entitlements in a straightforward and timely manner at the end of the Transition Period.

Our approach will ensure that:

* those with a continued entitlement to a UK-issued EHIC under the Withdrawal Agreement from the end of the Transition Period will be able to secure their EHIC rights; and
* those entitled to temporary EHIC rights at the end of the Transition Period will be able to secure these rights for the appropriate duration.

**Approach to existing EHIC cards in circulation**

As part of its published approach to the negotiations with the EU, the UK has indicated that it is open to working with the EU to establish arrangements that provide healthcare cover for tourists, short-term business visitors and service providers. These arrangements will be without prejudice to the rights of individuals who are protected by the Withdrawal Agreement. If there is no negotiated outcome, it will not be possible to determine from pre-existing EHICs whether the card holder is in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement. Existing cards will therefore need to be voided from 1 January 2021, from which point they will no longer be valid for use.

**Approach to those in Full Scope of the Withdrawal Agreement**

Those in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement and eligible for a UK-issued EHIC (the ‘Citizens’ Rights’ Cohort) will be invited to apply for a new ‘Citizens’ Rights’ EHIC ahead of the end of the Transition Period.

The new design will allow healthcare providers in Member States to easily distinguish between members of the Citizens’ Rights cohort and pre-existing EHIC cards which will no longer be valid; the ‘Citizens’ Rights’ EHIC will include a hologram in the top-right corner and distinguishing ‘CRA’ (Citizens’ Rights Agreement) text printed in the top field of the card and PIN. A copy of this new design is enclosed in Annex A, with a detailed image of the hologram attached at Annex B.

Current S1 holders, including frontier workers working in the UK and posted workers living in an EU Member State who can continue their posting, will be able to apply for their new card in Autumn 2020, with applications opening to all other groups, including qualifying EU citizens, in December 2020.

The first cards will be issued for use from early November 2020 and will be valid from receipt.

For those in the Citizens’ Rights cohort who have not applied for or received their new EHIC ahead of traveling in the EU in 2021, a Provisional Replacement Certificate (PRC) can be requested. This will operate in the same way as it does now, but with an additional check to confirm eligibility under the Withdrawal Agreement for those who have not yet applied for their card.

**Approach to ‘Cross-border’ situations**

***Temporary Visits***

Article 32(1)(c) of the Withdrawal Agreement protects the rights of individuals who are in a cross-border situation at the end of the Transition Period to continue to benefit from the EHIC scheme for as long as that cross-border situation in the state they are in continues. For individuals who are covered by these provisions, we will issue PRCs should they require treatment, as their pre-Transition Period EHIC will no longer be valid.

To request a PRC, the Member State healthcare provider should direct the individual to contact the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA), who processes entitlements on behalf of the Secretary of State. This way, they will be able to provide the necessary evidence to demonstrate that they are in scope. If a PRC is requested by a healthcare provider on behalf of an individual, the provider should take steps to ensure the individual travelled to the MS before 31 December 2020, as NHSBSA will not be able to issue a PRC without confirming this.

***Students***

Article 32(1)(c) of the Withdrawal Agreement also protects the rights of UK students who are habitually resident in the UK and studying in a Member State before the end of the Transition Period. These students can continue to benefit from an EHIC for use in their Member State of study for the duration of their course. We will issue these students with a time-limited EHIC, valid for their length of study, which will include distinguishing country-specific text in the PIN to indicate which Member State it will be valid in. An example of this design is enclosed in Annex C. The country specific text will be in accordance with the standard two-letter EU and EFTA country codes, as published on the European Commission’s webpages (Annex D).

To ensure that students understand their entitlement, we will notify them in the accompanying EHIC letter of the country-specific validity of their EHIC. Furthermore, as UK students may become habitually resident in their Member State of study, we will be clear in our communications about actions they can take to secure entitlements that are appropriate for them.

**Approach to Applications**

Please see below for a schedule of anticipated application opening dates for different cohorts in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cohort** | **Anticipated application opening date** |
| UK-insured persons resident in a Member State with a registered S1 form | Late October/Early November 2020 |
| Students habitually resident in the UK, on a temporary stay for the purpose of study starting before 31 December 2020 | Late October/Early November 2020 |
| UK-insured Posted Workers with a valid A1 form who are able to continue their posting under local immigration rules | Late October / Early November 2020, pending Member State confirmation of immigration rules |
| EU citizens resident in the UK under Article 10 | Early December 2020 |

**Approach to recognising Member State EHICs in the UK**

As previously communicated to the Specialised Committee, the UK would be grateful for support to ensure that EHIC entitlements in the UK operate successfully for people covered under the Withdrawal Agreement who are entitled to use a Member State-issued EHIC in the UK after the end of the transition period. The UK would welcome information from each Member State in setting out in return their intended approach to implementing EHIC entitlements, including any plans they may have for differentiating between Member State-issued EHICs for those who are and who are not in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement.

The UK would be grateful for timely responses from Member States, to ensure successful implementation, in line with the process agreed by the Specialised Committee.

