



NAVY MEDICINE

WORLD-CLASS CARE...ANYTIME, ANYWHERE

U.S. NAVAL HOSPITAL SIGONELLA

Patient Information Guide: Navigating the Italian Health Care System





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Introduction

U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Sigonella is a 22-bed community hospital located in the heart of the Mediterranean in Sicily, Italy. We are comprised of our main facility in Sigonella and have satellite clinic and branch clinics located in Souda Bay, Greece and the Kingdom of Bahrain. Our staff of almost 500 military, civilian and contract staff provide high quality, patient-centered care and operational support to approximately 6,250 active duty, family members, NATO forces, retirees, and other eligible patients through international collaboration and status of force agreements.

We take great pride in keeping our patients in the Sigonella area healthy, ready and on-the-job—the Navy Medicine mission. We are fully accredited by The Joint Commission—our nation’s premiere accrediting body for hospitals across the U.S. Our Medical Home Port Teams have earned the highest level recognition from the National Committee for Quality Assurance. NCQA’s recognition programs are built on evidence-based, nationally recognized clinical standards of care.

USNH Sigonella provides a continuum of care: primary care for the whole family, specialty services, surgery, maternity care, pharmacy, laboratory and radiology. Preventive services include wellness and nutrition.

When care is something outside of the scope of our services, we partner closely with our Host Nation health care facilities to ensure the best experience possible for you and your family members by providing patient liaisons, case managers, translation services and more to support continuity of care and the best patient outcomes. This guide is designed to help you navigate care in the Host Nation network.

Mission

We maximize force health protection while promoting health and providing high quality patient and family centered care. Our goal is to be Navy Medicine’s finest forward positioned medical team—flexible, capable and responsive to a dynamic operational environment. Our guiding principles:

➤ SHIP

Take care of the ship. The ship is the mission, the environment or command we operate in, our patients, and those we serve who seek care. It could be the Marines we are serving alongside or the vaccine we are trying to create. We must all consistently ask ourselves where we fit into the overall mission and priorities of not just our commands, but of the entire Navy Medicine enterprise. We must honor our proud heritage and perform the mission without fail.

➤ Shipmate

Take care of each other. Be vigilant to the needs and actions of your shipmates and watch out for one another. We must maintain an optimum level of professionalism at all times. We must remain on a path that supports our core values of honor, courage and commitment. When someone starts to veer off that course or starts to show signs of trouble, step between your shipmate and trouble and help them course correct. We all need one another to succeed. Leave no shipmate behind.

➤ Self

Take care of yourself. You cannot care for others if you are not caring for yourself. Asking for help is a sign of strength. We are all in this together. You must constantly reflect on your own needs and those of your family. Speak up so we can better equip you to meet the challenges you are facing. Self-reflection and awareness is also an important part of leadership and success.



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Access to Care

The Nurse Advise Line is available 24/7 at 1-800-TRICARE (874-2273). Call 118 in an emergency.

To make an appointment, call our Appointment Lines: 624-2273 or commercial 095-562273

When your unique care needs cannot be provided at our facility, we will provide you and your family with guidance and assistance you need for outpatient care or for a hospitalization experience in the Preferred Provider Network (PPN). As part of the TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP), the Defense Health Agency (DHA), TRICARE Area Office Europe-Asia (TAO-EA), the Managed Care Support Contractor (MCSC) as well as International SOS (ISOS) have established written agreements with local Italian health care providers and medical facilities to ensure the more complex needs of our patients can be met without the need for leaving the area. Apart from the cultural differences, Italian health care facilities offer high quality care similar to that you expect back home.



Important Phone Numbers

Civilian Prefix in the Catania area:	095 XX XXXX
Emergency/Ambulance	118
Carabinieri	112
Fire Department	115
Police Department	113
Healthcare Finder (Referrals)	624-4087/4846 or commercial 095-56-4087/4846
Beneficiary Counselor and Assistance	624-4848/4838 or commercial 095-56-4848/4838
Medical Service Coordinator (Enrollments)	624-4880 or commercial 095-56-4880
24 Hour – Nurse Advice Line	800-87-7660
Case Manager	624-4878 or commercial 095-56-4878
	Cell 335-578-8122 (7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.)
	Cell 335-763-0803 (4 p.m. to 7:30 a.m.)

If you need a Patient Liaison after hours, contact our Quarterdeck at DSN 624-3842/4250 or 095-563842/4250. Our Quarterdeck staff will contact the Patient Liaison, and they will contact you as quickly as possible.

