



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Please find below patients' frequently asked questions. If you have further questions and the here collected answers are not helping you, please do not hesitate to contact the HELIOS International Office (HIO) at any time. Thank you.

### 1. Is HIO an agency?

No. HIO is part of the HELIOS Hospital Group and not a private company. All employees of HIO are employed by HELIOS. They get a fixed salary independent of the number of patients under their care and no commission.

### 2. Which services does HIO offer?

HIO handles all organizational tasks for patients coming from abroad for treatment in Germany: preparation of cost estimates, coordination of appointments, assistance with visa formalities, transfer from the airport, accommodation and care of patients, providing a list of nearby accommodation for accompanying persons, cost control during treatment, translation of medical reports and settlement of treatment costs.

### 3. Can I send medical documents written in languages other than English?

All documents must be sent to HIO in either **English or German**. We recommend that records are translated at home to avoid any delays.

### 4. Does HELIOS translate medical documents?

No. It is the patient's responsibility to provide documents in either English or German.

### 5. How long will it take to process my application?

We are giving our best to process all inquiries **within 48 hours**. To ensure this tight timeframe, HIO requires all relevant medical documents (not older than 3 months in English or German). Should we need more time to deal with an inquiry, we would notify you accordingly. After having received your inquiry, we are checking whether all necessary information is present. Should we need further information from your side, we will contact you again. Should the inquiry be thorough enough, we will then forward it to the responsible specialist for feedback. Once we receive the specialist's feedback, we will provide you with a cost estimate accordingly.

### 6. What does the cost estimate comprise?

Providing you with a cost estimate is **free of charge**. All our cost estimates are calculated based on your medical documents and include the following costs:

- general medical treatment (according to the German DRG-System)
- laboratory tests and further case-specific diagnostics
- doctor's fees
- room and board for the patient
- room and board for an accompanying person, if required\*



\*Please note that the accommodation of an accompanying person in the patient's room depends on the capacity of each hospital.

Due to the fact that we can only give you a rough estimate, it may always happen that the sum of the final bill may be different from the cost estimate we have provided you with. You will receive a final bill, listing all accrued costs, after your discharge.

## 7. What is the German DRG-System?

The invoice for general inpatient treatment in the HELIOS hospital is based on the following guidelines:

Inpatient treatment is calculated by a case-based lump sum (base rate) and so called DRGs (Diagnosis Related Groups). DRGs are assigned based on ICD (International Classification of Diseases) diagnoses, procedures, age, gender, discharge status and possible complications or comorbidities.

Every particular DRG is matched with an appropriate relative cost weight. The base rate (determined value of a reference performed) is expressed in Euro. The relative cost weight is assigned to it and multiplied by the base rate, which is demonstrating the costs for treatment for this particular illness.

Furthermore, there will be different additional charges. These are legally determined and/or agreed upon with the hospital. Every single estimate of costs is based on the available data/present knowledge and is covering the treatment **without complications**. Thus, due to unexpected complications, the estimated costs can differ substantially.

## 8. What are "elective choices"?

These are services which you can obtain in addition to general hospital services.

They are as follows:

- single bedroom
- twin bedroom with another patient
- admission of one accompanying person
- medical treatment by chief physician or his deputy

Please note that these services cause [additional fees](#).

## 9. What does the doctor's fee include?

This fee includes treatment by a head physician or physician of your choice. Please note that if you choose head physician treatment, it refers to all head physicians involved in your medical treatment. For example, if you need surgery, this will not only include the head surgeon, **but also the chief physicians of involved departments such as radiology, anesthesia and laboratory medicine**. In case the head physician will not be available, his direct deputy will represent and carry out the treatment as well as the surgery.

## 10. Why do I have to pay the treatment costs in advance?

Receipt of the money is a condition for HIO to send the visa invitation letter, but also for the respective embassies to issue the visa. The expected duration of treatment determines the validity of the visa. The hospital is responsible for ensuring that patients enter the



country only for treatment and promptly leave the country once they have completed their treatment.

Patients coming to Germany from abroad for medical treatment are obliged to pay the treatment costs in advance as a deposit. Furthermore it is important to save the question of costs for a hospital group with 112 clinics all over Germany.

## **11. Can I pay for my treatment in installments or is it possible to get a discount?**

Unfortunately, no. HELIOS requires a full payment, in advance, prior to any international patient receiving services or treatment.

## **12. Does HIO assist with booking my travel?**

Unfortunately, no. You will have to book all flights and accommodation on your own. Nevertheless, we can provide you with a list of hotels and apartments close to your HELIOS Hospital.

## **13. Are interpreter services available at HELIOS?**

Yes. Please let HIO know if you need an interpreter for your visit.

## **14. Will I get a refund if the actual costs of my treatment are less than my advance payment?**

Yes. If your actual charges are below the amount you paid in advance, you will receive a refund.

Nevertheless, we would like to clearly point out that the money which was not needed for treatment can only be refunded to the account from which the payment was carried out. A refund to another account can only take place when you provide us with a letter of authorization verifying the identity of the original depositor. This regulation applies in connection to the Money Laundering Act.

## **15. Why do I have to wait to see a doctor although I have an appointment?**

In addition to their normal duties, our doctors may have to deal with unexpected emergency patients which can occasionally lead to longer waiting times.

## **16. Do you offer written second opinions?**

Yes, we do offer a written second opinion. In order for our specialists to evaluate your case, please provide us with all your relevant documents and relevant medical imaging (not older than 3 months) in either English or German.

Please note that this service causes additional fees, which have to be paid in advance of receiving the written second opinion.

**For further questions, please contact the HELIOS International Office (HIO):**  
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