**Approach to other healthcare entitlements**

NHSBSA will continue to be responsible for issuing Portable S1 and S2 documents. The process for issuing S1 and S2 documents will be the same as now, except that NHSBSA will also assess whether customers are within scope of the Withdrawal Agreement through residence or insurance contributions in Member States before they issue any documentation. The UK will not issue new S1 documentation to current S1 holders as existing certificates will remain valid and any S1 and S2 documentation issued after the end of the Transition Period will only be to people who are eligible under the Withdrawal Agreement.

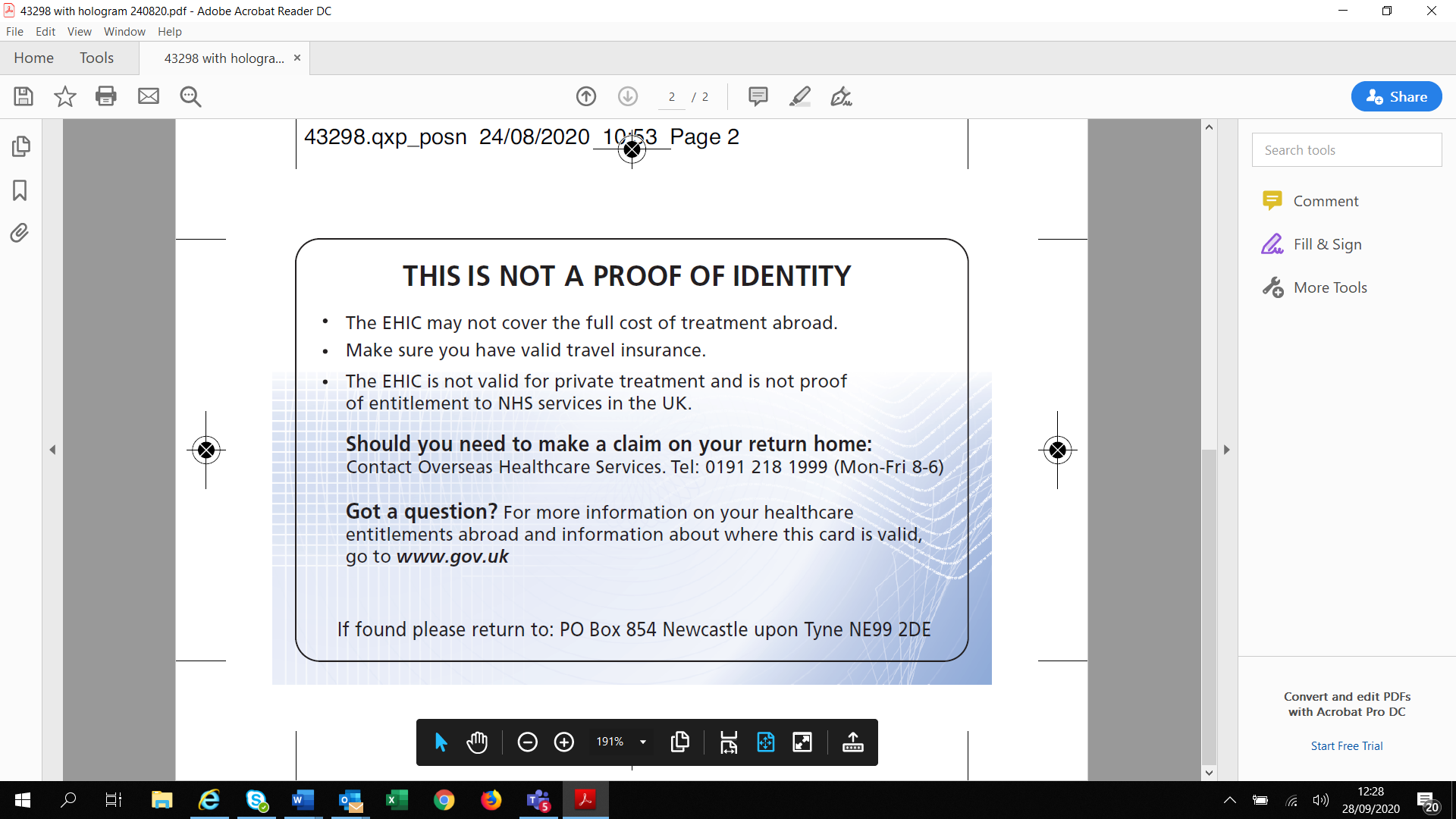
**Conclusion**

The United Kingdom Government asks that Member States note these changes and communicate them to local healthcare providers, to ensure UK citizens in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement continue to access healthcare rights. Specifically, the United Kingdom Government asks Member States to:

