

**Question for written answer E-001542/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Sir Graham Watson (ALDE)

Subject: European health insurance cards and private healthcare

The European health insurance card (EHIC) gives EU citizens visiting other Member States access to medical treatment under the same conditions and at the same cost (which is free in some countries) as people insured in that country.

Is the Commission aware, however, that visitors abroad are sometimes misdirected to private ambulance services and private hospital facilities which do not accept the EHIC? My constituents have highlighted instances in countries such as Spain and Greece of being taken to private facilities when they have sought medical assistance. This has included people being taken to private facilities further away than the local municipal health facility.

Understandably, when urgent medical assistance is being sought, many people are unaware that they are being guided towards a private enterprise and that they could instead receive public hospital treatment.

Is the Commission aware of such instances? What steps has the Commission taken in health and consumer protection legislation to ensure that those admitted to hospitals are made aware of local public emergency health facilities which could be used?