Travelling with a medical/mental health condition or disability - Big Bummit

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If you require this booklet in large print or as a printed copy, please contact bummit.eei@gmail.com

About this guide

Bummit is an incredibly exciting, fun and social activity, but it would be wrong of any of us to overlook the fact that some days can be long and slightly stressful. We would hate for anyone to feel like they were unable to participate in Bummit due to an existing disability, medical condition, mental health condition or anxiety over the nature of the trip, or for any of their team to feel unable to deal with this reality.

If you feel comfortable with sharing information relating to your condition or your history of mental health with your teammates and/or committee, then please do so that we can offer you tailored and confidential advice on how we can support you. There is no shame if this is information you would rather not share, and this booklet should offer a basic level of support if this is the case.

Please remember the number for Nightline and Samaritans will always be available in the Bummit Bible. Alternatively, you can call the Safety Phone, where a member of the committee will be able to offer support. **If you ever feel like you or your teammate is in danger, always call the emergency services (999) first.**

You should book an appointment as soon as possible with your Disability Adviser (if you have one) who can go through what you will need to do, and what may be helpful to do before Bummit.

Some things may not apply to everybody in the same way, where possible this will be indicated.

Nothing in this guide represents legal advice nor does it reflect the opinion of either the Students' Union or of the University of Sheffield.

Please be aware that the guide goes into topics which you may find distressing. There are contact numbers and email addresses as well as links to organisations and people who can help.

What is Bummit?

We raise money for charities in Sheffield and South Yorkshire by hitchhiking from Sheffield to Europe in 2 weeks!

We are a working committee of the Sheffield Students' Union, and part of RAG (Raising and Giving), and have been running events since 2003.

We are independently run and are the largest student-led hitchhike in the UK/Europe. We have raised almost £1,000,000 for charity as of 2019.

We run two events – one in Autumn called **Baby Bummit** and one in Spring called **Big Bummit**.

Your condition

You know best what you need and how your condition is affected by different things. You may have good or bad days.

Think about what you might need for your condition or if it worsened. For example, you might need:

- Clothing
- Footwear
- Quiet space to go (Accessible toilets work well if you've got nowhere else)
- Headphones
- Earbuds
- Medication (more on that below)
- Someone to talk to

Asthma

Make sure you discuss Bummit with your GP or asthma nurse. Follow the advice from Asthma UK (https://www.asthma.org.uk/advice/living-with-asthma/travel).

Diabetes

- Take twice the quantity of medical supplies as you would ordinarily.
- Make sure you find where you can get insulin in an emergency.
- You should bring snacks as meal times may be delayed.

Follow the advice from Diabetes UK (https://www.diabetes.org.uk/guide-to-diabetes/life-with-diabetes/travel) and from your GP or diabetes nurse.

Other conditions

Obviously every condition cannot be listed and specifically addressed, however this guide will go through some things that you should consider.

Telling your team

You may want to tell your team about your condition. This may help them understand better and may mean that they accommodate for you.
You do not need to explain it fully if you do not want to, but it might we worth explaining how it may affect your journey and your ability to complete the trip.

If you do not feel comfortable doing this, that’s okay!

Insurance

Why you need Insurance

You should get travel insurance because the travel insurance provided by the Students Union cannot cover certain pre-existing conditions and is general in nature.

