



Australian Government
Department of Immigration and Citizenship

Red and General Health Alerts for Humanitarian Entrants

Following the introduction of Pre-Departure Medical Screening (PDMS) for offshore refugee and special humanitarian entrants in 2006, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship introduced a two-tier medical alert system – Red and General Alerts. This system is designed to ensure entrants identified with serious medical conditions are provided with suitable medical attention during travel and upon arrival in Australia.

Red Alerts

Red Alerts relate to entrants who have satisfied Australia's health requirement, and who have been granted a humanitarian visa, but have a serious medical condition requiring medical attention shortly after arrival in Australia (that is, within 24 hours). Red Alert clients are accompanied by a qualified medical escort during travel and transit, until being handed over to an appropriately qualified doctor within 24 hours of arrival in Australia for further assessment and treatment.

- Red Alert cases may be identified during either the initial visa health assessment prior to visa grant or during PDMS shortly before a client's scheduled travel. Red Alert status is decided through consultation between the visa medical assessor (usually a panel doctor) and/or PDMS service provider and a senior Medical Officer of the Commonwealth.
- Decisions concerning Red Alerts are made on a case by case basis. There is no definitive list of medical conditions upon which such decisions are made.
- A Medical Officer of the Commonwealth will advise what medical follow-up is required on arrival in Australia, including the type of doctor the client needs to see (eg a specialist or a General Practitioner).
- Service providers of the department's Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Strategy (IHSS) arrange the appropriate medical appointment/s, meet the medically-escorted client on arrival, and assist them to attend the medical appointment/s.
- Medical escorts are arranged by the department's PDMS service provider (currently the International Organization for Migration). The costs associated with escorts are managed by the department's Humanitarian Business Process Section.
- The department meets all escort-related costs for refugee clients, while costs for Special Humanitarian Program (SHP) clients are met by the clients' proposers.

General Alerts

General Alerts relate to entrants who have been determined to be "fit to fly" and require medical attention within 72 hours of arrival in Australia. Medical escorts are not required during travel.

- General Alert status may be decided by the PDMS service provider or a Medical Officer of the Commonwealth. This decision is made on a case by case basis. There is no definitive list of medical conditions upon which this decision is made.
- IHSS service providers are required to ensure General Alert clients attend a GP appointment within 72 hours of arrival at the final destination.