Health

The UK has a National Health Service (NHS) which provides its residents with various healthcare services. Please refer to the information below for information about these services and to find out you are entitled to use them.

What free treatment does the UK National Health Service (NHS) provide to everyone?

Some NHS services are free to everyone, these include:

- Emergency treatment (but not follow-up treatment)
- Treatment of certain communicable (contagious) diseases
- Compulsory psychiatric treatment
- Family planning services (contraception)

Am I entitled to other free treatment?

You and your dependants will be entitled to additional free treatment if you fall under one of the following categories:

- Your course of study is for six months or more, whatever your nationality;
- Your course of study is less than six months, and you are a European Economic Area national. (In which case you will need to get apply for a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) in your country of residence to prove that you are entitled to free treatment)

You will be entitled to the access the following services for free:

- GP (doctor) services such as appointments with a doctor or nurse and use of doctor's clinics
- Hospital treatment both emergency and non-emergency

If you are not in the categories above, we strongly advise you to take out medical insurance for your stay.

Some countries have reciprocal health arrangements with the UK which entitle you to free hospital treatment. You can check if this applies to your country by checking the list of **participating countries (http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/student/info_sheets/keeping_healthy.php#reciprocal)** .

What will I have to pay for?

Even if you are entitled to free treatment, you may need to pay for:

- Some GP (doctor) services (eg certain vaccinations)
- Dental and optical treatment
- Medicines prescribed by your GP (doctor)

If you are on low income you may qualify for free prescriptions for medicines and for help with the cost of your glasses or dental treatment. To see if you qualify you will need to complete a HC1 form available from the **ARC in the Guild of Students (http://www.guildofstudents.com/support/thearc/)** . Health benefits do not count as "recourse to public funds" for the purpose of your visa, so claiming health benefits will not affect your immigration status. Detailed information on help with your medical expenses is available on the **UKCISA website (http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/student/info_sheets/keeping_healthy.php#intro_healthy)** .

If you cannot get free NHS prescriptions and you will be receiving prescriptions on a regular basis, you could reduce your costs by purchasing a prepayment certificate. This certificate allows you to pay a set amount no matter how many NHS prescriptions you have. If you think you will have to pay for more than 5 prescription items in 4 months or 14 items in 12 months, you may find it cheaper to buy a prepayment certificate (PPC). You can get a prepayment certificate application form from most Post Offices or **apply for a prepayment certificate online (https://www.ppa.org.uk/ppa/ppcdd/patient.do)** .

Registering with a doctor or dentist

You should register with a doctor and a dentist near where you live when you arrive. You can **find a local doctor or dentist (http://www.nhs.uk/servicedirectories/Pages/ServiceSearch.aspx)** using the NHS website and there is also **university doctor (http://www.theump.co.uk/)** and **dentist (http://universitydental.co.uk/)** you can register with.

You will need to show your offer letter or enrolment letter to show that you are a student. You can ask for a female doctor if you prefer.

Some doctors and many dentists do not have the space to register new NHS patients, so you may need to go to more than one place before you find someone who can register you.

In an emergency

In a medical emergency you should telephone 999. The call is free.

The nearest Accident and Emergency (A&E) department to the University is at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, near the University train station. If you have an accident or urgent medical problem you can go to the A&E department to be seen by a doctor. You do not need to make an appointment, but you may have to wait several hours as people are seen depending on the urgency of their medical situation.

If you need medical help but it is not an emergency and your Doctor is unavailable, you may want to use an NHS walk-in centre where you can be seen by a nurse, for further information please see the **NHS Walk-In website (http://www.nhs.uk/ServiceDirectories/Pages/WalkInCentre.aspx?id=YDC02)** .

Where can I find out more?

You can find out more about any of the issues above, and get advice on staying healthy in the UK, in **UKCISA Keeping Healthy Guide (http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/student/info_sheets/keeping_healthy.php)** .

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