

If you are not sure if you are entitled to free hospital treatment

Please ask to talk to the Overseas Visitors Manager if you are unsure whether you are entitled to free hospital treatment. All patients admitted to hospital are required to provide evidence of entitlement and the Overseas Visitors Manager can advise you of what documentation is acceptable.

For Further Information

Please contact the [Overseas Visitors Manager](#).



Healthcare Entitlement for Non-EEA Nationals



Disclaimer

This leaflet is a general guide and is not a full statement of the current regulations. Please ask at the hospital providing treatment for further information or see the Department of Health website at www.dh.gov.uk/overseasvisitors.

NHS Hospital Entitlement for Non-EEA Nationals

This leaflet has been compiled to explain the entitlement requirements for free NHS hospital treatment for Non-EEA nationals.

- **The NHS provides free hospital treatment to people who are and have the right to be permanent UK residents**
- **Evidence of residence and the right to live lawfully in the UK is required to access free hospital treatment**
- **Non-EEA visitors must pay for hospital treatment unless their home country has a bilateral healthcare agreement with the UK or an exemption applies**
- **If you are employed or studying in the UK you might be entitled to free hospital treatment**
- **Refugees and those asylum seekers whose formal applications to the Home Office are still being considered are entitled to free hospital treatment**

Entitlement to Free Hospital Treatment

The National Health Service (NHS) only provides free hospital treatment for people who live lawfully in the United Kingdom. People who do not normally live in this country are not automatically entitled to use the NHS free of charge – regardless of their nationality or whether they hold a British Passport or have lived and paid National Insurance contributions and taxes in this country in the past. All patients admitted to hospital, whatever nationality and residency, are subject to scrutiny and need to provide correct information and evidence of entitlement if requested.

Permanent Residents in the UK

If you are a Non-EEA National with the legal right to have residency in the UK and are living in the UK on a settled basis then you should be prepared to provide evidence of this in order to receive free treatment. When the Hospital Trust is satisfied with the evidence free healthcare entitlement will be confirmed. Similarly, UK/EEA Nationals can be required to show evidence that they are living in the UK on a settled basis.

Other Areas of Entitlement to free Hospital Treatment

There are exemption from charge categories in addition to the permanent residence entitlement. However, as for permanent residence, the Hospital Trust needs to be satisfied with your entitlement, including sight of relevant documentary evidence. Exemptions include:

Employment

You need to be engaged in employment with an employer who has his principle place of business in the UK or is registered in the UK as a branch of an overseas employer. It is not sufficient to have the right to work here, you must show evidence of actually working.

If you are self employed you must show that the UK is your principle place of business.

Full time study

To be entitled to free hospital treatment you need to be able to show that you are pursuing a full time course of study of not less than six months duration, or, if less, a full time course which is funded either wholly or substantially by the UK government. Please note that if you are spending a few hours a week learning English you are classed as a visitor and may be charged for healthcare.

Refugees and asylum seekers

Asylum seekers who have made formal applications with the Home Office which have not yet been determined are exempt from charges. A refugee is someone who has been granted asylum in this country.

Nationals and Residents Visiting from Countries with Bilateral Agreements with the UK

If you are a resident of a country with a bilateral healthcare agreement with the UK, you might be entitled to free healthcare the need for which arises during your visit here. The countries with bilateral agreements are:

Anguilla	Kyrgyzstan*
Armenia*	Macedonia*
Australia	Moldova*
Azerbaijan*	Montenegro*
Barbados	Montserrat
Belarus*	New Zealand*
Bosnia*	Russia*
British Virgin Islands	Serbia*
Croatia*	St. Helena
Falkland Islands	Tajikistan*
Georgia*	Turkmenistan*
Gibraltar*	Turks and Caicos Islands
Isle of Man**	Ukraine*
Kazakhstan*	Uzbekistan*

*These countries have agreements covering their nationals and UK nationals only. The others cover all residents, irrespective of nationality. If you are from one of these countries and think you might qualify for free hospital treatment please contact the Hospital Trust Overseas Visitors Manager.

** please note the Isle of Man Bilateral Agreement is due to end on the 1st April 2010.

