

Help with Health Costs

HC11 Quick Guide for Students

If you are a student aged 19 or over and receive NHS treatment, you will be asked to pay a charge (health cost). This guide explains the help available with the following health costs and how to find local NHS services.



Prescriptions



Dental Treatment



Sight Tests



Glasses or contact lenses



Wigs and Fabric supports



Travel to receive NHS treatment under the care of a consultant

Students who are aged 16, 17 or 18 in full-time education*

If you are aged 16, 17 or 18 in full-time education*, then you are entitled to the following NHS items and services free of charge:

NHS Prescriptions

NHS Dental Treatment

Sight Tests

NHS Wigs and Fabric Supports

You are also entitled to vouchers towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses.

How to claim

To claim your entitlement, tell the practitioner that you think you don't have to pay when you have your treatment / examination. The practitioner will ask you for evidence and will ask you to sign a form.

NHS Charges

If you are a student aged 19 or over and receive NHS treatment you may have to pay a charge (health cost), for example a prescription charge. A full list of the charges is available at www.dh.gov.uk. Use the search facility to find document "HC12".

You are expected to use reasonable care to make sure that information given on a declaration for help with health costs is correct. Anyone found to have wrongly claimed help will have to pay a penalty charge of may face criminal prosecution.

If you are aged 19 or over, or need help with hospital travel costs, please read on.....

* the place you are studying must be registered with the Department for Education and Skills

People with certain medical conditions

People with certain medical conditions, are entitled to apply for an NHS Medical Exemption Certificate that will allow them free NHS prescriptions. The exempting conditions include, certain forms of diabetes, certain types of Epilepsy and certain thyroid conditions. A full list of conditions is available - see details below.

To view the full list of medical conditions, visit the following website:

www.ppa.nhs.uk

Alternatively, pick up leaflet HC11, Help with health costs from a Jobcentre Plus office or NHS hospital. Some practitioners also have them.

Pregnant women and those who have given birth in the last 12 months

Women who are pregnant or who have had a baby in the last 12 months are also entitled to apply for a certificate which will entitle them to free NHS prescriptions and NHS dental treatment.

For more information about this, contact your GP surgery or visit www.ppa.nhs.uk. Alternatively, telephone us and speak to an adviser:

0845 850 1166

(calls are charged at the local rate)

Note: When you have a dependent child you can claim Child Tax Credit. This may entitle you to help with health costs. You need to contact the Inland Revenue about this.

If you have a low income

If you have a dependent child, you can claim child tax credit. This may entitle you to help with health costs. You will need to contact the Inland Revenue about claiming this entitlement.

Otherwise

If you don't qualify for help on any of the grounds already mentioned, but you find it hard to pay health costs, you might be able to get some help under the **NHS Low Income Scheme**. This Scheme compares your weekly income at the time you make the claim with your weekly living costs (as set by the Government).

Many students, irrespective of nationality, who apply for help under the Low Income Scheme are entitled to full help with their health costs. However, not all students claim what they might be entitled to. Students who get **full help** get:

Free NHS prescriptions

Free NHS dental treatment

Free NHS sight tests

Free NHS Wigs and Fabric Supports

Vouchers towards the cost of glasses/contact lenses

A refund of the reasonable cost of travel to receive treatment under the care of a hospital consultant

Even those students who don't get these things free might still get help towards costs. For example, a student might be sent a certificate which says they have to pay the first £15.00 towards dental treatment. A course of NHS dental treatment could cost over £350 therefore the student would still get some help if they needed more than just a routine check-up.

Note: The amount of help that you are entitled to depends on your circumstances at the time you make your claim. For example, if you claim in term-time and live in rented accommodation, your rent will be included in the assessment. However, if you are claiming for charges already paid, your circumstances at the time you paid the charges are normally looked at.

How to claim

You need to complete form **HC1**. The form asks you to give details of your income and expenditure on things like rent. You are asked to provide copies of student loan notifications, grant/bursary awards and payslips. It is important that you send these documents with the form if you want it to be dealt with quickly.

