



Patient Information

Advice for Overseas Visitors and Those Who Live Abroad

The NHS is not free to everyone and overseas visitors must be charged for specified NHS services, including admission to hospital whether planned or as an emergency (outside of the A&E Department). We will therefore ask you to provide us with information and certain documents to support your claim for free treatment.

Department of Health Charging Regulations place a legal obligation on the Trust to recover the costs of NHS services where an individual is not entitled to free treatment.

Background:

Hospital treatment is free to people classed as ordinarily resident in the UK, which means you must be living lawfully in the UK on a settled basis. This is not dependent on nationality, payment of UK taxes, National Insurance contributions, being registered with a General Practitioner (GP), having a NHS number or owning property in the UK.

You may be asked to fill in a Status Information Form, which is used by us to find out some basic information about you. We ask that you complete all pages of the form and provide as much detail as possible. This will help us to decide whether you are entitled to free NHS treatment.

You may also be asked to provide documents to prove your identity and residency. These could include passport, Biometric Residence Permit (BRP), European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), visa, council tax bill, utility bills, tenancy agreement, shipping documents and employment contract.



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European Economic Area (EEA) Patients:

If you are a visitor from within the EEA we ask that you bring your EHIC with you. If you do not have an EHIC and are either visiting the UK or here temporarily, for example studying or on a short-term employment contract, then you will need to pay for your treatment.



Non-EEA Patients:

If you have been granted Indefinite Leave to Remain or have paid the Health Surcharge when your visa was granted then you should be entitled to free NHS treatment. You may need to provide your Biometric Residence Permit and other documents as proof of your status.



British Citizens:

Please be aware that being British does not automatically entitle you to free NHS treatment. If you usually live abroad you are likely to have to pay for your treatment.

Chargeable Patients:

If we are unable to verify your entitlement to free NHS treatment or we establish that you are a chargeable patient, you will need to pay for your treatment before you receive it. This charge will be based on your initial clinical diagnosis and expected treatment plan. Any over-payment will be refunded once the final invoice has been issued.

If you have travel or medical insurance you will still be charged directly for the costs of your treatment and you must claim from your insurer.

If you are unable to pay up-front, you will not be refused immediately necessary or urgent treatment (to be determined by the Clinical Team responsible for your care) but you will still be charged.

Failure to pay in advance for non-urgent treatment means your treatment will be cancelled until payment has been received.

Payment:

Payment can be made by cash, credit or debit card or by bank transfer. Please



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contact us on the number below for details.

Please be aware that this Trust actively manages the collection of outstanding debts and any invoices not paid within two months of the invoice date will be referred to a debt collection agency for recovery.

Under the terms of the Charging Regulations the NHS is obliged to inform the Home Office of unpaid debts and this information could affect your right to enter or remain in the UK and any future visa applications you may make.

The National Health Service Act 2006 and the National Health Service (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 2018 determine the criteria for those who should pay for NHS treatment.

If you have any questions or require advice please contact:

Overseas Visitors Team
Cashiers Office
Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Marlborough Road
Swindon
SN3 6BB
Tel: 01793 604467

Monday – Friday 9.30 – 16.00

From 1st January 2019 smoking will not be permitted on any NHS site in England. Smoking will not be permitted within any of our buildings or anywhere outside on our sites. Smoking facilities will not be provided. Please be considerate of others when vaping in hospital grounds.

This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email gwh.pals@nhs.net

Document Control

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