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Dear students and guests,

Living and studying abroad bring about many changes in your daily life. We have published this Health Guide to help you enjoy all these new experiences and activities and to minimize any possible risks. The Guide also includes important contact numbers and details of useful organizations.

Have a pleasant and healthy stay!

Communication Office

Groningen, May 2013
Health Services
1.1 General practitioner

In the Netherlands a general practitioner (GP) or family doctor is called a ‘huisarts’. If treatment by a specialist is needed, the GP will give you a referral letter. Please note that it is not customary for a patient to make an appointment directly with a specialist. The specialist will send a report to the GP, who keeps complete medical records for each individual in his or her practice. The same is true for test results. Remember to make a photocopy of the referral letter for your medical insurance company.

You can sign up with Huisartsen Zorgpunt Zernike (HZ) which is a general practitioner’s practice especially designated for international students and staff:

**HZ Zernike (located at the Zernike Campus)**
Blauwborgje 5 / Uurwerkersgang 10
9747 AC Groningen
T 050 363 3111

Not only can you sign up online for HZ Zernike, you can also schedule (and cancel) appointments or get a consult online: [www.hzzernike.nl](http://www.hzzernike.nl)

STD tests are possible at HZ Zernike.
1. Call (050) 361 50 10

2. Make an appointment with the GP

3. Go to the reception of the GP office and fill out the registration form.

4. Wait for your GP to attend you

5. If you need medication, take your prescription to a pharmacy, for example the Apotheek Hanzeplein

You will either get a recorded message or be directed to a doctor’s assistant.

Do not forget to bring your insurance card with you!

In some cases, a GP will make house calls, but bear in mind that these consultations are more expensive (€ 38).
1.2 After-hours GP service

GP’s share duties after working hours. Should you suddenly need the help of a GP at night, during the weekend or on public holidays, you should call the central ‘After-hours GP Service’ (*Centrale Doktersdienst*). In most cases, they will ask you to come over for a consultation.

> Remember to take your insurance papers with you whenever you visit a GP, dentist, hospital or pharmacy.

After-hours GP service *(Centrale Doktersdienst)*
Damsterdiep 191
9713 EC Groningen
T 0900 92 29 (€ 0.10 p/m)

In an emergency, call 112
### Health insurance

The Netherlands has a high standard of medical care. It is, however, very important to be properly insured. Medical costs can be very high, especially if they include a stay in a hospital. Students at institutes of higher education are not automatically insured against medical expenses abroad. You must arrange this yourself, either before coming to the Netherlands or upon arrival.

Below you will find an overview of health insurance possibilities and the way to pay or reimburse invoices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Insurance</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EHIC (EU Health Card)</td>
<td>send your invoices to AGIS, with a copy of your EHIC card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AON</td>
<td>GP office will send bill directly to AON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A foreign health insurance</td>
<td>you pay in cash. Keep the receipts for possible reimbursement from your insurance company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch insurance</td>
<td>present insurance card; payments will be made by the insurance company</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information:

**AGIS Health Insurance**  
*AGIS Zorgverzekeringen*  
Afdeling Buitenland  
Postbus 19  
3800 HA Amersfoort

**For more information on AON:**  
T 0900 86 85 (€ 0.03 p/m)  
www.students-insurance.eu

Please note: all international students with a part-time job must take out a basic statutory health insurance. An EHIC card is not sufficient when employed. Students are free to choose any insurance company.

More detailed information on insurance matters is provided in the digital handbook for international students ‘Welcome to the University of Groningen 2013-2014’, which you have received through email. You can also ask the International Service Desk (see page 22) or your faculty to send it to you through email.
1.4 Dentist

If you need a dentist, please contact the information desk at the Center for Dentistry and Oral Hygiene (CTM) for an appointment. You must pay cash for a consultation. Remember to check whether dental care is included in your insurance package. If it is, ask for a receipt in order to get a refund from your insurance company later. If you are here for a long period of time and need a simple check-up be aware that you will be placed on a waiting list, meaning that it may take a couple of weeks before you get an appointment. However, you will be given an appointment immediately for emergency dental care.

Center for Dentistry and Oral Hygiene (CTM)
(Centrum voor Tandheelkunde en Mondzorgkunde)
Antonius Deusinglaan 1
9713 AV Groningen

Opening hours:
Monday to Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Friday, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Appointments by telephone:
T (050) 363 75 05

1.5 Hospital and emergencies

In the Netherlands, it is not usual to go to the hospital (ziekenhuis) for minor symptoms like headaches or stomach aches. Therefore, unless you have a serious symptom, you should always first go to your GP. The reason for this is that emergency rooms are very expensive and, if your condition is not life threatening, you will be sent to your GP anyway. However, if your GP thinks it is necessary for you to go to the hospital he or she will give you a referral for the proper specialist.

