

Student Researcher: Darcy Foster

Supervisor: Professor Tamara Hervey, Sheffield Law School

Co-produced with Fiona Loud, Kidney Care UK

Reciprocal Healthcare through the European Union (EU):

- **Kidney dialysis patients** use their European Health Insurance Cards (**EHIC**) whilst abroad at minimal or **no extra cost**.
- Patients' ability to travel abroad is vital for their **dignity, mental wellbeing** and having a **normal family life**.
- Accessing dialysis while abroad makes a **change** from ordinary routines possible, just as others have holidays, or travel abroad for significant life events of family.

Brexit changes this.



Brexit with the Withdrawal Agreement:

The Withdrawal Agreement (WA):

- continues the application of all EU law from October 31st, 2019 until December 31st, 2020
- even though the UK is no longer a Member State.
- means that EU law upholding UK citizens' right to access cross-border healthcare continues for dialysis patients.
- The WA is a new piece of legal text. No one had yet analysed its effects for dialysis patients.

'No Deal' Brexit:

'No Deal' means the UK leaves the EU on October 31st, 2019 without ratifying the WA. This means:

- no reciprocal healthcare agreements between the UK and the EU-27 as a bloc.
- UK dialysis patients will immediately lose their rights in EU law to access treatment in another EU country.

The total loss of rights to cross-border healthcare could be avoided:

- patients can rely on new post-Brexit domestic law in the country they are visiting
- many EU27 countries have adopted post-Brexit law giving reciprocal healthcare rights

The research provides:

- a full legal analysis of the WA and relevant domestic legislation in Ireland, Spain, Italy, France and Greece – the most popular countries for UK dialysis patients to visit
- Kidney Care UK will use this analysis in its interactions with government
- a plain language patient-friendly version

