

# Your oxygen service when staying away from home

At times, you will need your oxygen service to be available when you are away from your regular home. It might be for several weeks or a few days. It might be for a specific time or on a regular basis. For example:

- Going on holiday
- Going to stay with a friend or relative
- Going to school, university or work

## This leaflet explains:

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## What you need to think about before arranging to stay away from home

Please remember that in England and Wales, it is no longer possible to get your cylinders from a pharmacy (or chemist), so you will need to arrange supply with your GP and your oxygen supplier before you go away.

Thinking about your oxygen supplies is part of planning your time away from home and, as with other arrangements, you need to allow plenty of time to make sure that your supplies will be available, as it will take longer than telephoning the supplier with your order.

Your supplier may have to contact the supplier in the area where you will be staying and, at busy times such as Christmas, the New Year, Easter and the summer holidays, the supplier will have to plan deliveries to meet your needs and the needs of others in that area.

Wherever possible, try to give as much notice as possible of your plans to go away – at least two weeks is required, otherwise the supplier may not be able to guarantee the timely delivery of your supplies.

### Checklist

Make sure you have thought about all of the things listed below, and can provide information where it is required:

- Have you checked with your GP or other health professional that you are well enough to travel?
- Have you checked that the owner of the place where you will be staying has given consent to have oxygen products installed?
- If you don't usually use an ambulatory or portable cylinder, you may need to when travelling. Or you may need extra supplies of these cylinders if you plan to be out and about more than usual when away from home. Have you checked your GP knows your needs in order to get you the right service?

## Information you need to provide to your GP

- What date will you be travelling on?
- What date will you be arriving at your destination?
- What date will you be leaving to return home?
- What date will you arrive back home?
- Where will you be staying?
- Will you need portable or lightweight ambulatory cylinders?
- Do you have prior permission from the owner of the place where you are staying to use your oxygen equipment there?

This information will be included in the separate Home Oxygen Order Form (HOOF) for your oxygen supply when you are away from home.

## Information you need to provide to your oxygen supplier

Your usual supplier will be in touch with you before you go away to check:

- Contact details for the person who will receive your oxygen cylinders and/or support installation of your concentrator. For example:
  - The name of the owner/other contact where you will be staying
  - The address (including post code) of the place where you will be staying
  - Contact telephone/mobile number of the person who will take delivery of your oxygen supplies
  - Your arrival and departure dates
  - The name under which your booking has been made (if the booking is not in your name) and any reference number.
- How many extra cylinders you might need during your stay.

## What you need to do to get your oxygen supplies when away from home

**Think about the service you need and when you need it. Have this information ready when making your arrangements.**

### **Make your arrangements as early as possible**

This allows the supplier time to ensure that your oxygen supplies are available at your destination, particularly at peak times such as the summer holiday season. The supplier has to make sure that people living in the area also continue to have their supplies.

Try to give at least two weeks' notice where this is possible. Giving your GP and/or supplier less than two weeks' notice cannot guarantee that your needs will be met on your arrival.

It is easier to cancel arrangements (for example, if you are not well enough to travel) than to ensure your oxygen supplies can be delivered at very short notice.

### **Ensure you have prior permission to use or install oxygen equipment when away from home.**

Whether you are staying with a friend, a relative, at a hotel, a holiday resort or a campsite, you need to have the owner's prior permission to have oxygen supplies delivered and stored on the premises, and any equipment installed, during your stay. This is not something that your doctor or oxygen supplier can do for you.

### **Contact your GP or health professional**

Please be ready with the information that your GP or health professional needs to complete your order (listed on page 3 of this leaflet). This order is in addition to your usual home oxygen supply and must be completed for any request for oxygen when staying away from home.

This conversation also gives your GP or health professional the opportunity to check that you are well enough to travel and to discuss your needs when away from home.

Once the supplier has received this order, they will be in touch to check and finalise arrangements.

## Your oxygen service when away from home

**When you are away from home, a different supplier may deliver your oxygen supplies during your stay.**

### **Tell your usual supplier if you plan to take any equipment with you.**

For example, you may need a portable or ambulatory cylinder to use for your journey to and from home. Do not leave these cylinders at your destination, as they may not belong to the company supplying oxygen in that area. Even if your oxygen cylinder is

empty, you must still take it home with you.

If you have a concentrator, and would prefer to take your own machine with you when you go away, you should only do so if you are staying in a region served by your home supplier (please refer to the oxygen region map on page 9 of this leaflet).

If you take your oxygen equipment outside your home supplier's region, you do so at your own risk because the local supplier cannot support you if you have a problem with the concentrator. Please refer to your Patient Pack for safety advice on transporting your concentrator. Don't forget to take your back-up cylinder with you.

**Leave any equipment supplied to you during your stay – do not take it home with you**

The supplier for that area will collect it when you leave for home. You should tell the supplier where you have left the equipment.

**Ensure you are using your equipment safely.**

You may also notice a few differences in the cylinders supplied to you. Do not worry, as the supplier will provide full information and any help needed to ensure you can use

## **What your GP or health professional will do to arrange your oxygen service when away from home**

**Assess your health**

Your GP or health professional will check to ensure you are well enough to travel.

