

Identifying malaria prevention information needs: insights from UK national advice line enquiries, 2019-2025

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Background: Malaria is a mosquito-borne, preventable disease not found in the UK but common in several regions worldwide. The National Travel Health Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) provides online resources to support UK travel health practitioners in delivering pre-travel advice and also operates a telephone advice line. This study describes the pre-travel malaria-related calls to the NaTHNaC advice line from 2019-2025.

Materials and Methods: All telephone enquiries to the national advice line are routinely recorded in a standard electronic system by the nurse advisor handling the call. Malaria-related enquiries logged between January 2019 and December 2025 were retrospectively reviewed, and a descriptive analysis was conducted.

Results: Between 2019 and 2025, 2,765 malaria-related queries were received, accounting for 15% of all calls. Most originated from general practice (70%), though the proportion from pharmacies increased from 9% in 2019 to 34% in 2025. Most enquiries concerned female travellers, with those aged 20-39 representing the largest group. The main reason for contact was advice for travellers with special health needs (n=1,300; 47%), particularly in relation to pregnancy and breastfeeding (n=269) and cardiovascular or circulatory conditions (n=161). Country-specific queries were also common (n=1,188; 43%), most frequently regarding Kenya (n=229), Ghana (n=212) and Indonesia (n=205).

Conclusion: The findings highlight areas where clinicians frequently seek advice on malaria prevention, despite the online resources available on the national travel health website (Travel Health Pro). These insights can help identify gaps in current online materials and guide improvements to better address travel health practitioners' needs and concerns.