University Medical Center Groningen (UMCG)
(Universitair Medisch Centrum Groningen)
Hanzeplein 1
9713 GZ Groningen
T (050) 361 61 61
www.umcg.nl

Martini Hospital
(Martini Ziekenhuis)
Van Swietenplein 1
9728 NX Groningen
T (050) 524 52 45
www.martiniziekenhuis.nl
1.6 Medication

In the Netherlands there is a difference between a pharmacy (apotheek) and a drugstore (drogist). Examples of drugstores are Kruidvat, Etos, DA, Trekpleister. Drugstores are stores where you can buy household medicine without a prescription from your GP. If necessary, the GP or specialist will give you a prescription. Strong medication (medicijnen) is only available on prescription and is prepared at a pharmacy.

Remember that at night, during the weekends, and on public holidays most pharmacies are closed. However, the after-hours pharmacy service (Apotheek Hanzeplein) is open 24 hours a day. Drugstores sell drugs for minor complaints such as headaches, toothache, colds and the flu.

Pharmacy Hanzeplein
(Apotheek Hanzeplein)
Hanzeplein 122
9713 GW Groningen
T (050) 311 50 20 (during office hours)
F (050) 311 50 21
webservice@hanzeplein.nl
www.hanzeplein.nl

After 8 p.m. and during the weekend, please call:
T 0900 111 50 20 (€ 0.20 p/m)
At the Public Health Department (GGD Groningen), you can obtain information on all kinds of health-related subjects, such as venereal diseases or AIDS. The Public Health Department also gives information on infectious diseases such as influenza and mumps and performs tests for diseases such as tuberculosis. If you go abroad you can get advice from the department for travellers. By going to the Public Health Department in some cases you can choose to remain anonymous.

Public Health Department  
(GGD Groningen)  
HANZEPLEIN 120 9713 GW GRONINGEN  
T (050) 367 40 00  
www.ggd.groningen.nl

Healthy travel starts at the GGD Groningen
Planning to go abroad? Do you realize that in some countries you can easily get an infection by consuming infected food or drinking water? Many (sub) tropical areas are known for the presence of malaria mosquitoes. By preparing well you can do a lot to help prevent diseases. One sensible precaution is to visit GGD Groningen for professional advice. This visit will prepare you for healthy travel and will make sure you return home healthy.

By the way, many health insurance companies cover for most or all expenses on vaccinations and anti-malaria medication.

Making an appointment:

Public Health Department  
(GGD Groningen)  
Department for travellers  
(Reizigersadvisering)  
HANZEPLEIN 120  
9713 GW GRONINGEN  
T (050) 367 43 77

You can make an appointment by telephone:  
Monday to Thursday, from 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. and Friday from 8.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.

You also can make an appointment online:  
www.ggd.groningen.nl/reisvaccinaties
2.1 Student Service Centre – Psychological Counselling

Culture shock and homesickness
Studying abroad can be both an adventure and a challenge. Culture shock is not quite as shocking or as sudden as you might expect. It is part of the process of learning to live in and adapt to a new culture. Upon arrival you may find the new situation exhilarating and exciting, but as time passes you may start to feel overwhelmed and frustrated. Your experiences may go from being interesting to sometimes irritating. This kind of disorientation is normal after arriving in a new culture. This does not necessarily mean that you will need professional help, but if these problems begin to affect your studies and personal life, you can always ask the counsellors for help.

Student Service Centre
Uurwerkersgang 10
9712 EJ Groningen
T (050) 363 80 66

You can make an appointment by telephone Monday to Friday, from 8.45 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

› Remember that it is necessary to make an appointment before going to the university psychologists or student counsellors.
2.2 Student Service Centre – Student counsellors

The student counsellors at the Student Service Centre deal with matters that you may wish to address or that must be arranged outside your degree programme. These matters may include study delay (due to illness, committee work or circumstances beyond your control), legal matters (admission, student grants, registration, etc.), complaints (the counsellors can fulfil a mediating and advisory role for students), questions concerning study choice, financial help or personal and confidential matters. Appointments with the student counsellors should be made by telephone during office hours.

Student Service Centre
Uurwerkersgang 10
9712 EJ Groningen
T (050) 363 80 66

For more information about the Student Service Centre, please visit: www.rug.nl/ssc
2.3 University confidential advisor

The confidential advisor assists staff and students who are experiencing undesirable conduct (such as sexual harassment, aggression, violence, discrimination and bullying) or unequal treatment. The confidential advisor is independent and has the right to access all necessary information from the people involved.

