



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on January 18, 2023

Ukrainian Refugees Go Home for Healthcare They Can't Get From U.K.'s Socialist System

The United Kingdom's socialist healthcare system is so bad that Ukrainian refugees are returning to their war-torn homeland for medical treatment.

"Due [to] the NHS [National Health Service] pressures and long waiting lists for procedures, Ukrainians living with families across the UK are taking the perilous trip back into a war zone where they are treated by doctors immediately despite Russian bombardments of their towns and cities," [reported David Parsley of inews.co.uk](#).

According to Parsley, "Soon after President Vladimir Putin sent Russian troops into Ukraine on 24 February last year, the UK Government announced that all refugees from the country would be permitted free and full access to NHS services."

Of course, as with anything that appears to be free, the NHS is overused and stretched to the breaking point. Adding [over 150,000](#) more potential patients to its rolls overnight could only exacerbate its problems.

Former Kyiv resident Maiia Habruk, who was staying with a couple in southeast London, sought treatment from her local hospital. Parsley recounted her story:

Ms. Habruk, 31, suffers from angina and, despite experiencing chest pains was unable to book a face-to-face appointment with a GP. During a phone consultation she was told to take paracetamol, but the pain persisted.

Soon after this, Ms. Habruk also suffered from severe pain in her cheek and waited four hours in local [emergency] department before getting to the front of the queue.

"I had hellish pain in my face," said Maiia. "I couldn't sleep, and the painkillers didn't work.

"I went to the NHS chatroom online and I was told to wait for a call the following day, but the call did not happen, so I went to the hospital.

"After waiting four hours the doctor didn't even look at me and she also told me to take paracetamol. Again, it didn't help, and I was still in severe pain."

She decided the only way to get the treatment she believed she required was to make the 24-hour trip back to Ukraine, which includes a flight to Poland and a long and dangerous train journey to Kyiv.



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Once she arrived, a doctor immediately extracted an inflamed wisdom tooth.

Similarly, Maria, a 22-year-old Ukrainian who was living in Scotland, decided to return to her native land to get her thyroid condition treated after learning how long it would take to get the same treatment from the NHS.

Habruk told Parsley she “knows three other Ukrainians in London” who went home for healthcare because of the NHS’s delays.

“These people were engaging in cost-benefit analysis. They compared the risk of death, injury, or suffering from Russian bombs to the risk of death, injury, or suffering from languishing on a waiting list in the United Kingdom,” [observed economist Dan Mitchell](#). “And they decided Russian bombs were the better option.”

Who can blame them? Mitchell quoted a recent [Wall Street Journal piece](#) detailing the NHS’s abysmal record:

Waiting times for ambulances for the most serious calls are getting longer, with the average response time reaching 10 minutes 57 seconds in December, compared to a target of seven. Once patients reach the emergency room, 35% now face waits above four hours.... As of November, some 7.2 million patients have been referred for treatment but are waiting for it to start. Of those, 2.9 million have been waiting more than 18 weeks.... Excess deaths in 2022 were the most since 1951, excluding the pandemic.

As the *Telegraph*’s [Allister Heath](#) put it, “The NHS is finished.”

Unfortunately, few seem interested in the only genuine solution to the NHS’s woes: scrapping the whole system and letting the free market deliver healthcare. Members of the out-of-power Labor and Liberal Democrat parties, naturally, provided acrimonious remarks for Parsley’s article, but their only solution is to throw more money at the problem. Heath recommended replacing the NHS with a “modern, non-ideological, public-private, universal health service.”

But the award for the individual most blinded by the promises of socialism despite its results goes to Habruk. After taking her chances on returning to Ukraine for treatment she couldn’t get in the U.K., she told Parsley, “I do not in any way want to criticize the NHS. I think it’s amazing that everyone can get help for free.”



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