Emergency Care After-Hours

➤ For TRICARE Prime patients:

Your first choice is to come to the USNH Sigonella Emergency Department (ED). If you are unable to drive to the ED, call 911. If you live out in town, call 118. For 911 calls, our ED physician, in coordination with the ambulance crew, will make



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the decision to either take you to our ED or to a network ED. The on-call translator will be dispatched for all active duty and active duty family members sent to a Host Nation facility for medical care or evaluation and treatment afterhours.

➤ **Retirees and Other Health Insurance (OHI) Patients:**

Contact 118 to dispatch the Italian ambulance for emergency care and transportation. The 118 emergency services will identify the proper facility for care. In urgent, non-emergent, circumstances, OHI patients may contact their personal insurance company in order to make transportation arrangements. Retirees can contact TRICARE International SOS at 1-877-678-1207. Retirees and OHI patients will only be eligible for translation services during the initial admission and the discharge process at a Host Nation facility.

There are many network Emergency Departments available in the area that provide medical care for TRICARE Prime enrollees and cost-shared care for TRICARE Standard enrollees:

- **Ospedale Cannizzaro, via Messina 829 – Catania tel. 095-726-3030**
- **Ospedale Vittorio Emanuele, via Plebiscito 628 – Catania tel. 095-743-5257**
- **Ospedale Garibaldi, Piazza Santa Maria di Gesu' 5 – Catania tel. 095-759-4364**

The local ED may require hospitalization to complete diagnostic testing, unlike an American ED that may complete tests on an outpatient basis. An exception may be a minor injury/illness (i.e., lacerations, fractured bones needing casting, or suturing on an outpatient basis). Like any ED, patients are seen according to medical priority and availability of the appropriate physician.

Following your exam, you will be admitted, referred or released to follow-up at USNH Sigonella ED. When released, either as an outpatient or at the end of your hospitalization, the Patient Liaison will be given a medical report (discharge summary). This will be translated and integrated into your medical record. Upon discharge during normal business hours, a Patient Liaison and driver will bring you back to our hospital. Please schedule a follow-up appointment with your Primary Care Manager as instructed.

Managed Care & Referral Management

ISOS and the Referral Management Center (RMC) work together to support the TOP Prime patient (e.g., United States active duty service and family member) to obtain authorization of their referral in the Italian health care medical system.

The RMC ensures that the military treatment facility's (MTF's) capability and capacity are utilized optimally, works closely with providers, ISOS, and TAO-EA offices to review eligibility and benefits for patients, track all referrals to ensure patients are booked and seen within TRICARE access to care guidance, arrange network appointments, and assist with claims issues.

The RMC provides assistance to all TRICARE beneficiaries (including TRICARE Standard) and patients who are allowed access to care at the Medical Treatment Facility (e.g., NATO and DoD civilians).

Several of the RMC personnel also serve as Patient Liaisons. In this role, they help coordinate network appointments and inpatient admissions, after-hours patient transfers and admissions, translation services for network care, and consult results from network providers.



Case Management

USNH Sigonella's Primary Case Manager can be reached at 335-763-0803, 7:30 a.m. through 4 p.m., Monday - Friday, except on holidays. The Host Nation Care Coordinator may be reached after hours at 335-578-8122 including weekends and holidays. Active duty beneficiaries and their dependents are eligible for Case Management or Care Coordination services.

Case management involves a team of health care professionals who help you and your family to address your medical, education, and psychosocial needs. You and your team will work out a plan to help you gain control of your illness, injury or situation as soon as possible. You will also plan collaboratively with your team to identify the needed resources as your medical condition improves. The case manager will oversee the plan with you to ensure it continues to meet any change in your health status. The goal is to help you navigate the healthcare system.

Usually people with a very complex or catastrophic condition or situations require case management; however some individuals just need assistance with care coordination. Case management services are a benefit of the healthcare system. There is no charge to the individual no matter what status you are in while living in Italy. Your provider either submits a referral to case management and you will be contacted or you can meet with the case manager as a self-referral and the case manager will contact the primary care or specialty provider for a referral.

Outpatient Referrals

Pre-appointment visits are arranged by the Referral Management Center (RMC).

When your provider writes a referral for you to see a specialist that is not available at a MTF, you will be contacted by the RMC staff to coordinate your visit

We recommend setting up a RelayHealth account by logging into your home computer at www.relayhealth.com. This online system offers you a secure messaging account to allow simple efficient communication with your MTF providers and staff.

The appointment scheduling is based on the priority of the referral (determined by the referring provider) and TRICARE Access to Care guidance.

Routine referrals must be booked within 28 days. Patients who waive this requirement must notify their provider. If the referral is more urgent, RMC will work within that priority guidance. Please support the RMC as we try to work with your schedule as we are scheduling you with the local Italian facility.