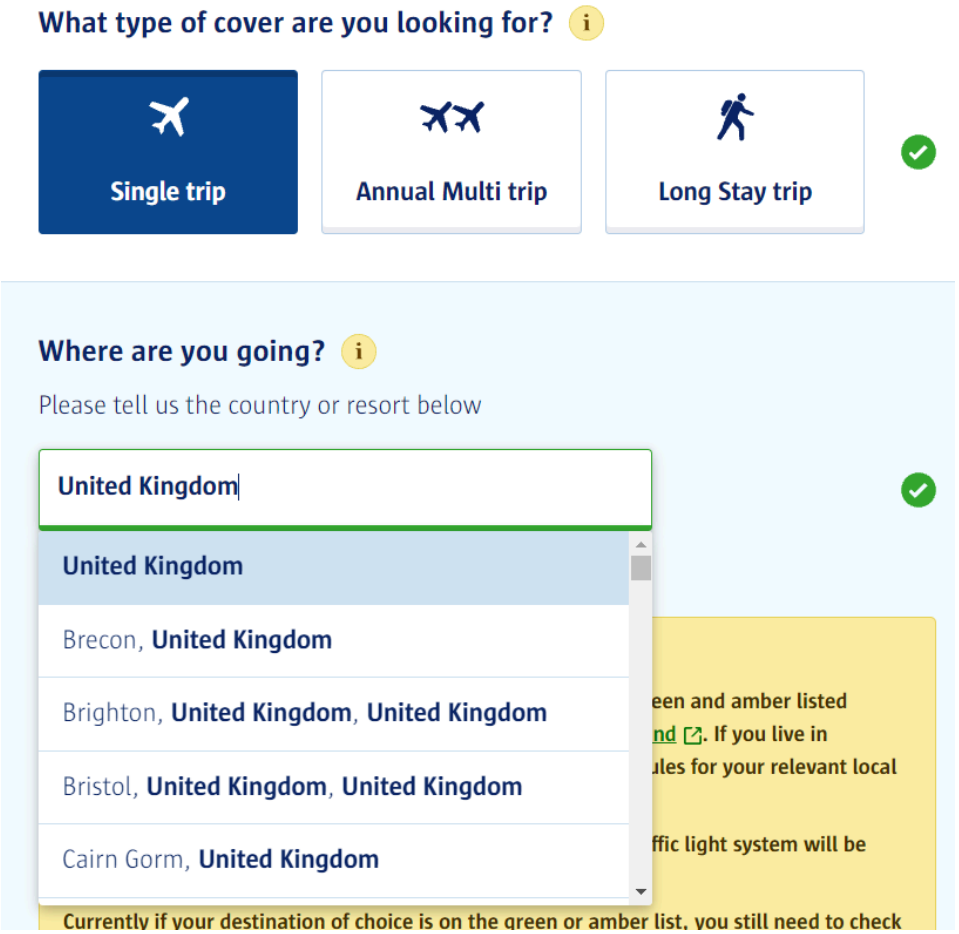
Buying insurance

You should get comprehensive travel insurance to cover the period of the trip and any after travel.

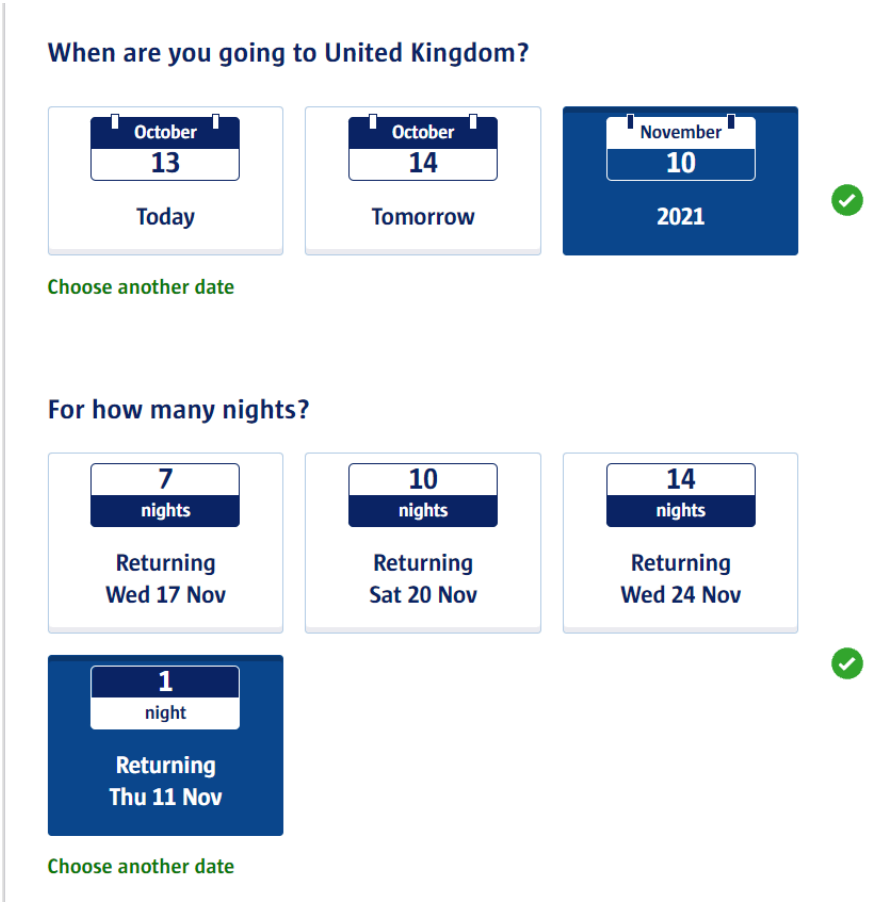
This is easy to do, and you should use websites like Go Compare or Compare the Market, which can find competitive rates for insurance.