**Review your oxygen needs**

If you are staying away from home, you may need cylinders as well as a concentrator when leaving your home or travelling. Your use of oxygen may also need to increase if you are more active when away from home. Your GP or health professional will discuss this with you.

**Remind you about safe use of oxygen**

Your GP or health professional will make sure you understand how to use your oxygen safely when travelling, and any other questions you may have about your supply when away from home.

**Complete an order form (HOOF) and send this to the supplier**

Your GP or health professional will need to complete a Home Oxygen Order Form (HOOF) to give the supplier details of your oxygen requirements while you are away from home. This is in addition to your usual home oxygen supply – a new form is not needed to resume your regular supply when you return home.

## What your oxygen provider will do to arrange your oxygen service away from home

### **Contact you to check they have the right information**

Your usual supplier will contact you, either by telephone or by post, to confirm the details of your order for oxygen supplies when away from home. They may need to pass these details to a different supplier who delivers this service at your destination. Please have the information they need ready (listed on page 3 of this leaflet)

### **Confirm the delivery date for your oxygen supplies at your destination**

You should hear from your oxygen supplier at least a week before you are due to depart. If you have not heard from your oxygen supplier by then, you should contact them on the usual freephone telephone number.

### **Deliver equipment to your destination**

Your usual supplier may either deliver your supplies themselves, or arrange with another supplier to do so. The supplier delivering the service will provide full information and any help needed to ensure you can use equipment safely and effectively. For information on which supplier serves each of the of English regions and Wales, a map is included on page 9 of this leaflet.

## What to do if your arrangements change or something goes wrong

### **If you have to change your plans (for example, if you decide to return home earlier or later than you originally planned)**

Tell your usual supplier as soon as possible

### **If you decide to cancel your stay away from home**

Tell your supplier and your GP (so they can cancel the order) as soon as possible

### **If your supply is not delivered to your destination on time, or if it is the wrong supply**

Contact the oxygen supplier in the area you are staying in – see the freephone numbers on page 8 of this leaflet. The supplier will sort out any problems as quickly as possible.

### **If you become unwell when away from home**

Contact a local GP in the area in which you are staying, or phone NHS Direct. If you become seriously unwell, go to the nearest Accident and Emergency department or phone 999.

### **If you do not receive confirmation that your oxygen will be delivered to your destination**

Contact your usual oxygen supplier. You should receive confirmation at least a week before you are due to travel

### **If you have any problems or questions about the oxygen equipment supplied to**

### **you at your destination**

Contact the oxygen supplier in the area you are staying in

### **If you need additional supplies during your stay, or if your oxygen starts to run out**

Contact the oxygen supplier in the area you are staying in.

### **If you want to complain**

If you are unhappy with the service you received whilst away from home, or if you are unhappy about any aspect of the service, contact your usual oxygen supplier. You can also contact your local Primary Care Trust (PCT). Details of your PCT are available from:

- **NHS Direct (0845 46 47)**
- [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- [www.homeoxygen.nhs.uk](http://www.homeoxygen.nhs.uk)

## **Staying in Scotland or Northern Ireland**

The NHS home oxygen service is available throughout the UK. However, delivery is different in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Your GP or health professional will send an order to your usual supplier, who will contact you directly to verify details and make the appropriate arrangements. Help us to help you by giving us as much notice as possible of when and where you need oxygen supplies away from home.

## **Travelling abroad, to the Isle of Man, or the Channel Islands**

The NHS home oxygen service does not include the supply of oxygen abroad. This includes cruises.

Please note that your oxygen equipment belongs to your supplier, not the NHS. Therefore, please do not take this abroad without informing your supplier and seeking their agreement for you to do so.

If you are travelling within the European Union (which includes the Republic of Ireland, sometimes also referred to as Southern Ireland or Eire), you will need to make arrangements before you travel.

Please see the Department of Health Advice for Travellers. This is available on the Department of Health website ([www.dh.gov.uk/travellers](http://www.dh.gov.uk/travellers)). This provides advice on obtaining oxygen supplies at your destination, supported by a UK issued Health

Insurance Card. You can also obtain this information by telephoning the Department of Health's customer service centre:

**Customer Service Centre – 020 7210 4850 (lines are open from 09:00 to 17:00, Monday to Friday)**

**Textphone (for people who are deaf or hard of hearing) – 020 7210 5025 (lines are open from 09:00 to 17:00, Monday to Friday)**

The British Lung Foundation has leaflets on holidays and travel, and on travelling by air. These are available on their website ([www.lunguk.org](http://www.lunguk.org)), or by telephoning them on **08458 50 50 20**. You can also write to them at:

**British Lung Foundation, 73-75 Goswell Road, London EC1V 7ER.**

You can also seek advice from an NHS oxygen service supplier about any arrangements for obtaining oxygen supplies abroad and on cruises. However, any arrangements you make to obtain oxygen services abroad will not be funded by the NHS and will have to be made privately.

