



New medical app launched to save seafarer lives

Gard and the Norwegian Centre for Maritime and Diving Medicine have launched an innovative digital medical guide to improve medical treatment onboard and potentially save seafarers' lives.

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The Mariners Medico Guide is a unique app, designed and tailored for seafarers. Developed in collaboration with the [Norwegian Centre for Maritime and Diving Medicine](#), it provides step-by-step guidance for treating crew onboard. Fully downloadable, it can be used mid-ocean and in remote parts of a ship – even without a signal.

“The world’s seafarers are the beating heart of global trade, and we need to ensure their safety and wellbeing. That is what this app is all about – investing in every seafarer to ensure that they feel safe and that they get the best possible health care at sea,” said Gard CEO Rolf Thore Roppestad.

75 per cent increase

The strain and pressures experienced by seafarers have increased over the last few years. Gard alone saw the number of claims related to crew illness or death increasing by almost 75 per cent from 2018 to 2021. In 2020, the year the Covid pandemic broke out, the number of cases classified as mental disorder claims increased by 34 per cent. Sadly, the number of deaths and suicides has also increased.

Symptom-based

The Mariners Medico Guide differs from other ship medical guides in several ways. As it is digital, it can be quickly and easily updated. Moreover, it covers both physical and mental health issues, using a symptom-based approach. Designed and written by doctors specialised in maritime medicine, guidance is set out in simple steps and language, for users with limited medical experience and reduced accessibility to medications and medical equipment.

“We have used our knowledge about crew claims to promote this tool for better medical treatment on board. I am immensely proud of the Mariners Medico Guide and truly believe it can make a difference to crew health and wellbeing. I really hope it will be actively used to the benefit of the many thousands of seafarers exposed to the risk of illness and injury,” said Christen Guddal, Chief Claims Officer and project sponsor.

His message was echoed by Dr Jon Magnus Haga, leader of the Norwegian Centre for Maritime and Diving Medicine at the University Hospital in Bergen, who said the app would complement their telemedical services and “facilitate better access to basic health care for all seafarers.”

Flag State approved

The MMG is Flag State approved by the [Norwegian Maritime Authority](#) as its national equivalent to the 2007 [WHO International Medical Guide for Ships](#). Knut Arild Hareide, Director General of Shipping and Navigation at the Norwegian Maritime Authority, said the App was a much-welcomed innovation.

The Mariners Medico Guide is available free of charge on both desktop and mobile (Apple App Store and Google Play). For more information, please visit www.medicoguide.no

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