TRICARE Prime beneficiaries will need a referral order that is pre-authorized by International SOS for network consults. ISOS has three business days to review the referral request and either authorize or deny authorization of the referral. TRICARE Prime beneficiaries are encouraged to utilize providers in the TRICARE network that is maintained by ISOS. If TRICARE Prime beneficiaries choose to see a non-network provider or if the TRICARE Prime beneficiary chooses to be seen by a provider without an authorization, as per TRICARE policy, this is considered a TRICARE Point of Service (POS) and has an out of pocket cost to the family.



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You can receive information about the POS option and costs at the RMC with a benefits counselor. Please note that the RMC staff does not contact, provide booking or transportation to providers outside the ISOS network. If you choose to use an outside provider and bring the consult notes from their provider to the RMC, we will be happy to translate the notes that pertain to the care you will be receiving under your medical provider at USNH Sigonella and enter them into the MTF's secured electronic medical record, also known as the Armed Forces Health Longitudinal Technology Application (e.g., AHLTA) for your provider. The original translated reports will be given to the Medical Record department for entry into your record.

Routine care in the Continental United States (CONUS): Any non-emergent or urgent care obtained outside an MTF, in CONUS while enrolled in TRICARE Overseas Program, requires medical justification and PRIOR authorization by contacting ISOS prior to receiving services. If not authorized prior to being seen, it will be subject to POS costs.

Non-Enrolled TRICARE Patients

The RMC offers referral management assistance to patients who are not enrolled to USNH Sigonella as TRICARE Prime. If you are enrolled to TRICARE Overseas Program Prime Remote (TOP Prime Remote), TRICARE Standard or utilize insurance benefits that are not part of the TRICARE program, the RMC will assist with booking your appointment to one of the local providers and assist with providing an estimate for out of pocket costs. International SOS has oversight and is responsible to the patients enrolled in TOP Prime Remote and TRICARE Standard for claim processing.

International SOS can be contacted on these following numbers: Eurasia-Africa TOP Regional Center: 44-20-8762-8384; Eurasia-Africa Medical Assistance: 44-20-8762-8133 or visit www.tricare-overseas.com.

All other patients who are allowed care by USNH Sigonella (e.g., NATO personnel, DoD affiliates, DoDs teachers) are not bound to providers in the TRICARE network that is maintained by International SOS.

For all patient categories, if the initial referral was generated by USNH Sigonella, we will provide the follow up written translation services pertaining to the care you received in the network. Once the written translation is complete by the RMC Staff or received from an outside organization selected by the patient, the original documentation will be scanned and placed into AHLTA and will also be sent to the Medical Record department for entry into your record.

Please Note: RMC staff does not contact, provide booking or transportation to providers outside the ISOS network. If the patient seeks care outside the International SOS network, it is the patient's responsibility to seek written translation services.

TRICARE & Other Health Insurance (OHI)

If you have OHI, you must follow all rules pertained to that plan. Your OHI is considered your primary insurance and pays before TRICARE. You or your provider must file health care claims with your OHI before filing with TRICARE. After your OHI determines the amount it will pay, submit a copy of the payment determination and the itemized bill with your TRICARE claims. If you are covered under the Italian Health System and want to utilize this benefit, please make sure this is known to the RMC Staff; they can provide information on how to utilize this program.



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Proof of payment is required for all overseas health care and pharmacy claims, including claims for care received while traveling overseas. Proof of payment is necessary for TRICARE to validate claims and safeguards benefit dollars. Our Beneficiary Counseling Assistance Coordinator (BCAC) assigned to the RMC can offer further assistance for all claims issues.

Referral results

After receiving care, the Referral Management staff will collect the results from the local physician. Once translated, the results will be placed in the custody of the provider that initiated the referral for specialty care. If you choose to take yourself to see the network provider, please bring a copy of the notes to the RMC for translation, entry into AHLTA, and the note added to the paper medical record. Any other non-paper media (e.g., compact discs, ultrasounds, films) will be filed by the Medical Records Department.

Routine translations will be processed within 10 business days. Emergent and acute reports will be processed within 24-72 hours depending on acuity.