## **Home oxygen service providers in Wales and England**

### **Wales**

The home oxygen service in Wales is provided by Air Products. If you are a patient, you can call Air Products on 0800 373 580. This is a freephone number.

### **England**

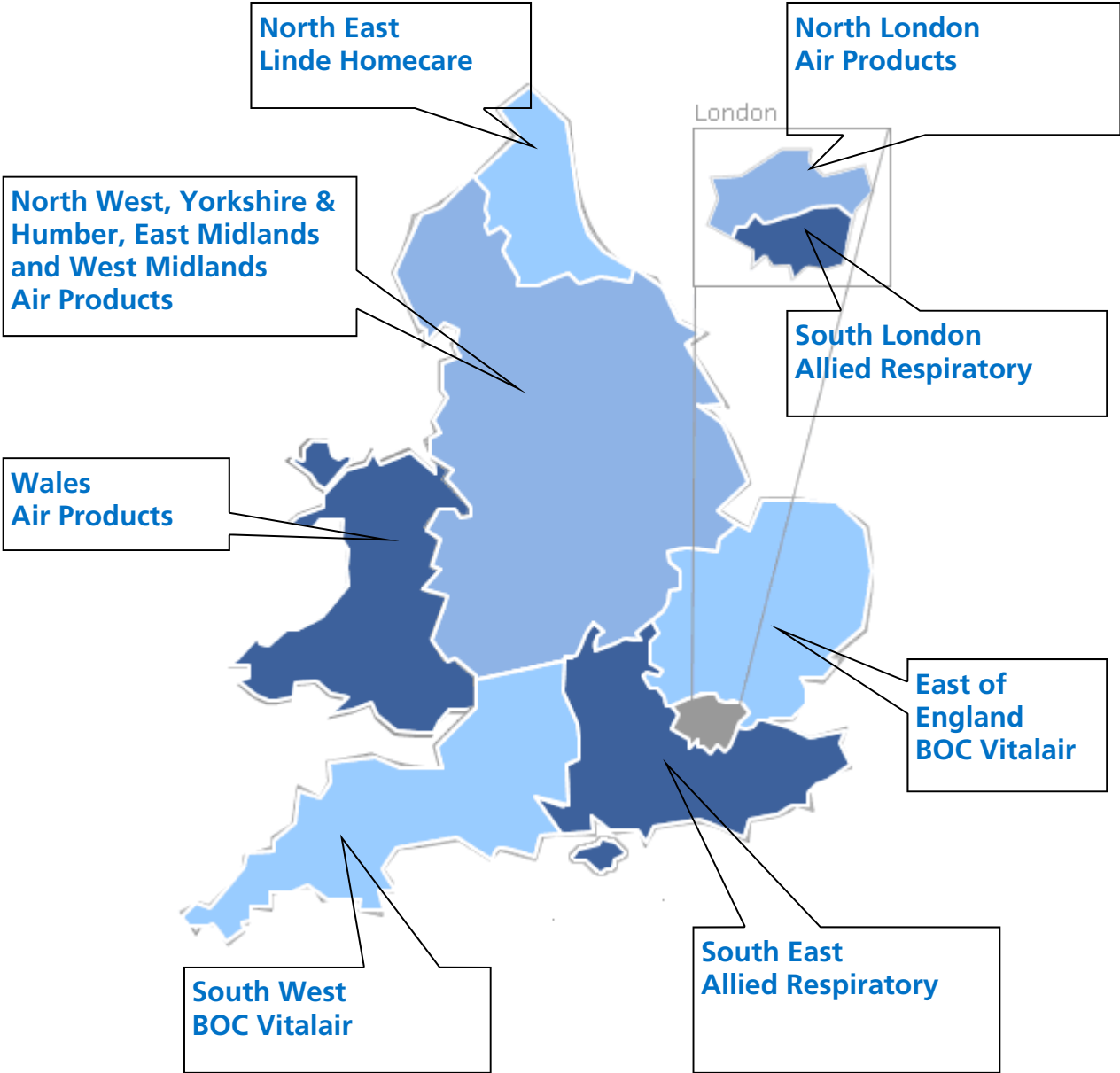
**Allied Respiratory** covers South London and the South East. If you are a patient, you can call Allied Respiratory on 0500 823 773. This is a freephone number.

**Air Products** covers the North West, Yorkshire & Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands and North London. If you are a patient, you can call Air Products on 0800 373 580. This is a freephone number.

**BOC Vitalair** covers the East of England and the South West. If you are a patient, you can call BOC Vitalair on 0800 136 603. This is a freephone number.

**Linde Homecare** covers the North East. If you are a patient, you can call Linde Homecare on 0808 202 0999. This is a freephone number.

# Home oxygen service providers by region





Home Oxygen Service

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**Air Products  
Allied Respiratory  
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**This leaflet is also available in:**

**Arabic, Bengali, Dari, French, Gujarati, Hindi, Italian, Mandarin,  
Portuguese, Punjabi, Somali, Urdu and Welsh.**