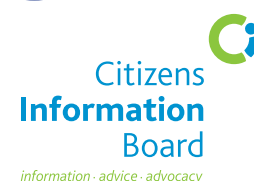


Borderwise: Health

Organisation of Health Services

This information sheet aims to provide a general overview of the health services which are available in Northern Ireland. In the UK healthcare is provided through the National Health Service (NHS) and most NHS care is free. In Northern Ireland (NI) healthcare is provided by the Department of Health, Social Services, and public safety (DHSSPS) which is the equivalent of the NHS. While a private health care sector exists, the public health service is used by the vast majority of people.



How do I register for health services?

When you arrive in NI you must register with a General Practitioner (GP) at your local health centre to use the health service (except emergency services).



Medical Card

When you register with a GP practice you will have to fill in a form – HS22X. You will receive a medical card and you can use this card to register with a dentist or with different GP if you move to another area. Frontier workers resident in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) and employed in the North are entitled to a medical card and to avail of the National Health Service (NHS).

What types of treatment am I entitled to?

GP services

You are entitled to free GP services;

- If you are living in NI
- If you are looking for work in NI
- If you are living in ROI and working in NI
- If you are living in ROI and become ill on a temporary visit to NI

Irish citizens do not need any specific documents but other EU/EEA nationals who are looking for work should have Form E301 with them. Other EU/EEA nationals who are visiting the North should have their European Health Insurance Card (Form E101)

Emergency and immediately necessary treatment

Emergency and immediately necessary treatment is provided free of cost to everybody regardless of nationality.

Routine treatments (non-emergency services)

Routine treatments are provided free of cost to persons who live in NI.

The technical term for living in NI is being 'ordinarily resident' and includes migrant workers and refugees.

Going
North

Maternity Services

You may get free maternity services from your GP, a midwife in a hospital or local health clinic and an obstetrician in a hospital if necessary. Maternity services are available to frontier workers resident in the South and employed in the North.

Hospital services

Hospital in-patient and out-patient services are free of charge. Generally, you must be referred by a GP. In emergencies you may go to the Accident and Emergency Department. Some hospitals have minor injury units which you may attend without a GP referral.

Community Care Services

Community care services for people who need them are provided by the various trusts. There is a range of services available including health visitors, district nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, domiciliary care and domiciliary meals.

What services do I pay for?

Although health care is provided free of charge, there are some services that usually need to be paid for. These include:

- Prescriptions
- Dental Services
- Ophthalmic Services

However you do not need to pay for these services if you:

- Are aged under 16 or aged 16-18 in full time education
- Are aged 60 or over
- Are pregnant or have had a baby in the last 12 months (you should get an exemption certificate from the CSA) Central Services Agency
- Have a listed medical condition (see leaflet HC11, available from main post offices, social security (jobs & benefits) offices and hospitals, for the current list – you should get an exemption certificate from the CSA if you have one of these conditions)
- You or your partner are getting Income Support, Income based Job Seeker's Allowance or are named on a tax credit exemption certificate or hold a HS Low Income Scheme Full Help Certificate (HC2)

If you are unsure about your entitlements seek advice from your local Social Security or Jobs & Benefits office.

Contact Details

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