



Partners' Newsletter - June 2010

PENSION BENEFIT AND HEALTHCARE TEAM

A QUICK REMINDER

In the May edition of the Partners' Newsletter, you may remember we asked those of you who are directly on our mailing list to give us an insight into your organisation and how you use the newsletter. The main information we are requesting is:

- name and nature of your organisation/group (i.e. social club, charity, town hall department)
- the way in which you use the newsletter (i.e. upload on website, put on notice board, email to members etc)
- number of people who receive the newsletter through your organisation/group (how many attend meetings, are on your mailing list etc), the number of people in your organisation/group as a whole (if applicable) and their age profile

If you have not yet provided us with this information, please do contact us at lorna.geddie@fco.gov.uk by 30th June, as the information you provide will help us improve our service.

PLANNING AHEAD



Many people put off thinking about their pension, perhaps because retirement seems a long way off, or maybe because it just seems too complicated to understand. However, planning for your future is important and thinking about your pension now may help ensure you enjoy your retirement later on.

If you would like to know how much UK pension you are likely to receive based on the years you have already worked, you can apply for a pension forecast from HMRC. Based on this, you may also wish to consider paying voluntary contributions to top up your pension entitlement. If you are currently living and/or working in Spain, but wish to voluntarily contribute to the UK, you can pay for any of the last 6 years where you have not contributed enough previously. In addition, if you reach state pension age between April 2008 and April 2015 you are entitled to pay for any 6 years back to 1975, providing you already have 20 full qualifying years.

Remember however, if you reach pension age after 6th April 2010, you now only need 30 years of contributions to qualify for a full UK State Pension.

If you are interested in paying UK voluntary contributions or wish to find out more, call HMRC on 0044 191 203 7010 or see www.hmrc.gov.uk.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PAPERWORK

Those of you in receipt of a UK State Pension should have received a letter earlier this year informing you of the value of your weekly rate as from April 2010.



These letters are sent out every year, but how many of you keep the paperwork regarding your pension?

In a previous edition of the newsletter, we highlighted how the PBHT can provide a certificate to help you prove your State Pension income when applying for help through social services. In order to do so however, we need to see recent correspondence regarding your pension. To ensure the process is as quick and smooth as possible, we will ask to see your pension increase letter, so you might just find it worth hanging on to.

GOOD NEWS STORY!

A customer contacted PBHT from the UK as she and her family were planning a holiday on the Costa del Sol. Her daughter required oxygen whilst on holiday and the PBHT helped liaise between the family and the health authorities to ensure the oxygen was available and delivered to the hotel with all costs and treatment covered by the EHIC.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Those of you who were affected by the EHIC changes last month may be aware that the EU social security regulations have been updated and that the changes came into force on 1st May 2010. As part of this update, it is important to note that 'E-forms' (for example the E121) have been replaced with new forms and they are now going to be known by different names.

One of the most relevant name changes that British citizens living in Spain should be aware of is to the forms used to access healthcare abroad. The E121, which is available to UK State Pensioners and their dependants, and the E106, available to posted workers and in some cases early retirees, have now both been replaced by the S1. As with the E121 and E106, the S1 must be registered with the Spanish authorities to give the holder access to full healthcare and the form comes with full instructions on how to do so.

PLEASE NOTE: Anybody who is already registered under an E121 or E106 does not need to take any action as their E121/E106 remains valid and their entitlement to healthcare is not affected. These changes only apply to new applicants who will receive an S1 instead of the E121/E106.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The PBHT recently held the following events:

11th June – Road show, Coín, Málaga

15th June – Healthcare 'Super Surgery', Guardamar

Keep an eye out for more events in your area soon on <http://ukinspain.fco.gov.uk>

British Consulate/Age Concern España Partnership Project (BC/ACPP)

BRITISH CONSULATE SPRING GARDEN PARTY 2010



The British Consulate in Malaga held a Spring Garden Party in Fuengirola to help raise money for the Age Concern España Casework Service.

The event, which was sponsored by Euro Weekly News and attended by British Ambassador, Giles Paxman, raised €20,000 which will be used to train the volunteer caseworkers in Spain. Age Concern España offers support to over 15,000 English speakers across the country and has been working closely with the British Consular network in Spain for the last few years.

"This sort of integration is really valued by our consular teams," commented Giles Paxman, "it's important that the local Spanish community understand what we do and recognise areas in which we can help the British population in Spain in a joined-up way."

The Garden Party was held at Sohail Castle in Fuengirola, and was attended by members of the British and Spanish community, including Rowetta of The X Factor and Christian Fa, winner of the Wow Factor 2009.

Sarah Rogers, Country Casework Manager for the British Consulate/Age Concern España Partnership Project said that "these funds can help us train our volunteer caseworkers across Spain and enable us to help those most in need in the community". She stated that "without the generous donations from our sponsors, raffle prize donors and attendees, the Garden Party would not have been the success it was". She wanted to say a special thank you to the volunteer caseworkers who helped out on the day.

SPORT RELIEF

Rising to a challenge set by Olympic gold medal winner Steve Redgrave to Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) staff around the world, members of the British Embassy in Madrid held a Sport Relief Mile on Friday 16th April. The run, which was completed by British Ambassador to Spain, Giles Paxman LVO and Deputy Head of Mission, Emma Boggis, was followed by traditional 'Sports Day' events such as egg and spoon and relay races. The British Embassy in Madrid has chosen to donate the money they have raised to Cruz Roja Española and Age Concern España.

Adam Kettle-Williams of the Consular Network, who helped to organise the event says: "Both of these charities offer fantastic services to local communities in Spain and we often rely on their support in providing assistance for our customers. Today has been an opportunity for us to give something back to them."



The Royal British Legion

COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES

The war dead of the Commonwealth came from many different countries and cultures; they were of all social and military ranks and standings, and of many faiths and of none.

When the Imperial (later Commonwealth) War Graves Commission was founded in 1917, the principle was that for the dead, there would be **equality** in commemoration. Their bodies would remain in the countries in which they had fallen, where they would be permanently commemorated individually and by name, either on a standard headstone marking the grave or on a memorial.

The Commission was tasked with marking the graves, creating the cemeteries and building the memorials. It now has a commitment in **150** countries, caring for **1,100,000** Commonwealth burials from the two world wars in **2,500** constructed war cemeteries and **21,000** other burial grounds. The **760,000** dead who have no known grave are commemorated on some **200** memorials.

The Commission has 54 commitments throughout Spain and are looking for volunteers who would be willing to visit the graves once a year to check on their condition, take some photographs and provide a report regarding any up-keep necessary.

Volunteers are needed in the following areas:

Cervera, Figueras, Huelva, Les Corts (Barcelona), Madrid, Montjuich (Barcelona), Palma (Mallorca), Peña (Navarra), Tarragona, Vilagarcia de Arousa (Pontevedra), Zahara de los Atunes (Barbate), Ceuta & Melilla.

If you are interested in volunteering please contact:

Consuelo Luci:

Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Tel: +39 06 509991201

Fax: +39 06 50524593

Email: Consuelo.luci@cwgc.org

NEW CASEWORKERS

On 14th & 15th May, 16 new volunteer caseworkers attended a course and are now ready to become active as caseworkers.

I would like to express my thanks to all those who attended the course & for volunteering their time to assist Legion beneficiaries here in Spain.

We are always looking to recruit more volunteers. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer caseworker or Hospital & Housebound visitor – please contact dmwilson@britishlegion.org.uk or Tel: 95 235 23 00 (7)