



30 Years of Pioneering Travel Health

December 2015

Welcome to the final newsletter!

Welcome to the last Travax newsletter of 2015, our thirtieth anniversary year – a year that just seems to have zoomed past! However, in this final letter, we're going to be looking forward, not back, as we enter the murky world of the soothsayer and attempt to make some predictions about the future of travel medicine.



The Travax Team.

In the Travax crystal ball

Global travel has increased in every decade since World War II and there's no reason to think that things are going to change as we move deeper into the twenty-first century. 2014 saw more than sixty million international passenger departures from the UK, with the two Scottish airports playing an increasingly large part in this. Edinburgh Airport – Scotland's busiest - now deals with 28,000 travellers a day, and is expected to double that in the next ten years, with Glasgow not far behind.

Passengers travelling to and from the UK will form part of the estimated seven billion journeys undertaken annually by 2030. And it's not just the volume that is increasing.

Over the next two decades, China, India and, to a lesser but still significant extent, Africa will all increase their market share. With this travel comes potential for an increased risk to health from infections and communicable diseases. However, we are in a good place to tackle the coming challenges. Through Travax every GP, pharmacy, hospital and travel health provider in the country (and beyond) has the opportunity to access world-class information. There is a better understanding of the risks faced by travellers and we have improved ways of mitigating them.



Modern vaccines are far safer than they were only 10 years ago and research and development will make available new treatments. The World Health Organisation (WHO) is already trialling six

candidate vaccines against Dengue Fever and, though it's still early days, a vaccine to treat Chikungunya is also being tested. The need for malaria prophylaxis outside sub-Saharan Africa is reducing and new formulations could lead to shorter courses with better long-term protection.

Just as Travax has moved with the times and embraced new ways to deliver health intelligence, it may be that technology becomes the greatest agent for change over the next few years. In 2015, the US Food and Drug Administration approved the first drug to be manufactured by 3D printing, where the printer mixes the ingredients like a robot cocktail shaker and provides a drug specifically tailored to an individual patient. Researchers are now looking at ways to digitise the chemistry, so that molecules can be combined from a set of basic components and drugs created from scratch using 3D printers at any pharmacy, anywhere in the world.



Whatever comes to pass, the need for healthcare providers, trained to a high standard in the discipline of Travel Medicine, will surely grow and Travax will be here, serving their needs for the next thirty years, just as it has been since 1985.

Farewell from Helen

Another major event during 2016 will be the well earned retirement from the Travel and International Health Team of nurse specialist Helen Sutton. Helen has looked after both Travax and fitfortravel for more than 10 years, and will be very much missed. She reflects on what the future holds for her...

“ I started my nurse training on the 6th January 1969, and have only had two short breaks of 6 months (to have my son and daughter), in a career spanning 47 years (no I never met Florence). I have been at HPS for 12 terrific years; that's why I am still here. Those in the know say that you must have a plan in place before retiring, well my plan is to take a well earned break and be good to myself for a change. The only other plans I have at the moment are to improve my tennis and get my house in order.

There are some celebratory travel plans in 2016; a family holiday to the lakes in Poland in July with my son, daughter, brother and my daughters fiancée. Then I am off on a cruise round the Hawaiian islands in October (shame about the dengue) with my BFF Elizabeth; we have been friends for 50 years since we trained as Nursery Nurses together in 1966. I can't wait!



Members of the team at NHS awards ceremony - Helen (far right).

The prospect of retiring after a long career is a bit scary, especially when you enjoy what you do and it has taken me a long time to make that decision and get used to the idea. However, I can see that it is time to move on and make way for the next generation who will bring freshness, enthusiasm and new ideas that will benefit the Travel and International Health Team at Health Protection Scotland and those who subscribe to Travax.👉👉

Farewell from Kitty

The team is also sad to be saying goodbye to Kitty Smith, our Medical lead, who leaves next year for pastures new. We wish her all the best and know she will be a great success in her new role. Kitty reflects...

👉👉 I am leaving HPS and Scotland in mid-February 2016 to start a new job in London and to move south to be nearer to parents and family.

As the year ends, I am looking forward to the new challenge in the New Year but I am also aware of how little time I have left at HPS. I will miss so many aspects of my life here in Scotland; not least the HPS travel health team. I have had the privilege, over the last 10 years of being part of the team that produces Travax and fitfortravel and deals with the increasingly frequent travel associated public health issues that arise in HPS with cheerfulness, professionalism and compassion.

We will keep in touch and continue to forge links in health protection within and outwith the NHS and across the UK. 👉👉



Dr Kitty Smith.

Honours for Lorna

Finally, congratulations this time to a member of the team.

In October 2015, Lorna Boyne was elected Vice Dean of the Faculty of Travel Medicine (FTM) at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow (RCPSG).

Lorna is a founder Fellow of the FTM, which is about to celebrate its tenth anniversary, and is the first nurse elected into the Vice Dean position in the RCPSG, itself over 400 years old. She told Travax, 'The Vice Dean post is for two years, during which time I will be working very closely with the Dean (Group Captain Andy Green), the Secretary (Margaret Umeed, a Specialist Nurse Practitioner) and the faculty Executive Board, all of whom are well known travel medicine experts from across the UK. I know it will be a very busy and challenging two years and I'm really looking forward to taking on this role. It's a real honour to have been elected'.



Lorna in her FTM robes.

A message from our Chief Executive, Ian Crichton

I took great pleasure in recently attending Travax's 30th birthday conference in Glasgow. It was good to meet members of staff past and present. At dinner I was sat next to two eminent European experts who spoke enthusiastically about how fantastic the Scottish approach is, how they envied the service and level of professionalism we have been able to achieve.

When you think about it, Scotland is a small country but we have always been known to travel well so it is somehow fitting that we have established such a strong competence in Travel Medicine. The calibre of speakers we were able to attract spoke volumes as does the longevity of Travax and the extensive use made of it both North and South of the Border.

In an increasingly small world, travel medicine has never been more important or relevant, not just for people who travel abroad but also for the domestic population as they come back. As a Scottish resident, I will sleep better at night having been reminded just how good at this we truly are and, as the Chief Executive of NSS, I am humbled by the professionalism and dedication of our staff, who make Travax the tremendous success it is today, whilst guaranteeing it will only get better in future.



Ian Crichton

Chief Executive & Accountable Officer NSS / NHS 24

A final thank you from the team

For the continued support and good wishes we have received from around the world during our anniversary year. Wishing all our Travax users a very peaceful 2016, and happy future travels!

The Travax Team.