Using Compare The Market, let's go through how to buy insurance:

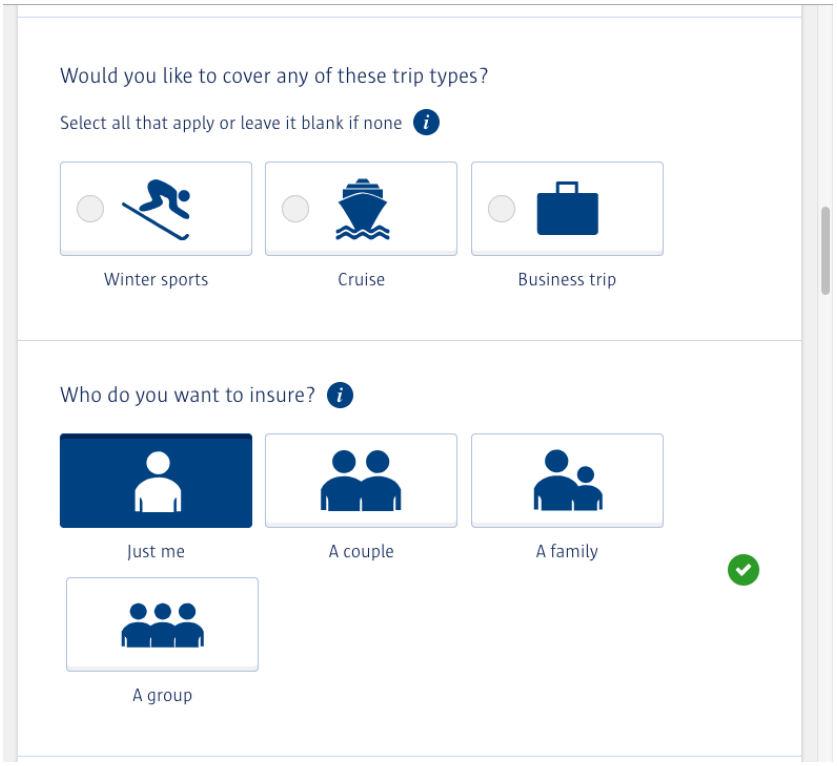
1. First choose the type of cover – the three main types are single trip, multi-trip and backpacker trip. Select **Single trip** and then type in **United Kingdom**. You don't want to choose backpacker trip, because this is designed for month long trips and may be more expensive.



2. Now let's choose the dates of the trip, for example between the 10th and 11th November, and select those dates using the calendar function.