Refunds

If you are paying NHS Prescription charges and you think that you might want to claim a refund ask the pharmacy for an NHS receipt (form FP57) at the time you pay the charge. The receipt tells you what you need to do to claim a refund.

If you have already paid other NHS charges or travel costs, you might be able to get some or all of your money back. Claims must be made within 3 months of the date you paid the charge. To claim a refund, you normally need to complete form HC5 and send it off with your receipt(s). The HC5 explains more about this.

How to get a form

You can get form **HC1** (claim for help with health costs) or form **HC5** (claim for a refund of health costs) from:

Your local students' union

Your local Jobcentre Plus Office

Your local NHS hospital

Some dentists and opticians

Online at www.ppa.nhs.uk - it will be posted to you

You can also get a form, advice on completing it, information or general advice by calling:

0845 850 1166

(calls are charged at the local rate)

Prescription Pre-payment

Prescription Pre-payment certificates (PPCs) help people who require large quantities of, or regular prescriptions to reduce the cost where they are not entitled to free prescriptions on other grounds. PPCs are available for 4 months or a year.

A PPC will save you money if you regularly need more than 1 prescription per month.

You can apply for a PPC:

On the internet at www.ppa.nhs.uk

By post using form FP95 available from your local pharmacy

From a pharmacy registered to sell PPCs (you can find a list of pharmacies registered to sell PPCs at www.ppa.nhs.uk)

You can check the price of a PPC or purchase one over the phone by calling:

0845 850 0030

(calls are charged at the local rate)

Getting Treatment

Finding a Doctor (GP)

If there is not a practice on campus, or you wish to be treated elsewhere, the local Primary Care Trust (PCT) will have a list of GPs. Information is also available on www.nhs.uk. This site will also give the contact details of your local PCT. You can also get information from NHS Direct by calling 0845 46 47.

Registering with a GP practice should be a straightforward process. You simply go to any practice in the area where you live and ask to be accepted as a patient. Registration can be made by completing a form which asks for personal details.

If you have problems finding a GP, your local PCT can allocate patients to a practice.

Finding a dentist

If there is not a dentist on campus, use www.nhs.uk to find one in your area. The site tells you which dentists are accepting NHS patients. You can also get information from NHS Direct by calling 0845 46 47.

Finding an Optician

There is no need to register with an optician. Simply choose a 'high street' optician for a sight test and 'shop around' for best value glasses or contact lenses.

Advice on what to do if you are ill

If you are ill and want to know what to do, call NHS direct on 0845 46 47 for advice. They will tell you if you should see a practitioner. Your pharmacist may also provide health advice.

Walk-in-centres are available to anyone - you don't have to be registered with a doctor. They are open all the year for extended hours. Contact details can be found on www.nhs.uk

PCTs also provide "out of hours" services. Some of these can be accessed via NHS Direct.

Emergency Treatment

Use the nearest Accident and Emergency department for critical or life threatening situations requiring medical attention, such as:

Loss of consciousness

Heavy blood loss

Suspected broken bones

Persistent chest pain for 15 minutes or more

Difficulty breathing

Overdose, ingestion or poisoning

If you are in any doubt, call 999 and ask for an ambulance.

Interpretation Services

If English is not your first language, a telephone interpreting service is provided on all of the telephone numbers shown in this leaflet. When you telephone any of these services, say in English or get a friend to say your preferred language and we will arrange an interpreter.

This will be done as quickly as possible.

Special Needs

This leaflet can also be made available by request in braille, on audio cassette, on disk and in large print.

All telephone numbers in this leaflet accept Tynetalk for people who are hard of hearing. This is operational Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm. However, for NHS Direct, it is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

This leaflet gives guidance about arrangements in England only and is not a definitive guide to the help available.

For more detailed information, pick up leaflet HC11 available at NHS hospitals. Some pharmacies, GP surgeries and opticians also stock them.

Or, go to the following website and use the search facility to access the leaflet:

www.dh.gov.uk

Alternatively, for further advice call the following helpline number and speak to an adviser:

0845 850 1166

(calls are charged at the local rate)