Patients Responsibilities

It is the patients' responsibility to notify RMC with any concerns, follow up with your Primary Care Manager (PCM), and to contact any MTF providers that may be involved with your referral to the network. It is also the patient's responsibility to utilize the grievance system to report any concern or complaint regarding health care quality or service. Any TRICARE civilian or military provider; TRICARE beneficiary; sponsor; or parent, guardian, or other representative of an eligible dependent child may file a grievance. More information can be obtained at http://www.tricare-overseas.com/Beneficiaries_Grievances.htm Comments and concerns can also be expressed through the ICE system at <https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=card&sp=139686&s=1108&sc=11&dep=DoD&card=1>



Day of the appointment

Please note: *On the day of the appointment, translation services via our Patient Liaisons will be provided for non-English speaking network facilities only. Unfortunately, only one parent may accompany patients under the age of 18. Due to the limitations on space, no other individuals will be permitted in the vehicle. If accompanied by your USNH Sigonella Patient Liaison for your first initial visit, there is no cost to the patient.*

Transportation to first appointment is on space available basis and pending resource of personnel and driver. If afforded the opportunity to be taken to your appointment (transportation), please show up to the RMC in the TRICARE office on the first floor of the hospital for transport at least 15 minutes prior departing.

Bring your personal Global Positioning System (GPS) to record coordinates for subsequent visits to the provider.

If you choose to go to the appointment on your own, be prepared to pay for parking because many facilities will have parking attendants who charge for parking. This cost averages between €2-10.



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No Show and Late Policies

If for some reason you are not available to make your appointment, please make every effort to contact our Referral Management Center at 624 4087/4846 or commercial 095-564087/4846 prior to the scheduled time of your appointment. Our RMC Staff will reschedule another appointment for you. If you are late more than 15 minutes from your scheduled appointment and the RMC was unsuccessful in contacting you, the appointment will be rescheduled for another day that corresponds with scheduled visits for staff members to be in the network. If you do not show up on the day of your appointment, and the RMC staff cannot make contact with you, the provider who initiated the referral will be notified and will decide at that time if the referral needs to be rescheduled or not.

Please note: After a second no-show appointment, the RMC Staff has no other choice but to cancel your initial referral and notify your provider to submit another referral, if needed.

Up Front Costs

In some cases, after care is rendered, patients may be expected to pay charges to the network facility up front and receive reimbursement later depending on your patient category (e.g., contractors). The Referral Management Center provides assistance in these matters through our Beneficiary Counseling Assistance Coordinator (BCAC).

Inpatient care in Italian Health Care System

During emergency situations where your medical care needs exceed the capabilities of the MTF, you will be transported to a PPN Italian medical facility. A patient liaison will be notified to help coordinate your admission to the medical facility.

If you sustain an illness or injury and admitted to a host nation hospital in the Sigonella area, we are notified and a Patient Liaison assigned to the RMC will contact you and/or the facility to assist with admitting procedures and interacting with the local Italian physicians when language translation and interpretation is required. When the admission occurs, the Patient Liaison is authorized to travel and assistance will be provided in person at the facility.

If you have not heard from a Patient Liaison within the first four hours, please call or have someone call the Naval Hospital Quarterdeck at DSN 624-3842/4250 or 095-563842/4250.

Please note: It is important to understand that once you and your loved one are settled in for the inpatient stay at the Italian Facility, the Patient Liaison is available for emergency contacts only. For routine questions, it is advised to notate your questions on a memo pad that will be addressed by the Patient Liaison the following morning. If you are a TOP Prime beneficiary, the patient liaison will notify ISOS to communicate your concerns and they will follow-up with the Italian medical team to further clarify any issues and address your concerns.

If admitted to a hospital or clinic outside the country of Italy, please contact ISOS at: +44-20-8762-8384 (overseas), 1-877-678-1207 (stateside) or from your cell: 800-915-994. During your inpatient stay, International SOS will remain your primary point of contact for medical updates, verbal translation services, and assistance. Upon discharge from the



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hospital, it is highly encouraged that you bring all discharge paperwork related to your illness or injury to our Referral Management Center for translation and submission into the USNH Sigonella's electronic health record. Please be advised: USNH Sigonella providers are not licensed to practice in Italian health care facilities and are unable to treat or prescribe medications to a patient while admitted.

After receiving care, the Referral Management staff will collect the results from the local physician. Once translated, the results will be placed in the custody of the provider that initiated the referral for specialty care. If you choose to take yourself to see the network provider, please bring a copy of the notes to the RMC for translation, entry into AHLTA, and the note added to the paper medical record. Any other non-paper media (e.g., compact discs, ultrasounds, films) will be filed by the Medical Records Department.

Patient Liaisons

USNH Sigonella has several Patient Liaison to assist all our patient who are hospitalized in Host Nation hospitals. Patient Liaisons are fluent in both English and Italian languages. Their working hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. You may also reach one by dialing the RMC at commercial: 095-56-4846/4087/4838/4848. A Patient Liaison is also on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for emergencies and serious illnesses/injuries. Please call the USNH Sigonella Quarterdeck for assistance: commercial 095-56-3842/4250.

