



NorthStandard

First Call Brazil

Medical assistance for
crew in Brazil



FIRST
CALL

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If you're a NorthStandard Member in need of medical assistance for your crew in Brazil, First Call offers fast, reliable and effective support 24/7, even for minor ailments.

What is First Call Brazil?

First Call Brazil is a programme supported by NorthStandard in collaboration with Proinde and Brazil P&I. The service is available for NorthStandard members disembarking crew for medical treatment in Brazil and will arrange medical treatment, transport to and from the ship, treatment at a reputable facility and the control and auditing of medical costs.

The aim is to assist members by providing a specialised service to ensure crew members obtain excellent medical attention as soon as possible and that the treatment is managed in a cost effective manner. The expeditious provision of medical services also reduces the risk of crew members being repatriated unnecessarily.

Should First Call only be used for significant illnesses or injuries?

We would recommend that our members make use of First Call for all ailments requiring medical attention in Brazil, irrespective of the severity.

This 24/7 service is available across Brazil



If a port is not shown on the map, members should still contact their nearest First Call correspondent for assistance.

How does the programme work?

The Master of a vessel approaching a Brazilian port or already in port with an ill or injured seafarer on board can contact First Call via a 24-hour dedicated telephone number to request assistance from the correspondent covering the port involved. The correspondent will then notify the port agent that they are instructed to assist a crewmember with a medical referral and make arrangements for swift transfer to an appropriate medical facility.

If safe for the crewmember to do so, they will be provided with any medication prescribed by the assessing doctor and returned to the vessel. The clinic will be requested to submit all invoices to correspondents to audit the same and to agree a negotiated discount where possible. For more serious situations, our correspondents will monitor the ongoing treatment and provide regular updates. The audit process will remain the same with potential for significant savings to be achieved.

How much will First Call cost?

At the conclusion of the claim, correspondents will submit their fee note with two elements to it:

1. Their fee note for the ordinary work they provide as correspondents (monitoring treatment, reporting on discussions with authorities etc);
2. A separate fee of up to 25% of the savings made during the auditing process.

The cost of the auditing process is a percentage of the savings rather than any additional cost. If no saving is made, there is no charge for the auditing service.

While medical services in Brazil are generally of good quality, strict case management and medical auditing are essential to prevent overpricing and overtreatment.

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Case studies:



Money saved

A crewmember was disembarked from a Members' vessel after suffering a severe stroke. He was admitted to a private hospital with arrangements being made by a third party. He was hospitalised for almost three months with Members presented with invoices totalling almost US\$340,000. After significant investigation and inquiries, the correspondent managed to negotiate a saving of 42%.



Proportionate treatment

A crewmember was disembarked and hospitalised suffering from acute inflammation. Demands for a payment guarantee were made, amid reports that the crewmember was being prepared for surgery. Doctors appointed by correspondents were able to intervene and assess that there was no urgency, with the diagnosis being an ingrown toenail. The crewmember was transferred to a different hospital for a second opinion and treatment at a significantly lower cost. The decision by the correspondent resulted in a saving of over US\$10,000 with the crewmember returning to the vessel the very next day.



Inadequate control

A Brazilian crewmember was disembarked from a vessel in southern Brazil, reporting abdominal pain. The treating doctor proceeded with gallbladder surgery which, it later transpired, was not an emergency and could have waited until the crewmember was repatriated to their hometown. Unfortunately, the crewmember developed post-operative infections, required additional surgery, and was left with lifelong scarring. The crewmember subsequently filed a lawsuit against the shipowner based on inappropriate medical decisions. This entire situation may have been avoided if a correspondent had been appointed, highlighting the necessity for strict management of crew cases in Brazil.

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