

Healthcare information for visitors and students from the European Union (EU)



This leaflet provides information for all residents of EU countries* (including British citizens living in one of these countries) who may wish to use the National Health Service (NHS) while visiting England.

For information on visitors from Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland please see <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/visiting-or-moving-to-england/visitors-from-eu-countries-norway-iceland-liechtenstein-or-switzerland/>

If you are visiting England on holiday or to study, please bring a valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) issued by your home country with you, otherwise you may be charged for any NHS hospital or secondary care treatment you need. An EHIC covers all immediate and clinically necessary treatment during your visit until your return home.

If you cannot provide either a valid EHIC or a Provisional Replacement Certificate (PRC) you may have to pay for your treatment if you are not resident in the UK and are not exempt for any other reason.

*Find out if your country is part of the EHIC scheme. Details are on the back of this leaflet

Why bring a European Healthcare Insurance Card (EHIC)?

People who do not normally live in this country are not automatically entitled to use the NHS for free. All people using the NHS need to be prepared to provide satisfactory documentary evidence of entitlement in order to receive free hospital care, otherwise they may be charged for their treatment.

If you are resident in an EU member state, including if you are a UK national, and are visiting or studying in England, you can access free NHS treatment that is medically necessary during your stay by showing a valid EHIC issued by your home country. This allows the UK to recover the cost of your care from your country of residence.

What treatment is covered by an EHIC?

All treatment that is medically necessary before your planned date of return is covered as long as you have a valid EHIC. In other words, an EHIC covers treatment which cannot wait until your return to your home country. This includes treatment of pre-existing medical conditions and routine maternity care, providing the reason for your visit to the UK is not specifically to give birth. An NHS medical professional needs to make a medical decision on whether the treatment is medically necessary in this context.

The EHIC is not an alternative to travel insurance. It will not cover any private medical healthcare, being flown back home, or lost or stolen property. The government always advises visitors to the UK to take out travel or health insurance. Check your insurance has the necessary healthcare coverage to make sure you can get the treatment you need during your visit.

Lost or forgotten your EHIC?

If you have lost your EHIC, forgotten to bring it with you or it has been stolen whilst in England, and you need hospital treatment, you should apply for a

Provisional Replacement Certificate (PRC) from your home country immediately.

Do not have a valid EHIC or cannot obtain a PRC?

If you cannot show a valid EHIC or PRC you may be charged for your hospital care during your visit, and depending on the urgency, you may be asked to pay any charges before being treated. Most EU permanent residents will be able to obtain a refund for all or part of their treatment when they return home from their healthcare provider.

Holders of a registered S1 form

If you are living in an EEA country or Switzerland and your healthcare is paid for by the UK, by virtue of a valid UK S1 form that you have registered in your country of residence, you may have the right to return to England to receive treatment in the same way as someone ordinarily resident in England.

For more information on UK S1s please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-for-eu-and-efta-citizens-visiting-the-uk#uk-nationals-who-no-longer-live-in-the-uk>

You will need to show a copy of your S1 when seeking treatment. For more information on how to access treatment, you should contact the NHS provider directly as their requirements may vary.

This information also applies to family members of the principal S1 holder who are registered on the S1 form (unless they are entitled to hold a non-UK EHIC).

Planned treatment S2 Form

If you are coming to England for planned treatment you will need to make arrangements yourself in advance. Planned treatment is not covered by the EHIC and unless you have valid documentation you may be charged for treatment. You can access planned treatment without charge in England by obtaining an S2 form from your health care provider in your home country.

Visits of longer than 6 months

From 1 January 2021, you will generally have to pay the immigration health surcharge when applying for a visa to come to the UK for six months or more. This entitles you to NHS-funded healthcare on broadly the same basis as someone who is ordinarily resident, from the date your visa is granted and for as long as it remains valid. You must pay for those services for which a UK ordinary resident must also pay, such as dentistry and prescriptions in England, and assisted conception services.

If your UK visa starts on or after 1 January 2021 and you have registered an S1 document issued to you by an EU member state, you may be eligible for a full or partial refund of your immigration health surcharge payment.

If you are a student from the EU and have paid the Immigration Health Surcharge as part of your student visa application, you may be eligible for a reimbursement from 2022.

Please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application/refunds> for more information.

Need more information?

Please visit NHS.UK for more information on how to access NHS healthcare services.

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/visiting-or-moving-to-england/how-to-access-nhs-services-in-england-if-you-are-visiting-from-abroad/>

Details on how to obtain an EHIC can be found on the European Commission website.

<http://ec.europa.eu>

Or download the EHIC app for your smartphone.

EU Countries

*Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.