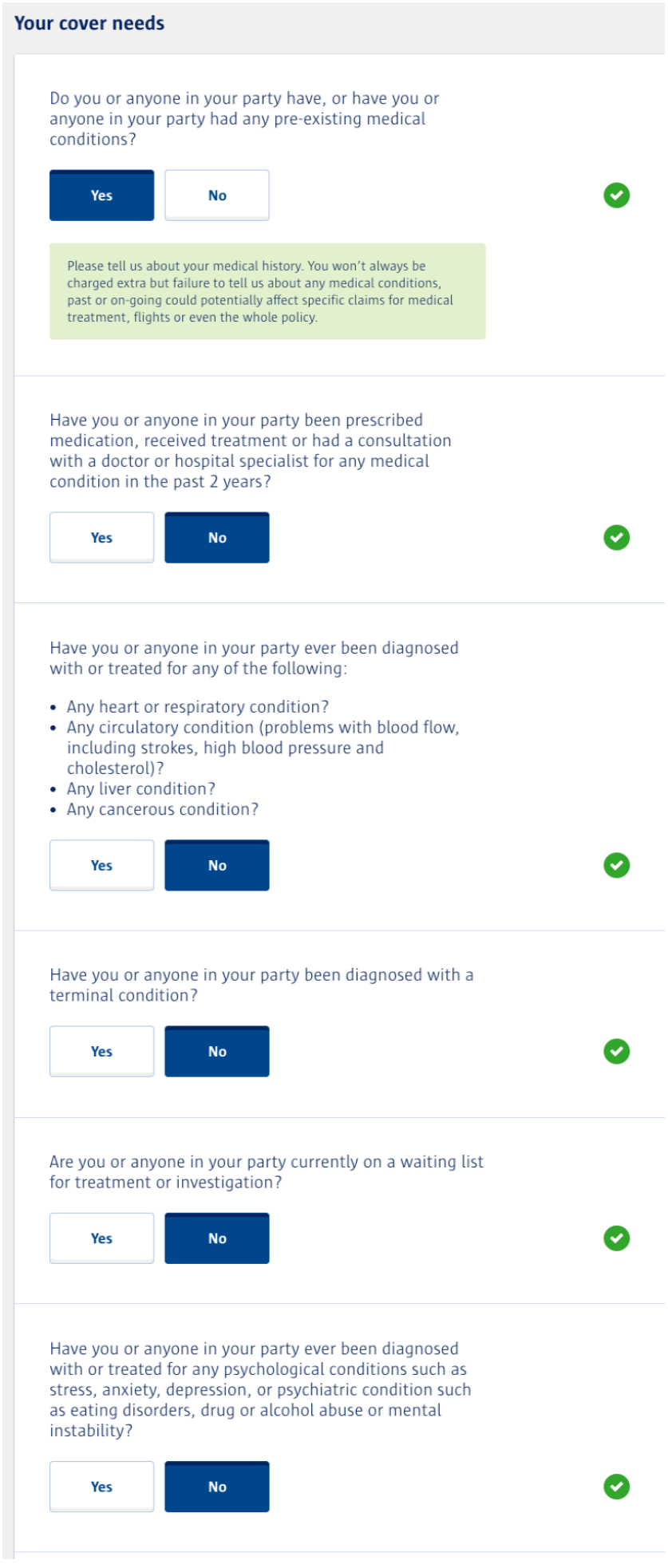


3. We are not doing winter sports, going on a cruise or doing a business trip, so ignore these. Then select **Just me**, unless you want to insure more people.



4. Now add your date of birth under **traveller born**. You can adjust **Cover details** if you need/want minimum medical cover, maximum excess etc.

5a. Under **Your cover needs**, answer the questions with **yes** or **no**. You may not need to declare your specific medical condition.



Your cover needs

Do you or anyone in your party have, or have you or anyone in your party had any pre-existing medical conditions?

Yes | No

Please tell us about your medical history. You won't always be charged extra but failure to tell us about any medical conditions, past or on-going could potentially affect specific claims for medical treatment, flights or even the whole policy.

Have you or anyone in your party been prescribed medication, received treatment or had a consultation with a doctor or hospital specialist for any medical condition in the past 2 years?

Yes | No

Have you or anyone in your party ever been diagnosed with or treated for any of the following:

- Any heart or respiratory condition?
- Any circulatory condition (problems with blood flow, including strokes, high blood pressure and cholesterol)?
- Any liver condition?
- Any cancerous condition?

