

Title:

Health Matters

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338

Summary:

I guess nobody likes thinking about what can go wrong with the recruitment process. We all like to think we are reasonable employers, offering a fair package in return for a professional job. Yet, we do operate in a market that is prone to certain complications. Think about it. We recruit mainly young teachers who travel a long way from their home and friends, perhaps to a country they don't know anything about. There you are: already you can see how emotionally vulnerable th...

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Teach English, Teaching English, Teaching English Overseas, ESL Jobs, ESL, TEFL, TESOL

Article Body:

I guess nobody likes thinking about what can go wrong with the recruitment process. We all like to think we are reasonable employers, offering a fair package in return for a professional job. Yet, we do operate in a market that is prone to certain complications. Think about it. We recruit mainly young teachers who travel a long way from their home and friends, perhaps to a country they don't know anything about. There you are: already you can see how emotionally vulnerable they are. And if all this causes them stress, they could more easily fall prey to physical illness, infection, be more accident prone.

Look, I'm not trying to be the pessimist here but I think we have to face the fact that the health of teachers is an important issue. At least, I believe a responsible employer should have health-protection measures in place as part of the recruitment package. Ideally, we should offer full health insurance together with provision to repatriate a teacher who needs to be back home for treatment and support.

Now I know that for some small schools this could prove expensive but that's no reason to duck the issue. If you genuinely can't offer this kind of protection as part of the deal, think of the alternatives. First make sure you explain to the teacher the kind of healthcare they will be entitled to from any national scheme that protects those working in your country. Secondly, advise them to

look at insurances that are available in their own country. Maybe they can find inexpensive insurance to cover them while they are working abroad. But please don't ignore the issue. It is deeply unpleasant to find oneself sick or injured in a foreign country and if, on top of that, inadequate provisions exist for treatment and care. The whole situation can become a nightmare. We owe it to our teachers to ensure that they are fully aware of the risks they run and the protection that they can expect or should obtain.