The translator is not expected to stay with you throughout your hospitalization but will help ease language barriers between you and the Host Nation providers; answer questions regarding treatment, environment of care, and follow-up care as recommended by your provider; assess and interpret your concerns to determine specific needs for assistance during provider consultation; conduct follow-up as requested to assess progress made and/or plans for you or your family member's transfer to other hospitals or USNH Sigonella; and assist with your admission and discharge.

Italian Hospitals

To contact U.S. Naval Hospital Sigonella from an Italian hospital, please dial the RMC at 095-56-4846/4087/4838/4848. After hours please contact our Quarterdeck at 095-56-3842/4250.

Ospedale Cannizzaro

Services: Emergency, ICU, Traumatology, Pulmonology, Orthopedic Surgery, Neurosurgery

The Cannizzaro Hospital is utilized for trauma and only on an emergency basis. However, the patient may end up being admitted to one of their departments for ongoing care. Transportation to and from the hospital and language facilitation will be provided by the RMC. OHI patients are not eligible for transportation services via TRICARE van or MTF ambulance. Visiting hours are coordinated via the Patient Liaison. A cell phone is highly recommended. The translator will stay at the hospital as long as necessary information is translated but cannot stay at the hospital for the entire hospital stay. Please call the USNH Sigonella Quarterdeck for assistance.

➤ **DRIVING DIRECTIONS:** Go left on SS192, turn right at the round-about and take the autostrada A19 towards



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Catania, take the second exit Catania-Messina (E45), continue towards Messina and exit at Catania Centro (A18). Take the third exit on the right and continue on Via Marco Polo (circonvallazione) towards Messina-Acicastello, then towards Acicastello. After the AGIP station continue left on Via Antonino Caruso and turn right on the second street Via Messina. At the big round-about continue straight and take the second exit on the other round about. This is the entrance to the hospital.

Vittorio Emanuele

Services: Emergency, ICU, Surgery, Pediatric Surgery, Oncology, Urology & specialties

Admissions are organized via the RMC and the length of stay is determined by the patient's condition. Transportation to and from the hospital and language facilitation will be provided by the RMC. OHI patients are not eligible for transportation services via TRICARE van or MTF ambulance. Visiting hours are coordinated via the Patient Liaison. A cell phone is highly recommended. The translator will stay at the hospital as long as necessary information is translated but cannot stay at the hospital for the entire hospital stay. Please call the USNH Quarterdeck for assistance.

➤ **DRIVING DIRECTIONS:** Go left on SS 192 towards Catania, take the autostrada (A10) toward Catania. Continue until the end of the autostrada and turn right on Corso Indipendenza, continue straight until Piazza Risorgimento and turn right, around the Piazza take the second on the right to turn into Via Vittorio Emanuele until the traffic light. Turn left on Via Plebiscito. The hospital will be 300 meters down on your right.

Ferrarotto

Services: Cardiology, Pediatric Cardiology, Cardiac Surgery, Vascular Surgery, Hematology

There are no emergency services at Ferrarotto Hospital. This hospital is part of the Vittorio Emanuele-Policlinico Corporation. Admissions for the services mentioned are organized via the RMC and the length of stay is determined by the patient condition. Transportation to and from the hospital and language facilitation will be provided by the RMC. OHI patients are not eligible for transportation services via TRICARE van or MTF ambulance. Visiting hours are coordinated via your Patient Liaison.

➤ **DRIVING DIRECTIONS:** Go left on SS 192 towards Catania, take the autostrada (A10) towards Catania. Continue until the end of the autostrada and turn right on Corso Indipendenza, continue straight until Piazza Risorgimento and turn right, around the Piazza take the second on the right to turn into Via Vittorio Emanuele until the traffic light. Turn left on Via Plebiscito. Turn left on Via Carlo Forlanini, at the traffic light turn left on Via Citelli. The hospital is 50 meters ahead on your right.

Santo Bambino

Services: Pediatric Cardiology

There is an Obstetrical Emergency Room at the Santo Bambino Hospital. Admissions for the services mentioned are normally organized via the RMC and the length of stay is determined by the patient condition. For Neonatology admissions, a Patient Liaison will verify availability of cribs before the transfer of the patient. Transportation to and from



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the hospital will be provided via USNH Sigonella ER. OHI patients are not eligible for transportation services via TRICARE van or MTF ambulance. Language facilitation will be provided by the RMC. Visiting hours are coordinated via the Patient Liaison. The spouse or one family member/friend of a delivering mother will be allowed to stay in the room throughout the entire birthing process.