Yes | No

Have you or anyone in your party been diagnosed with a terminal condition?

Yes | No

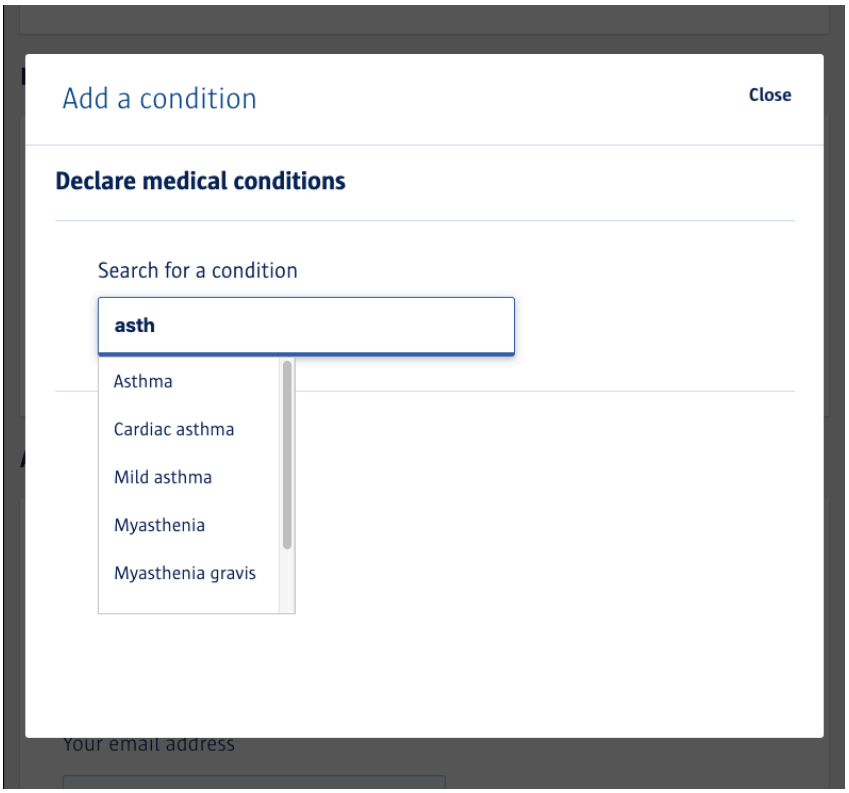
Are you or anyone in your party currently on a waiting list for treatment or investigation?

Yes | No

Have you or anyone in your party ever been diagnosed with or treated for any psychological conditions such as stress, anxiety, depression, or psychiatric condition such as eating disorders, drug or alcohol abuse or mental instability?

