

## SEAMEN'S HOSPITAL SOCIETY

Registered Charity No: 231724



The Seamen's Hospital Society, which has sponsored this information leaflet, assists seafarers and their dependants in need by making grants to qualifying individuals, as well as to selected organisations. Applications for individual assistance may be made at any time. For further information, please view the Society's website or contact its Greenwich office directly (see "Contacts" below).

### Contacts

#### DREADNOUGHT MEDICAL SERVICE

Dreadnought Administrator  
Dreadnought Medical Service  
St Thomas' Hospital  
Lambeth Palace Road  
London SE1 7EH

Telephone: 020 7188 2049

Fax: 020 7188 2051

Email: irene.bonnici@gstt.sthames.nhs.uk

# DREADNOUGHT MEDICAL SERVICE



#### SEAFARERS' BENEFITS ADVICE LINE

The Seamen's Hospital Society funds the Seafarers' Benefits Advice Line - operated and managed on its behalf by Greenwich Citizens Advice Bureau - which provides advice and help to seafarers (both active and retired) and their dependants on a range of issues including welfare benefits, employment, housing, debt, consumer problems, legal problems, personal relationships, and tax. The service is free, independent, impartial and confidential.

The Advice Line may be contacted Monday-Friday 10.00am - 12.30pm on tel: 0845 7413318.

All messages left outside these hours are returned as soon as possible.

Alternatively, write to:

Seafarers' Benefits Advice Line

PO Box 45234, Greenwich, London SE10 9WR

Fax: 020 8269 0794 Email: admin@seabal.org.uk

For further information visit: [www.seabal.org.uk](http://www.seabal.org.uk)



#### DREADNOUGHT DENTIST

Telephone: 020 7188 2047

#### PATIENT TRANSPORT SERVICES (Guy's & St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust)

Telephone: 020 7188 2888

#### SEAMEN'S HOSPITAL SOCIETY

General Secretary  
29 King William Walk  
Greenwich  
London SE10 9HX

Telephone: 020 8858 3696

Fax: 020 8293 9630

Email: admin@seahospital.org.uk

Website: [www.seahospital.org.uk](http://www.seahospital.org.uk)

## FACT SHEET

The Dreadnought Medical Service - often called simply "the Dreadnought" - is a facility offering priority medical treatment to eligible seafarers through the medical services at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust in London. Its principal aim is to enable serving seafarers to return to work as soon as possible by providing treatment in a shorter timescale than may normally be offered at a seafarer's local NHS hospital (although this cannot always be guaranteed). This leaflet provides answers to frequently asked questions about the Dreadnought.

## Who is eligible for treatment at the Dreadnought?

The following are eligible for elective priority treatment at the Dreadnought:

- active seafarers, pilots, tugboat men, etc
- trainee candidates for the merchant navy
- fishing vessel personnel
- shipping company shore staff essential to the function of the fleet
- dependants, where the illness of the spouse or child causes the seafarer grave concern

The following (but not their dependants) are also eligible to be considered for elective treatment:

- union officials
- retired seafarers

## Is the Dreadnought a separate department?

No. At one time the Dreadnought included dedicated wards. Nowadays Dreadnought patients are treated according to clinical need, and are assigned to the in-patient or out-patient area most suitable for their medical condition. However, there is a designated administrative office, dealing exclusively with Dreadnought patients, headed by the Dreadnought Administrator.

## How do I get treatment at the Dreadnought?

You will need a completed referral form and a referral letter from your GP or other approved/company doctor, both of which should be sent to the Dreadnought Administrator (see 'Contacts' below). Standard referral forms are available from the Dreadnought Administrator.

## Are all forms of treatment available?

A wide range of medical and surgical services is provided. However, while cardiac surgery, in particular by-pass surgery, is among the services available, priority access cannot be guaranteed because of the high demand on intensive care beds.

## Can I have dental treatment at the Dreadnought?

Active seafarers may have dental treatment via the Dreadnought. Further information may be obtained from the Dreadnought Dentist (tel: 020 7188 2047).

## I'm an active seafarer and my child needs treatment

If you are an active seafarer with a child below the age of 18 whose illness causes you grave concern, you are entitled to seek treatment for him, or her, at the Dreadnought.

## I'm a retired seafarer - can I still use the Dreadnought?

Seafarers who have retired after spending their working lives at sea, and who have not taken up subsequent employment, are eligible to be considered for treatment at the Dreadnought, although not normally on a priority basis. The dependants of retired seafarers are not entitled to use the Dreadnought.

## I live some distance away, and can't afford the fares

If you are on a low income, patient transport services (tel: 020 7188 2888) at Guy's & St Thomas' can advise whether you are eligible for help from the Department of Work and Pensions with the cost of fares to and from your home. If you are not eligible for help from this source, but can prove financial need, the Seamen's Hospital Society (tel: 020 8858 3696) may be able help with the payment of fares.

## I can't manage to travel by public transport - what should I do?

In some instances you may be eligible for ambulance or other special transport, even outside London. Patient transport services (tel: 020 7188 2888) at Guy's & St Thomas' can advise you on this.

## I need overnight accommodation before or after my appointment

Accommodation can be booked at the hospital or, near St Thomas', at the Marine Society. Please contact the Dreadnought Administrator for further information and advice.

## I will need a period of convalescence after my treatment

Seafarers who require a period of convalescence following their treatment may be eligible to use the facility provided at the Merchant Seamen's War Memorial Society's Springbok Estate in Surrey, and should contact the Dreadnought Administrator before discharge from hospital. Please note that no personal or nursing care is provided at Springbok.

## I'm not satisfied with the treatment I received at the Dreadnought

You should write to the Dreadnought Administrator who will take up the matter within Guy's and St Thomas'.

## I'm eligible to use the Dreadnought - does this mean I can cancel my private medical insurance?

No. It is important to note that eligibility to use the Dreadnought is not the same thing as having private medical insurance, which may cover different aspects of healthcare, and offer different forms of service, when compared with what is provided by the NHS scheme.

## Who pays for the Dreadnought?

Central government pays the cost of running the Dreadnought, and all medical treatment for seafarers eligible to use it, in the form of specially earmarked NHS funding.

## I thought the shipping companies contributed to the cost of the Dreadnought?

Shipping companies and other agencies have been generous with donations to the Dreadnought; such donations are held in a welfare fund and used to enhance, in various targeted ways, the core treatment and facilities funded from NHS sources.

## I'd like to make a donation or raise funds for the Dreadnought

If you would like to make a donation, or raise funds, for the benefit of the Dreadnought please contact the Dreadnought Administrator (see 'Contacts' below).