

Question for written answer E-001935/2017
to the Commission
Rule 130
Mairead McGuinness (PPE)

Subject: Rights under the cross-border health directive

Directive 2011/24/EU on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare, adopted in March 2011, has now been transposed into law in the 28 Member States.

Article 7(4) of this directive states that the 'costs of cross-border healthcare shall be reimbursed or paid directly by the Member State of affiliation'. An example of good practice would be the Scottish Health Secretary's declaration that an individual patient's 'particular circumstances' should be evaluated to determine whether a provider should be paid directly. Presently though, Member States require that patients pay for treatment upfront, to then be reimbursed by the Member State. This has meant that only the wealthiest can utilise the directive, and the poorest are placed at a disadvantage by not being able to access their rights under the directive.

1. Is the Commission aware of the difficulties faced by patients trying to access the directive? What efforts is it making to ensure that both options for payment are being used in Member States?
2. Can it provide guidance on when it would be appropriate and necessary for Member States to pay healthcare providers directly?