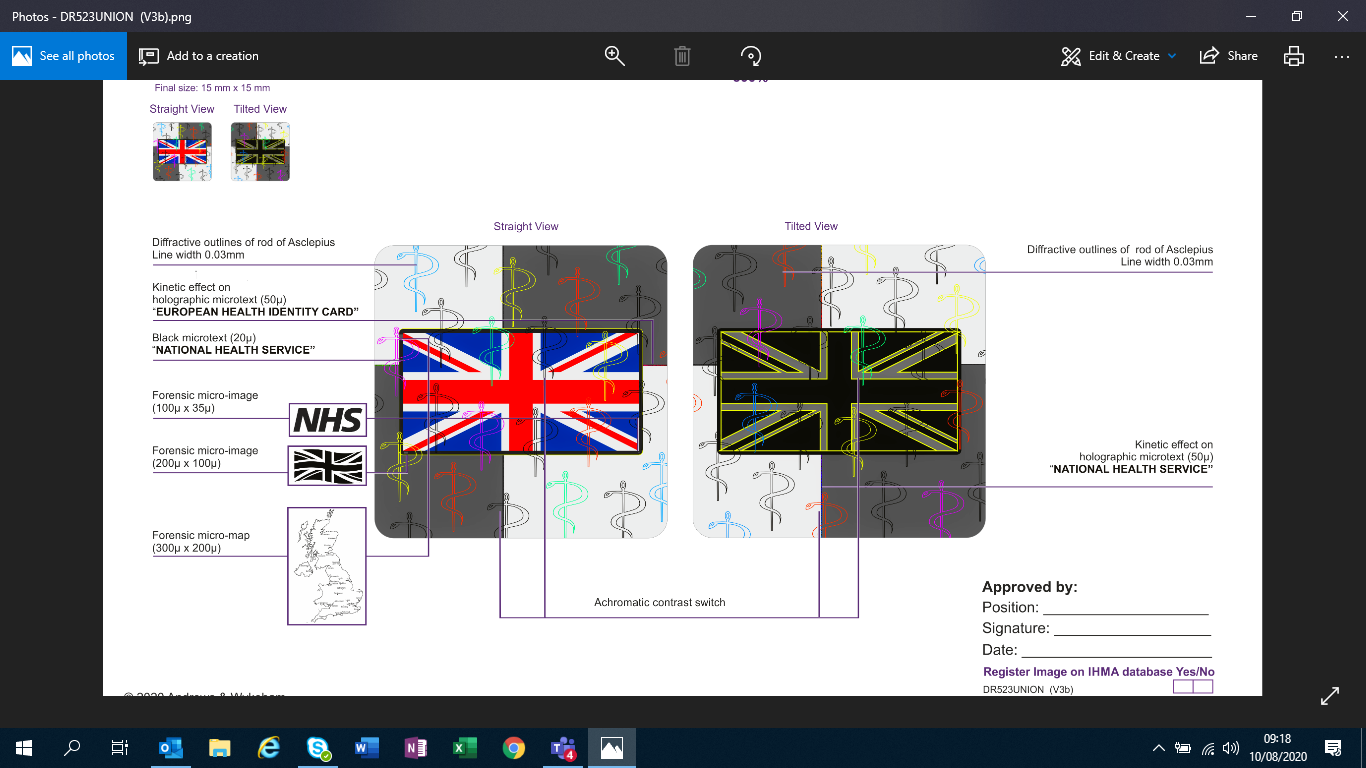
* Note the new ‘Citizens’ Rights’ EHIC design for people in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement, including the country-specific text in the PIN field for Student EHICs.
* Inform healthcare providers of this new design, ahead of new cards being ready for use in early November 2020. Healthcare providers will need to check for both the hologram and distinguishing text at the end of the PIN field in order for the EHIC to be valid for use. The text at the end of the PIN field should either be marked with ‘CRA’ or the correct country code if it is a Student EHIC (although Students may use a Student EHIC in any Member State until 31 December 2020).
* Inform healthcare providers of the new process requirement for obtaining a PRC from January 2021.
* Inform the UK of their intended approaches to differentiating between Member State-issued EHICs for those who are and who are not in scope of the Withdrawal Agreement, via the Specialised Committee Secretariat.

Annex A - The new ‘Citizens’ Rights’ EHIC





Annex B – The new ‘Citizens’ Rights’ EHIC Hologram



“EUROPEAN HEALTH INSURANCE CARD”

Three-dimensional image that appears to float above the hologram

Several level 2 (inspector level) features, i.e. micro-text, and level 3 (forensic level) features.

Two main switching features as the hologram is tilted using e-beam technology which is difficult to replicate.

Annex C - The new Student EHIC (for use in France)



Annex D – Student EHIC country codes

**European Union (EU)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Belgium | (BE) | Greece | (EL) | Lithuania | (LT) | Portugal | (PT) |
| Bulgaria | (BG) | Spain | (ES) | Luxembourg | (LU) | Romania | (RO) |
| Czechia | (CZ) | France | (FR) | Hungary | (HU) | Slovenia | (SI) |
| Denmark | (DK) | Croatia | (HR) | Malta | (MT) | Slovakia | (SK) |
| Germany | (DE) | Italy | (IT) | Netherlands | (NL) | Finland | (FI) |
| Estonia | (EE) | Cyprus | (CY) | Austria | (AT) | Sweden | (SE) |
| Ireland | (IE) | Latvia | (LV) | Poland | (PL) |  |  |

**European Free Trade Association (EFTA)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Iceland | (IS) |  | Norway | (NO) |
| Liechtenstein | (LI) |  | Switzerland | (CH) |

We have taken these codes from the list defined by Eurostat: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary:Country_codes>