➤ **DRIVING DIRECTIONS:** Go left on SS 192 towards Catania, take the autostrada (A10) towards Catania. Continue until the end of the autostrada and turn right on Corso Indipendenza, continue straight until Piazza Risorgimento and turn right, around the Piazza take the second on the right to turn into Via Vittorio Emanuele until the traffic light. Turn left on Via Plebiscito Pass the hospital on your right and turn right on Via Osservatorio. Then turn left on Via Antico Corso, after about 100 meters the hospital will be on your right.

Policlinico

Services: ENT, Neurosurgery, OB/GYN, Urology, Endocrinology, Sleep Disorders

This hospital is part of the Vittorio Emanuele-Policlinico Corporation. Admissions for services are normally organized via the RMC and the length of stay is determined by the patient's condition. Transportation to and from the hospital and language facilitation will be provided by the RMC. OHI patients are not eligible for transportation services via TRICARE van or MTF ambulance. Visiting hours are coordinated via the Patient Liaison.

➤ **DRIVING DIRECTIONS:** Turn left on SS 192, at the round-about turn right into (A19) towards Catania, take the second exit (Tangenziale E45) towards Messina-Paterno. Take the third exit towards S.G. Galermo, at the round-about take the second exit and go straight on Via Carrubella. Turn left to stay on Via Carubella. Then turn right to take Via Santa Sofia, after the walking traffic light on your left you will see the entrance to the hospital.

Garibaldi

Services: Emergency, Trauma, Neurosurgery, ICU, Pediatric Surgery, Neurology, OB/GYN

In addition to emergency services, Garibaldi Hospital is utilized for routine neurology admissions. Admissions for services are normally organized via the RMC and the length of stay is determined by the patient's condition. Transportation to and from the hospital and language facilitation will be provided by the RMC. OHI patients are not eligible for transportation services via TRICARE van or MTF ambulance. Visiting hours are coordinated via the Patient Liaison.

➤ **DRIVING DIRECTIONS:** Take right SS 192 towards Catania, turn left to Misterbianco, take SS 121 towards Catania, after passing AUCHAN follow directions towards for the Circonvallazione, at the big round-about turn right, you will see a big sign "Ospedale Garibaldi". THIS IS NOT THE TRAUMA GARIBALDI CENTER. take Via Palermo until Viale Mario Rapisardi and turn left at the small round-about, keep going on this road with many traffic lights about 3 kilometers, you will see the hospital on your right and Piazza Santa Maria di Gesu (the square with a fountain) right in front of you. Turn right at the square.



What You Can Expect

Italian health care is in many ways the same as the American system you are accustomed to and in other ways it can be vastly different. Italians pay for a lifetime of health care via their taxes. This health coverage is primarily a socialized medicine system consisting of mostly public health care with some private and semi-private facilities available.

Unlike most hospitals in the United States, the number of Italian facilities that provide private rooms is very limited and most have none at all. Most rooms do not possess the same modern cosmetic appeal as a private hospital but they contain modern medical technology and provide the same medical treatment capabilities that would be afforded in similar size American hospitals or MTF. The type and quality of nursing care is also much different from an American hospital. As Americans, we have come to expect a nurse to perform many bedside tasks while the Italian culture places a large emphasis on family and the healing qualities a family can bring to an ill patient. As a patient in an Italian facility, you may be expected to have your family or friends assist you with some personal hygiene tasks such as bathing. Despite these differences and the occasional language barrier, the goal is exactly the same...quality health care.

Some things to keep in mind during your stay:

- Italian physicians should answer all your questions when asked, but generally do not volunteer all results and information. Patients/parents are encouraged to ask doctors and nurses about their treatment plan. Your Patient Liaison is there to assist with the translation of your questions, if necessary.
- For infection control purposes, visitors are asked to not lie in the hospital bed with or without the patient. In the pediatric wards, the parents may request an additional bed to sleep near their child. However, this is only possible if space is available. Please be respectful to the other patients who share the same room and respect their privacy and personal space.
- Standards of privacy vary between Italian and American facilities. Italian physicians may not always have a stand-by when examining patients of the opposite sex. You may also be asked to undress while nursing staff is passing through the area.
- Bring, or have your visitor bring, some EURO to purchase snacks, drinks, and for parking fees as you should not expect to be served American food during your hospitalization. You will be served bottled mineral water, a variety of teas, and/or juice (without ice).
- Very few of the staff may understand English or speak English. Although you may not speak Italian, a **Salve** (hello), **Buon giorno** (good morning), **Buona sera** (good evening), **Per favore** (please), **Grazie** (thank you) go a long way!
- Should TRICARE beneficiaries disagree with their treatment plan, they may sign an Against Medical Advice (AMA) form. However, the patient should be advised that the Host Nation facility cannot be held responsible for medical problems/conditions complicated by the refusal of medical treatment. Active Duty Service Members are not allowed to sign an AMA form.



