DCS and young children, a borderline situation.

Wishing to spend a relaxing holiday on the Red Sea with her numerous family, last November a 47-yearold Dutch woman went to Marsa Alam with her husband and four children, all minors. Unfortunately, after a series of repeated dives to a depth of 32 metres, the woman became affected with all the unpleasant symptoms of inner ear DCS – Decompression Sickness: nausea, vomiting and dizziness. Alarmed, her husband got his wife's DAN membership card and called the DAN Europe hotline, which put him in touch with a Dutch mother tongue specialist doctor. As soon as the doctor was sure of the woman's symptoms, he issued a diagnosis of Type II DCS and immediately addressed the patient to the nearest hyperbaric centre, in this case the Baromedical in Marsa Alam.

The woman was insured with a Sport Silver policy and so DAN Europe took immediate charge of the case, covering the costs for her hyperbaric therapy: two six-hour treatments. Once the most urgent problem had been solved, there was that of the return home, planned for 21st November: diving medical protocols strongly advise against flying immediately after undergoing hyperbaric therapy, suggesting a minimum no-fly period of 72 hours. Therefore there was a need to stagger the family's return to The Netherlands, dividing the family into two groups: first the four children with an escort and then the husband and wife who couldn't leave any sooner.

Unfortunately, upon their return, the children would have had no relative ready to look after them, so they too had to stay longer. The cost for the children's prolonged stay was not covered by the insurance, nor was that of their airplane tickets. In light of this particular situation, through laborious negotiation and in exceptional circumstances, DAN Europe managed to extend the woman's insurance to also cover her children as it originally only included herself and her husband. The result: on last 26th November, with the patient in stable conditions, the whole family was able to return to The Netherlands together and without having to pay neither for the expensive hyperbaric treatment nor for the airplane tickets. They also had their extra hotel stay reimbursed, for a total cost of about 14,000 Euro. A case that, on one hand, highlights the remarkable service of DAN compared to other types of health insurance and welfare; on the other, it reiterates the need to choose an insurance plan suiting your actual needs, besides taking into consideration economic factors only.