

Dear Patients,

We are committed to promoting your health and your well-being. In addition to optimal medical treatment, we understand that personal attention helps to build trust, which is an essential part of the recovery process. You have placed your trust in our hospital and IMS and it is our aim to make your stay as pleasant as possible for you and your family.

Our “International Medical Services and International Business Development” is part of a German state hospital and not a private company. As a state institution we are obligated to conduct our work within the scope of the law. Past experience has shown that many patients have the same questions and concerns. Therefore, in order to solidify the trust you have placed in IMS, we have prepared a brochure to answer your questions and explain the procedures and modalities associated with your treatment and stay at the Medical Center – University of Freiburg.

Please do not hesitate to contact your IMS patient adviser for help with any questions you may have with regard to your individual treatment and care. The entire IMS staff wishes you all the best for continued health and well-being.

Yours sincerely,

Cornelia Beyer

Director of the Department IMS

**For further information please
contact our colleagues:**

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**WHAT YOU ALWAYS
WANTED TO
KNOW...**

**International Medical Services and
International Business Development**

Medical Center – University of Freiburg,
Germany

■ **Is IMS an agency?**

No. IMS is a public institution; it is a department of the Medical Center – University of Freiburg and not a private company. All members of the IMS staff are employees of the hospital. They are paid a fixed salary independent of the number of patients under their care. They do not work on commission.

■ **How is IMS financed?**

As a public institution, the IMS department is financed by the Medical Center – University of Freiburg.

■ **What is the role of IMS?**

IMS handles all organizational tasks for patients coming from abroad for treatment in Germany. These include visa invitation letter, cost estimate, coordination of appointments, airport transfer, accommodation and care of patients and their families, cost control during treatment, sending out medical reports and settlement of treatment costs. Our aim is to make your stay as pleasant as possible.

■ **Who are IMS interpreters?**

IMS interpreters are specifically qualified and trained freelancers working for IMS, but for their own account. They are paid from the deposit made to IMS on the basis of the timesheet signed by the patient. Waiting time also has to be paid. IMS interpreters do not make appointments and do not provide information about costs.

■ **What is included in the IMS cost estimate?**

Before travelling here, you will receive a detailed cost estimate which includes the statutory costs for treatment, doctors' fees as well as costs for laboratory tests and diagnostic radiology. The cost estimate always contains a note that amounts paid in excess will be paid back to you.

■ **Why does the patient have to pay the treatment costs in advance?**

Receipt of the money is a condition for IMS to write the visa invitation letter, but also for the respective embassies to issue the visa. The expected duration of treatment determines the validity of the visa.

The hospital must ensure that patients only enter the country for treatment and promptly leave the country once they have completed their treatment. Patients coming to Germany from abroad for medical treatment are obliged by law to pay the treatment costs in advance as a deposit.

■ **How are accounts settled for IMS patients?**

After about 8 weeks, you get a detailed final invoice listing all items. Any credit balance will be paid back to you. If there is a debit balance, we will ask you to pay it without delay.

■ **Why can't you take medical letters and the invoice with you when you leave?**

After you have left, your file will be circulated through all the departments involved in your treatment before being sent to the invoicing department. This is done through postal channels, as the accounting centers are located all over Germany. We thus ask for your understanding that it takes us about 8 weeks to prepare your final invoice.

With regards to medical letters, we try to get them as soon as possible. It may happen, however, that the doctor cannot dictate and sign them immediately, e.g. because he is out of office.

■ **Why do you have to wait for some time to see a doctor although you have an appointment?**

The Medical Center – University of Freiburg is a maximum care hospital, which covers the entire South-West and other large areas of Germany. Our doctors have to deal with emergency patients; they are specialists with an international reputation and have to look after many patients.

■ **Do you have to pay value-added tax on medical services?**

No. In Germany, medical treatment and all medical services except plastic surgery are exempt from value-added tax. If you make purchases from pharmacies and medical supply stores, you can get back the value-added tax paid by you.