University confidential advisor
(Vertrouwenspersoon)
Visserstraat 47–49
9712 CT Groningen
T (050) 363 54 35
www.rug.nl/confidentialadvisor

Consulting hours:
Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. by appointment only.
You can make an appointment by telephone.
3

Drugs and Alcohol
3.1 Drugs policy in the Netherlands

The Netherlands is known for maintaining a policy of tolerance towards the use of soft drugs. However, the distribution of soft drugs (hashish and marijuana) to the public is strictly regulated.

Drugs policy on soft drugs is:

- If you are 18 years or older you are allowed to possess a maximum of 5 grams of soft drugs, such as hashish and marijuana, for personal use.
- You can only buy soft drugs at an official coffee shop.
- It is not permitted to use soft drugs in public places or on the street.

Drugs policy on hard drugs:

- Hard drugs such as cocaine, heroin, GHB, XTC and magic mushrooms (dried or fresh) are not tolerated anywhere. If you are caught in possession of any of these drugs, you will be arrested.

Do not mix drugs with alcohol, the consequences can be dangerous. Always watch your drink when you are at a bar or party, this way you avoid the risk of somebody slipping GHB (also known as the “rape drug”) into your drink.

3.2 Alcohol

After having consumed alcohol, it is officially against the law to participate in traffic (whether by bicycle or car). Careless behaviour will be punished.
Sexuality
**Sexually Transmitted Diseases**

Becoming involved in sexual activities may sometimes have its risks. Always take into consideration the risk of acquiring sexually transmitted diseases (STD’s). STD’s are passed on in sperm, blood, vaginal fluids and by contact between mucous membranes. Most people acquire STD’s from unprotected sex. You can contract and pass on an STD infection without knowing, so be careful.

Some examples of STD’s are:

- HIV
- Chlamydia
- Genital warts
- Genital herpes
- Gonorrhea
- Hepatitis B
- Syphilis

If you think that you may have one of these diseases, you can contact HZ Zernike in order to have a STD test. You can schedule an appointment online: www.hzzernike.nl

You can also contact SENSE Noord Nederland and make an appointment to be tested. You can choose to remain anonymous when taking this test.

**SENSE Noord Nederland**

www.sensenoord.nl

T 0900 736 73 66 (local rates apply)

Office hours: Monday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Once you have made an appointment through SENSE Noord Nederland you will be referred to the Public Health Department (Gemeenschappelijke Gezondheids Dienst = GGD), for a consultation. If necessary, you will be referred to the Department of Dermatology at the UMCG where you will receive the necessary treatment. In either case, if you need to talk about sexually related issues or need to be tested, contact SENSE Noord Nederland first.

Visiting addresses:

**Public Health Department (GGD)**

Hanzeplein 120
9713 GW Groningen
T (050) 367 40 00

**University Medical Center Groningen (UMCG)**

Department of Dermatology
Hanzeplein 1
9713 GZ Groningen
T (050) 361 61 61

For more information on sexually transmitted diseases, go to: www.soaaids.nl/english
4.2 Safe sex and contraceptives
By practising safe sex you are not only protecting yourself from STD’s but also from the risk an unplanned pregnancy. Contraceptives (the pill, coil, intra-uterine device (IUD), the diaphragm and condoms) can be obtained from your GP. Contraceptives can also be obtained at centres for sexuality. Condoms are sold at supermarkets, pharmacies and drugstores. You can also find condoms in vending machines at many bars and clubs.

4.3 Pregnancy
If you think that you are pregnant, you can buy a pregnancy test at the pharmacy or at any drugstore. Since pregnancy tests are not always reliable, you can also make an appointment with a GP. If you would like to remain anonymous or talk to someone you do not know, then you can go to the SGNN (Sexual Health North Netherlands). You can make an appointment and they will explain the further procedures. All information is kept confidential.

SGNN (Sexual Health North Netherlands)
(Sexuele Gezondheid Noord Nederland)
Radesingel 11
9711 ED Groningen
T (050) 312 42 03
Available daily from 9.15 a.m. until 12.30 p.m. and from 1.15 p.m. until 3.15 p.m.
rutgers@csgnn.nl
4.4 Sexual orientation

If you are struggling with questions about sexual orientation, be sure to talk to a friend or counsellor. It is also possible to contact the COC Vereniging Groningen. The COC is an organization for gays and lesbians in the Netherlands. You can also go to a student psychologist and discuss matters.

