

## Overview

- This leaflet explains who has the right to receive free hospital treatment under the National Health Service (NHS). It also tells you about the kind of hospital care you may have to pay for.
- Please tell us if you have any difficulty reading this leaflet and we can try to arrange help for you to understand this document.
- For further information, please contact the **overseas visitors team** or see our website for advice:
  - Call 01273 696955 extension 67858
  - Email [selecthealthcare@bsuh.nhs.uk](mailto:selecthealthcare@bsuh.nhs.uk) or [bsu-tr.OVSandPPdept@nhs.net](mailto:bsu-tr.OVSandPPdept@nhs.net)
  - <https://www.bsuh.nhs.uk/your-visit/overseas-visitors/>

## General support

- For general medical advice please use the NHS website, the NHS 111 service, walk-in-centres, or your GP.
- The **NHS** website provides online health information and guidance [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- **NHS 111** phone line offers medical help and advice from trained advisers supported by nurses and paramedics. Available 24 hours a day. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.
- There are walk-in and urgent treatment services at Brighton Station, in Crawley and at Lewes Victoria Hospital. [www.bsuh.nhs.uk/services/ae/](http://www.bsuh.nhs.uk/services/ae/)
- **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** can be contacted with your comments and concerns, and to provide general support. [PALS@bsuh.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS@bsuh.nhs.uk)  
RSCH: 01273 664683  
PRH: 01444 448678  
PALS, Royal Sussex County Hospital,  
Eastern Road, Brighton BN2 5BE

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Disclaimer: The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.

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Brighton and Sussex  
University Hospitals  
NHS Trust

**Overseas Visitors**  
Advice for patients seen in the  
Emergency Department  
on hospital treatment  
and paying for care

### Emergency Department

Royal Sussex County Hospital  
Level 5, Thomas Kemp Tower,  
Eastern Road, Brighton BN2 5BE  
01273 696955 extn. 64261

Princess Royal Hospital  
Lewes Road, Haywards Heath RH16 4EX  
01444 448745

[www.bsuh.nhs.uk](http://www.bsuh.nhs.uk)



## What is the NHS?

- The NHS is a state-funded organisation which provides free hospital treatment to people who are legally living in the UK on a permanent basis. If you are not ordinarily resident in the UK, you may have to pay for your hospital treatment, even if you have a British passport, or have paid National Insurance contributions and taxes in this country in the past.

## How can I prove that I am entitled to free hospital treatment?

- In order to receive free hospital treatment, you will need to provide evidence that you are legally living within the UK.
- All patients admitted to this hospital, whatever their nationality and living status, are required to provide correct information when registering their details.
- If you are living in the UK on a settled basis then you should be prepared to provide evidence.

## What happens if I need to attend the accident and emergency department (A&E)?

- You will not be charged for treatment that you receive in the A&E department. However, this does not include emergency treatment given in any other department in the hospital.

## I am just visiting the UK. Do I definitely have to pay for treatment if I become unwell?

- No. There are a number of circumstances under which you might still be entitled to free healthcare:
  - If you are visiting the UK and you normally live in a country that has a bilateral healthcare agreement with the UK, you might be entitled to free healthcare if you become unwell during your visit to the UK.
  - If you are visiting the UK and you normally live in a country that is a member of the European Economic Area healthcare arrangement, you will be entitled to free healthcare, provided that you have a valid **European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)**. This card does not entitle you to pre-planned treatment – only emergency treatment.
  - If you have come from abroad to take up employment or studies in the UK, you might be entitled to free hospital treatment. However, it will not be enough to show your 'right to work'. You need to be able to show evidence that you are actually working for a UK-based employer. If you are in full-time study, you need to be able to show that you are attending a full-time course of not less than six months duration.

- If you are a refugee or an asylum seeker whose formal application to the UK Border Agency is still being considered, you will not have to pay hospital charges. A refugee is someone who has been granted asylum in this country. If you are a refugee or an asylum seeker you will still have to pay for all prescribed medications.

## If I am not eligible for free treatment, what will I have to pay for?

- You will be charged for any treatment given to you, by any member of staff in any of our services, both in the hospital or in the community. Exceptions may apply under certain circumstances, but we will discuss this with you if it applies to you.
- This leaflet is a general guide only and not intended to provide a full summary of the current regulations.

## How will I know if I have to pay?

- Our **overseas visitors team** can give you more information if you are not sure whether you are entitled to free hospital treatment. They can also advise you about which documents to use when you are asked for evidence of entitlement. Their contact details are on the reverse of this leaflet.