Yes | No

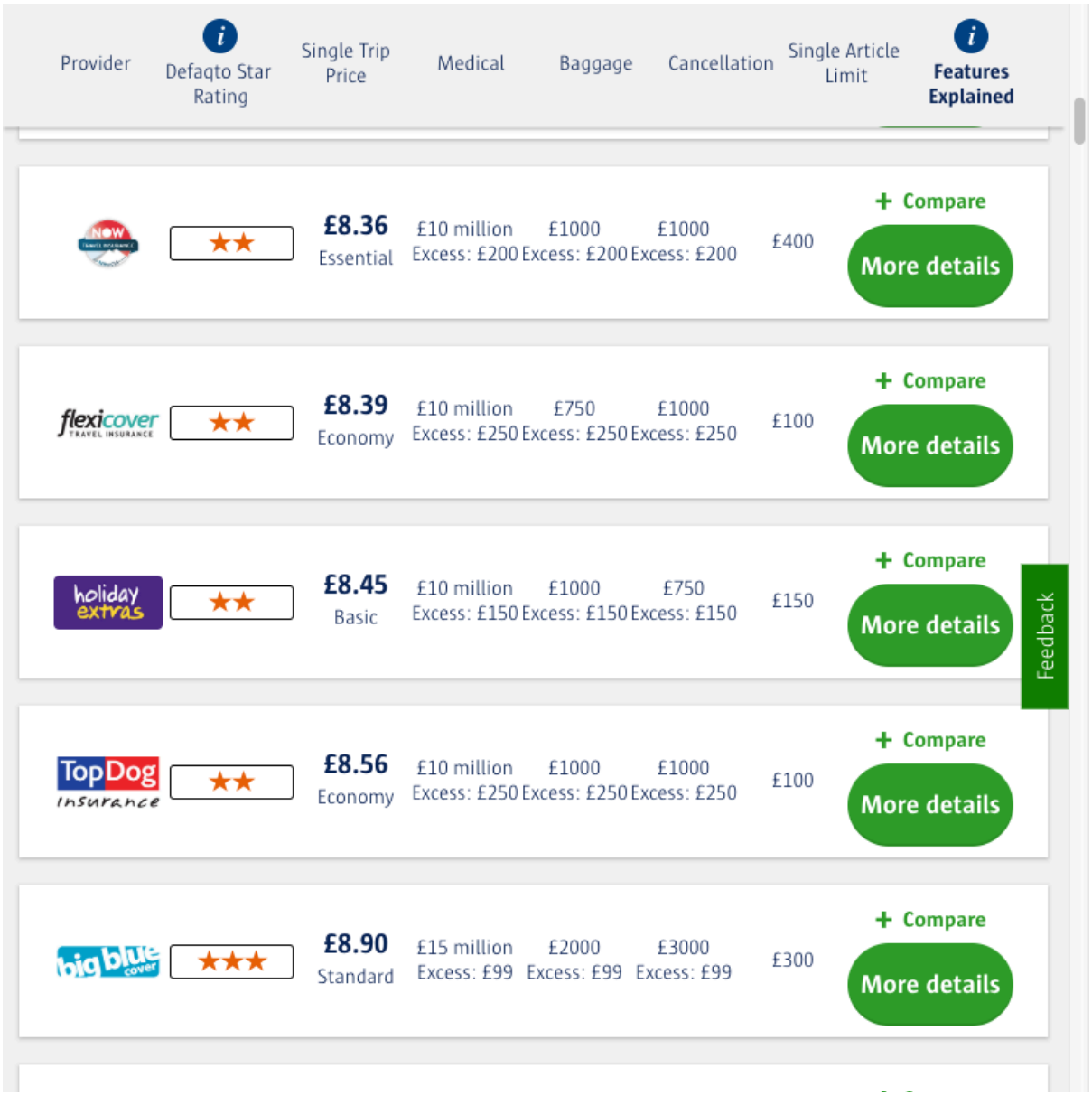
5b. If you need to specifically declare then it will tell you to do so. You should select **add a condition** and you will be able to search for your condition. You may be asked more questions about the condition which you should answer. This may add additional conditions on top of the one that you searched.



6. Then fill out basic account information and the website will search policies for you.

Understanding limits and excess

Most insurance comparison websites will give you something which looks like this screen:



The columns indicate the value or cost that the insurance provider would be willing to pay out maximum in the case of claim, or the **limit**.

The Money Advice Service recommends that you have at least £1 million worth of medical insurance, though the average claim is only £930.

Most policies will have an **excess**, this is the amount you will have to pay when you make the claim regardless of the cost of the claim.

Medication and prescriptions

You are responsible for making sure that you have your medication and you should follow the advice of the NHS and the government.

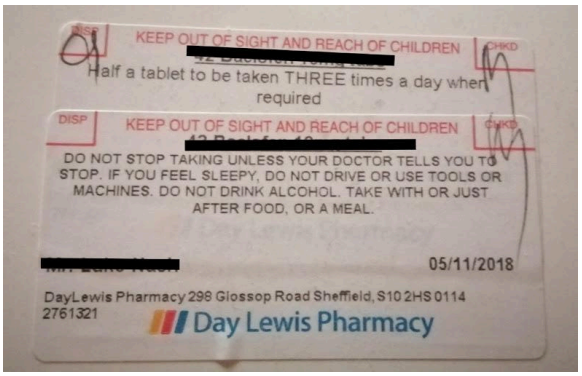
How much should I bring?

