

Important Information for Families with Special Needs Dependents

An overseas move can be exciting as well as stressful. While Naples is a fascinating area, the Naples overseas environment is typically experienced as very challenging for newly arriving sponsors and their families. When there is a special needs family member, the stressors can increase, unless you have been proactive.

To ensure a good start in Naples, all incoming sponsors need to complete the Navy's Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) OCONUS screening process. Here are some things to consider.

U.S. Naval Hospital (USNH) Naples is a small community hospital. While it does have a number of solid medical services, it does not have a full range of specialty providers. Per EFMP category definitions, USNH Naples is considered an EFMP category 2 facility. When deemed suitable by a local military physician, this can be waived and USNH Naples can accept EFMP category 3 patients on a case-by-case basis. You can check with your local EFMP representative to obtain more information or visit www.med.navy.mil/sites/napoli.

If you have a special needs family member who is a minor, then school programs should be a concern. In the Naples military community, the Department of Defense Dependents Schools offer a wide variety of special education services to address the educational needs related to most handicapping conditions. However, services for lower incidence disabilities such as visual and hearing impairments, and emotional impairments may be more limited. More information is available at www.dodea.edu/Curriculum/specialEduc/parentsInfo.cfm.

Please remember that civilian providers are not able to clear patients for military facilities overseas. Military members must have official approval from USNH Naples. While not required, civilian members are also highly encouraged to seek guidance from USNH Naples and the other resources mentioned here.

Therefore, individuals who are considering relocating to Naples, Italy should be aware that specialized medical support services may not be available for family members, such as long term mental health services or certain medications. Additionally, specialized educational or recreational programs that have been important to family members also may not be available.

Please allow for a comprehensive overseas screening for family members.

Non-disclosure of a medical problem can have dramatic consequences to the family once care is required in the overseas setting. For the military member, this might involve an early return of their dependents and/or administrative action. Being proactive about overseas screening and researching available services is imperative to prevent hardships in the care of your loved ones. This will help reduce the stress that your family will encounter during this big transition and ensure that you will be able to receive the care and services you expect for your family members.

If you take these steps, your tour in Bella Napoli will be much more enjoyable and rewarding.

