

How the NHS works: a guide for migrants



You can contact the 24-hour service **NHS free phone line** by dialling **111** to get free health information and advice. You can ask for an **interpreter in your language** by saying "interpreter please."



Pharmacy



Pharmacists can offer clinical advice and medicines for a range of minor illnesses, such as coughs, colds, sore throats, tummy trouble and aches and pains. The pharmacist will let you know if you need to visit a doctor or direct you to other healthcare professionals to make sure you get the help you need. You can also buy medicines for minor illnesses or first-aid supplies in a pharmacy or supermarket; to find the nearest pharmacy, go to: www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy.



Basic medicines

Dentists and Opticians



- Find a dentist www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist
- Find an optician www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/opticians/

If your tooth is painful you should call **111** for **Urgent Dental Care Services**



Teeth and eye care

GP practice or medical centre



A GP can offer medical advice, provide a diagnosis and prescribe medicines. They might be your first point of contact for many physical and mental health concerns. The GP practice is also responsible for coordinating and managing your long term healthcare and they can refer you if you need more specialised hospital services. It is best to register with a GP practice to meet your ongoing health needs. www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery/



Medical management, coordination of long term care and access to hospital specialists

Community health services



Some health services are accessed in the community, and not in hospitals. These include mental health, child health and antenatal services and sexual health and family planning clinics.



Pregnancy, child health, contraception services

Walk-in or Urgent Treatment centres



If you need urgent medical care for minor injuries such as cuts, sprains and small fractures, or urgent medical advice, you can directly go to a walk-in or urgent care centre without an appointment. These centres are usually open during daytime hours.



Minor injuries or urgent medical advice

Emergency services



Call **999** if someone is **seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk**. The telephone operator will advise you what to do or where to go next. An ambulance may be sent to provide treatment or transport the patient to hospital. Hospital Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments are open 24 hours every day of the year. You can access these services directly and without an appointment. www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care-services/when-to-call-999/



Medical emergency or life-threatening situation

Emergency mental health

If you have seriously harmed yourself or are about to do so, call **999** for an ambulance or go straight to A&E. **If you are thinking about suicide, talk to someone at the Samaritans by calling 116 123.**

Suicidal thoughts or serious self harm

Your rights to healthcare: a guide for migrants

Everyone has a right to register with a GP (General Practitioner)

You do not need proof of address, immigration status, ID or an NHS number.

Find your nearest GP practice and register online.

www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery/

If you are having difficulty registering with a GP you can:

- Download a GP Access Card and show this to the GP receptionist. www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/gp-access-cards/
- phone NHS England (0300 311 22 33) or Doctors of the World (0808 1647 686) for help



These health services are free for everyone



- GP advice and treatment
- Services that are provided as part of the **NHS 111 telephone advice line**



- **Accident and Emergency** services provided at an A&E department, **walk-in centre, minor injuries unit or urgent care centre**



- Diagnosis and treatment of some **infectious and sexually transmitted diseases**
- NHS services provided for **COVID-19** investigation, **diagnosis, treatment and vaccination**
- **Family planning** services (contraception)
- Treatment for a **physical or mental condition caused by torture, female genital mutilation, domestic violence or sexual violence**



Specialist health services are also free for:



- Refugees
- Asylum seekers
- Victims or suspected victims of Modern Slavery
- dependants

People whose application for asylum has been rejected may still have access to free NHS services. Check if you are entitled to free health care.

www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-entitlements-migrant-health-guide

Prescription medicines, dental and eye care are normally not free in England but asylum seekers who are financially supported by the Home Office will be given an HC2 certificate to get full help with these health costs. Anyone can apply for this support, see further advice on how to apply.

www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-entitlements-migrant-health-guide



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