



## New international medical app available for all seafarers

Gard and the Norwegian Centre for Maritime and Diving Medicine have launched an innovative international 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. It provides step-by-step guidance for treating crew onboard. Fully downloadable, it can be used without a signal mid-ocean and in remote parts of a ship. It is available free of charge to all seafarers.

Seafarers do an outstanding job and deserve investment to ensure they feel safe and get the best possible health care at sea. Developing a free digital medical guide to improve medical treatment onboard, and potentially save any seafarer's life, feels like a big step forward for healthcare onboard.

Medical professionals use symptom-led questioning to gather information to be able to diagnose and treat illness and injuries effectively. That is why the app is built around guiding the user through their symptoms as a navigation tool. It has been designed and written by doctors specialised in maritime medicine and working in Radio Medico. Guidance is set out in simple steps and language for users with limited medical experience. The app also aims to lower the threshold for seeking professional support from doctors ashore, guiding the user when to seek support from telemedical assistance services.

During launch week, several thousand downloaded the app, with more than 10,000 visits to the Mariners Medico Guide. Users have been overwhelmingly positive about the app, over 90 per cent of those surveyed have said that they are very satisfied/satisfied:

*"\*Very good that you have made this app. We just had last month a case with appendicitis onboard and planned how to get things better done. When something happens, we are all a bit shocked and somehow it ends up being difficult to \* always remember where to look for information. This app looks very nice and especially when you can download it on your phone it's easy to take with you when you meet the patient on location".*

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*"Thank you, the Mariners Medico Guide is fantastic, practically replaces the medical guidebook into your palm in a very nice and structured way, very good information included in the procedures and phone numbers \*".\**

*"It is much faster than looking for it in the medical book."*

*"The App is very easy to locate a problem with any part of the body using "Guide me" and also through the body drawing, by just clicking the body part concerned. The app is perfect giving step by step details how to treat injury and how to give first aid."*

We believe the app will improve medical treatment onboard as well as save lives. As the guide is digital, it is very easily updated, and seafarers should receive better medical attention faster. The app has already been endorsed by the Norwegian flag state as satisfying the requirements for the provision of medical care and training on board ships. We are in discussions with other flag states who we expect to follow.

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It is more important than ever to safeguard seafarers' health and wellbeing. During the height of the pandemic, seafarers were under enormous strain and pressure, which led to some worrying developments for Gard crew claims. In 2020, the number of mental disorder cases increased by 34 per cent and as well as an increase in the number of deaths and suicides. During 2018 to 2021, the number of Gard claims relating to crew illness and death increased by almost 75 per cent. An important feature of the Mariners Medico Guide is the increased inclusion of mental health symptoms and advice. After all, wellbeing includes both physical and mental components.

We hope seafarers will find the app useful and we welcome feedback via [support@medicoguide.no](mailto:support@medicoguide.no).

Download your Mariners Medico Guide today for free on both desktop and mobile devices. Please visit [www.medicoguide.no](http://www.medicoguide.no) for more information.



*After 31 years with Gard, most recently as global head of People Claims, Alice Jackson Amundsen is retiring. She was a key member of the project team for the Mariners Medico Guide app. We thank her for this and her other innumerable contributions to seafarer wellbeing.*

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