

## Information for overseas visitors about hospital treatment and paying for care

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.

### 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, 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?**

**The Overseas Visitors Team can provide you with more detailed information if you are unsure whether you are entitled to free hospital treatment. You will be asked to provide evidence of entitlement – the Overseas Visitors team can advise you of what documents are acceptable.**

### **Contact Us:**

**The office is open Monday to Friday, from 8.30am to 4.30. They can be contacted as follows:**

**t: 01642 624350 . You can leave a voice message if no one is available to take your call.**