

International students - A guide to The National Health Service (NHS)

The National Health Service (NHS) might seem very complicated if you have not used the system before. The NHS is a public funded system which provides health care for residents in the United Kingdom (UK).

1. Who is entitled to free health care treatment from the NHS?

You are entitled to free necessary treatment from the NHS if you are either:

- a full time student from any country on a course for more than 6 months
- studying on a course of any duration which is substantially funded by the UK Government
- from a country which is part of the European Union (EU) *
- from a country which is not from the European Union (EU) that has a bilateral agreement
- the husband or wife of any of the above and living here whilst your wife or husband is a student
- a dependent of any of the above: *A dependent is any child under 16 or under 19 if in full time education*

* If you are a student from another country in the European Union, here for less than 6 months, you will require a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) which must be obtained from your home country.

2. Will I need health care insurance?

If you are not covered by any of the above it is advisable to ensure you have adequate health care insurance as payment will be necessary if you receive any health care in this country.

The following services are free of charge for everyone:

- Emergency treatment in any Accident and Emergency department.
- Emergency treatment in any NHS Walk-in Centre providing Accident and Emergency type services.
- Treatment for certain infectious diseases.
- Compulsory psychiatric treatment.
- Family planning services (sexual health).

3. How do I register for health care?

To access health care you will need to register with a General Practitioner (GP) doctor. Most GPs work in a health centre. GPs are general doctors who have specialised in family health. He or she is therefore qualified to see anyone from small babies to the elderly.

4. Will I have to pay to register?

- Registration is free
- You can only be registered with one GP/health centre at any time.

If you are exempt from NHS Charges and require hospital care you will need to provide your passport, visa, NHS card and proof of attendance at university.