**COC Groningen-Drenthe**
*(Dutch organization for gays and lesbians)*
Hardewikerstraat 9
9712 GR Groningen
T (050) 313 26 20
www.cocgroningen.nl

**Opening hours:**
Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Available by mobile phone on working days from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
M 06-202 444 31

**Student Service Centre**
Uurwerkersgang 10
9712 EJ Groningen
T (050) 363 80 66

**Ganymedes**
Ganymedes is a student association which was established by students to unite lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students and students interested in LGBT issues, to organize social, cultural and political events for LGBT students in Groningen and to improve LGBT wellbeing. The aim of Ganymedes is to raise awareness and improve social acceptance of diversity in sexuality and to inspire the establishment of similar student associations at other universities.

Membership and participation in activities is not only limited to LGBT students, but is also open to all students of the University of Groningen regardless of their sexual orientation. Members are a diverse mix of students with a variety of backgrounds and interests. In Ganymedes, you can talk, eat, drink and go out with people with similar interests or background. Ganymedes can help you with a first step ‘out of the closet’ in a comfortable environment or be your first introduction to the gay scene.

For more information, please visit: [http://ganymedes-lgbt.nl/](http://ganymedes-lgbt.nl/)
Addresses
5.1 Addresses

HZ Zernike General Practitioners
Blauwborgje 5
9747 AC Groningen
T (050) 363 31 11
E info@hzzernike.nl
www.hzzernike.nl

After-hours GP service
(Centrale Doktersdienst)
Damsterdiep 191
9713 EC Groningen
T 0900 92 29 (€ 0.10 p/m)

SGNN (Sexuele Gezondheid Noord Nederland)
(Sexual Health North Netherlands)
Radesingel 11
9711 ED Groningen
T (050) 313 22 50
Available daily from 9.15 a.m. until 12.30 p.m. and from 1.15 p.m. until 3.15 p.m.
E rutgers@csgnn.nl

COC Groningen-Drenthe
(Dutch organization for gays and lesbians)
Boterdiep 46
9712 LR Groningen
T (050) 313 26 20
www.cocgroningen.nl
Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Available by mobile phone on working days from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
M 06-202 444 31

Center for Dentistry and Oral Hygiene (CTM)
(Centrum voor Tandheelkunde en Mondzorgkunde)
Antonius Deusinglaan 1
9713 AV Groningen
T (050) 363 75 05 (by appointment only)
Monday to Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Friday, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

International Service Desk
Academy Building, 1st floor
Broerstraat 5
9712 CP Groningen
T (050) 363 81 81
F (050) 363 71 00
isd@rug.nl
Monday to Friday, noon to 4 p.m.
Martini Hospital
(Martini Ziekenhuis)
Van Swietenplein 1
9728 NX Groningen
T (050) 524 52 45
www.martiniziekenhuis.nl

Pharmacy Hanzeplein
(Apotheek Hanzeplein)
HANZEPLEIN 122
9713 GW Groningen
T (050) 311 50 20 (during office hours)
F (050) 311 50 21
webservice@hanzeplein.nl
www.hanzeplein.nl
After 8 p.m. and during the weekend: T 0900 111 50 20 (€ 0.20 p/m)

Public Health Department (GGD)
Hanzeplein 120
9713 GW Groningen
T (050) 367 40 00

Psychological Counselling
Uurwerkersgang 10
9712 EJ Groningen
T (050) 363 80 66

Student Service Centre
Uurwerkersgang 10
9712 EJ Groningen
T (050) 363 80 66

University confidential advisor
(Vertrouwenspersoon)
Visserstraat 47–49
9712 CT Groningen
T (050) 363 54 35

University Medical Center Groningen (UMCG)
(Universitair Medisch Centrum Groningen)
Hanzeplein 1
9713 GZ Groningen
T (050) 361 61 61
www.umcg.nl
5.2 General emergency number: 112
(Police, Fire, Ambulance)
The national emergency telephone number is 112. You should only call this number if you require urgent assistance. Explain the problem briefly to the operator, who will put you through to the police, fire brigade or ambulance service. Tip: write the number on a sticker and put it on your telephone.

The emergency number should be used only if the situation is so urgent that you require an immediate response.

Emergency services are either free or covered by your insurance, unless you have called them unnecessarily. In the event of a genuine emergency, call 112 and help will arrive within minutes.

For police information call 0900-8844 (local rates apply). You can call this number if you have a question or a problem that is not an emergency.

Groningen Police Station
Rademarkt 12
9711 CV Groningen