Pain & Symptom Management

Italian medical staffs do not usually order pain medications to be administered around the clock. It is best for you to *communicate* with the nursing staff and request medication regularly rather than wait for it to be brought to you. Similarly, you should communicate any concerning symptoms with the medical or nursing staff.

Please contact USNH Sigonella Patient Liaison Services. They are available during normal working hours, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., as well as after hours for emergency communication. You can also utilize simple words and common phrases on pages 16-21.

Medications

If you are currently taking medications, inform your physician immediately. If possible, bring them with you to the hospital for review by the physician, as there could be adverse reactions with other medications that may have been ordered. On some occasions, you may be given medication to take throughout the day. If you are unsure of the medication that you are receiving, or how and when to take it, ask the hospital staff or the Patient Liaison. Be sure to inform the physician and/or staff about any allergies (i.e., medication, food, latex, environmental).

When visiting the Host Nation hospital as an outpatient, you may be given medication to last until the next working day. More likely, if you require medication as an outpatient, your physician will write you a prescription. English-written prescriptions may be filled at the USNH Sigonella Pharmacy. Italian prescriptions require a translation by the Patient Liaison. If the medicine is not available at the USNH Sigonella Pharmacy then you may go to a Farmacia (Italian pharmacy). You can go to any Farmacia to get your prescription filled, *but* you will be asked to pay (EURO only) for your medication. Look for a green fluorescent cross; these are used to identify the pharmacies. Every town will have a night-time pharmacy open for emergencies. Keep your receipt and prescription and take them to the RMC at USNH Sigonella. Your receipt will be submitted to TRICARE for reimbursement.

General Information

➤ **VISITORS:** Children under 12 years of age are not allowed on most wards. Visiting children must be supervised at all times (i.e., no jumping on beds, tables or chairs, no running in the hallways). The patient should not have more than two visitors at a time. Visitors should not use the patient's toilet. There are toilets in the hallway marked **WC**. Visitors are expected to leave the room when physicians make their rounds. The majority of host nation facilities are public and have varied and restricted visiting hours. The Patient Liaison can help you identify the specific visiting hours for the specific Host Nation facility.

➤ **TELEPHONES:** Some hospitals have telephones in the patient rooms; however, these phones only receive calls. Please take your personal cell phone to call your family and friends, along with a charger for 220 volts.

➤ **TELEVISIONS:** Most patient rooms have television and it may be used free of charge, however, all channels will be in the Italian language. On some wards, TVs are not permitted for reasons of possible detrimental effects on the health of



Patient Information Guide

some patients (electronic interference, etc.) Cable television and Internet are not available.

- **PARKING:** Parking is challenging which is the primary reason transportation is provided by the RMC at USNH Sigonella. OHI patients are not eligible for transportation services via TRICARE van or MTF ambulance. However, inform visitors that most hospitals have “blue line” parking, meaning they will have to purchase a parking ticket from a parking meter. Parking tickets are sold in increments of one hour, half-day, or full-day. Some hospitals do not have public parking. Visitors may park on the street or find private parking.
- **CAFETERIA SERVICES:** Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served to inpatients. Breakfast in the hospital usually consists of a cup of tea, milk, or coffee and bread with marmalade.
- **SMOKING:** Smoking is only permitted outside of the medical facilities in marked zones.
- **PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY:** Host Nation providers have strict confidentiality rules similar to U.S. privacy laws. Only physicians are allowed to give you medical information. They will allow your Patient Liaison to assist and translate, and understand they are bound by the same patient confidentiality rules. Please understand that the Italian staff and/or Patient Liaisons are **not** allowed to give any medical information to your chain of command, other military staff, family support groups, etc. without your permission.

What to Bring With You








In most Italian public medical facilities, the patient is expected to provide some, if not **all**, of their personal care articles. Below are just some of the many items you may want to bring yourself or have someone bring to you.