You should bring enough medication for the trip, plus for a few extra days, in case you stay longer on the trip due to a delay or emergency. If you are going on to do after travel, you should have medication to cover this period also.

For example:
Say you need take a tablet twice a day. Over a 2 day trip, you would need 4 tablets, but bring enough for 4 days (8 in total).

Other things to note

You should keep your medication in its original packaging with the original dispensing label, as shown below.



You should also keep your medication with you at all times and protect as though it were cash or your passport.

Accessibility

Accommodation

For Bummit, you should check that the accommodation that you have booked works for you.

Consider whether –

- It has disabled or accessible toilets
- You are able to get a room on the ground floor OR a room on a higher floor via a lift
- There is step free access to the lobby/reception
- It is close to restaurants and supermarkets
- It is close to a pharmacy, clinic or hospital

However, sometimes it won't be possible to find accommodation that is accessible and so it may be better to have somewhere which fulfils some of this than none at all.

Being dropped off

You may be dropped off somewhere which is not easy for you to get out of the car or vehicle. If this is the case, speak to the driver to get dropped off somewhere where you would feel comfortable being dropped off at.

Mental Health

You should speak to your GP, counsellor or mental health advisor before you go on the trip who will be able to talk through what support you may need.

If you need to speak to someone urgently you can speak to Samaritans and Nightline. You can also talk to us on the advice phone and we'll be there to listen. Remember you are not alone.

The following is advice from Mind on how to cope if your teammate experiences anxiety or a panic attack during the trip:

Try not to put pressure on your friend or family member to do more than they feel comfortable with. It's really important to be patient, listen to their wishes and take things at a pace that feels okay for them.

It's understandable to feel frightened if someone you care about experiences a panic attack – especially if it seems to happen without warning. But it can help if you:

- try to stay calm
- gently let them know that you think they might be having a panic attack and that you are there for them
- encourage them to breathe slowly and deeply – it can help to count out loud, or ask them to watch while you gently raise your arm up and down
- encourage them to stamp their feet on the spot
- encourage them to sit somewhere quietly until they feel better.

You should never encourage someone to breathe into a paper bag during a panic attack. This isn't recommended and it might not be safe.

Contact us

Website	**www.bummit.co.uk**
Committee	bummit@sheffield.ac.uk **fb.com/bummit**
EEI Officer	bummit.eei@gmail.com
Lucy Coull (Students' Union)	lucy.coull@sheffield.ac.uk

Links, useful webpages and contact details

Money Advice Service

Travel Insurance for over 65s and medical conditions
(https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/travel-insurance-for-over-65s-and-medical-conditions#travel-insurance-if-you-have-a-medical-condition)

What does a good policy look like?
(https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/a-good-travel-insurance-policy)

Money Saving Expert

Pre-existing Travel Insurance
(https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/insurance/pre-existing-travel-insurance/)

University of Sheffield

Disability & Dyslexia Support Service	**www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/disability** **call 0114 222 1303**
University Health Service	**www.sheffield.ac.uk/health** **call 0114 222 2100**
Counselling Service	**www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/counselling** **call 0114 222 4134**

Students' Union

Welcome desk	**call 0114 222 8500** **email studentsunion@sheffield.ac.uk**
Student Advice Centre	**call 0144 222 8530** **email advice@sheffield.ac.uk**

Crisis hotlines

Samaritans	**call +44 116 123** (free in UK, 24 hours a day) **Call +44 114 276 7277** (local call charge, 10am to 10pm) **email jo@samartians.org** (24 hours a day) **www.samaritans.org**
Nightline	**call +44 114 222 8787** (call local charge, 8pm to 8am)

skype sheffieldnlskype (free even abroad, 8pm to 8am)
instant messenger service available
www.sheffieldnightline.co.uk

Togetherall

You may also want to consider online support, such as Togetherall:
https://togetherall.com/en-gb/