- Mobile phone or pre-paid telephone
- Sleeping & lounging clothes
- Towels & wash cloths
- Reading materials
- Personal electronics (e.g., laptops, iPad)
- English-Italian dictionary
- Memo Pad for note taking
- Euro
- Bottled water
- Slippers & robe
- Female sanitary products & wipes
- Tooth brush/paste & other toiletries
- Sheets, blankets, pillow & pillow cases
- 220 volt chargers for your electronics
- This guide

Please note: *Wi-Fi is typically not offered in most facilities.*



Common Words/Phrases—Illustrations

Doctor – “Dottore”		Female Nurse – “infermiera” Male Nurse “infermiere”	
Yes – “Si”	SI	No – “No”	NO
Family Mem- bers – “Membri Della Famiglia”		Surgeon – “Chirurgo”	
Happy – “Felice”		Sad – “Triste”	
Scared – “Spaventato”		What time is it? – “Che ora E’?”	





Common Words/Phrases—Illustrations

<p>Is it Day or Night?</p> <p>“E’Giorno o Notte?”</p>		<p>Please, turn on the light.</p> <p>“Per favore accenda la luce.”</p>	
<p>Please, turn off the light.</p> <p>“Per favore spenga la luce.”</p>		<p>Silence please.</p> <p>“Silenzio per favore.”</p>	
<p>Please close the door.</p> <p>“ Per favore chiuda la porta.”</p>		<p>Please open the door.</p> <p>“ Per favore apra la porta.”</p>	
<p>I need to throw up!</p> <p>“Ho bisogno di vomitare!”</p>		<p>I have nausea.</p> <p>“Ho la nausea.”</p>	
<p>I need to use the bathroom.</p> <p>“Devo andare in bagno.”</p>		<p>I need to sleep.</p> <p>“Ho bisogno di dormire.”</p>	













Common Words/Phrases—Illustrations

<p>I have a fever. “Ho la febbre.”</p>		<p>My stomach hurts. “Mi fa male lo stomaco.”</p>	
<p>I am very tired. “Sono molto stanco.”</p>		<p>I have a headache. “Ho mal di testa.”</p>	
<p>It itches. “Ho prurito.”</p>		<p>I have a cough. “Ho la tosse.”</p>	
<p>My back hurts. “Ho mal di schiena.”</p>		<p>I have insomnia. “Ho L'insonnia.”</p>	
<p>My chest hurts. “Ho male al petto.”</p>		<p>I am cold. “Ho freddo.”</p>	
<p>I am dizzy. “Ho le vertigini.”</p>		<p>I need to comb my hair. “Ho bisogno di pettinarmi.”</p>	



Common Words/Phrases—Illustrations

<p>I need to wash.</p> <p>“Ho bisogno di lavarmi.”</p>		<p>I need to shave.</p> <p>“Ho bisogno di radermi.”</p>	
<p>Can I have some juice?</p> <p>“Posso averte del succo di frutta?”</p>		<p>Antacids</p> <p>“Antiacido”</p>	
<p>I need soap.</p> <p>“Ho bisogno di sapone.”</p>		<p>I am hungry.</p> <p>“Ho fame.”</p>	
<p>I am thirsty.</p> <p>“Ho sete.”</p>		<p>I need a softer/ harder pillow</p> <p>“Ho bisogno di un cuscino piu’ morbido/duro</p>	
<p>I need a cover.</p> <p>“Ho bisogno di una coperta.”</p>		<p>I need toilet paper.</p> <p>“Ho bisogno di carta igienica.”</p>	







Common Words/Phrases—Illustrations

<p>I need a towel.</p> <p>“Ho bisogno di un’asciugamano.”</p>		<p>I need a shower.</p> <p>“Ho bisogno di fare una doccia.”</p>	
<p>I need a toothbrush.</p> <p>“Ho bisogno di uno spazzolino.”</p>		<p>Chaplain</p> <p>“Cappellano”</p>	
<p>IV Medicine</p> <p>“Flebo”</p>		<p>X-Rays</p> <p>“Raggi X”</p>	
<p>Medicine</p> <p>“Medicina”</p>		<p>Translator</p> <p>“Interprete”</p>	
<p>Eye drops</p> <p>“Gocce Oculari”</p>		<p>Physical Therapist</p> <p>“Fisioterapista”</p>	



Common Words/Phrases—Illustrations

<p>Prescription "Ricetta"</p>	 An illustration of a white prescription slip with a green border, a pen, and a green ink blot.	<p>Psychologist "Psicologo"</p>	 An illustration of a psychologist sitting in a red chair, talking to a patient lying on a purple couch.
<p>Tight "Stretto"</p>	 An illustration of a woman with blonde hair, wearing a green shirt and blue jeans, looking uncomfortable with sweat drops around her.	<p>Loose "Largo"</p>	 An illustration of a person's waist wearing a blue belt and very loose, baggy blue pants.

Thank you!

Grazie!

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