

Patient exemption checking

Communications toolkit for
dental teams in England

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Summary

From 1 September 2021, the temporary signature suspension was lifted. This means that any time a patient makes a declaration that they are entitled to free or reduced cost NHS dental treatment, they must complete and sign a declaration form (FP17PR) before any treatment begins and provide evidence.

More information and full guidance is available on the ***NHSBSA website***.

Key messages

- From 1 September 2021, any time a patient makes a declaration that they are entitled to free or reduced cost NHS dental treatment, the dental team must ask them to complete and sign a declaration form (FP17PR) before any treatment begins and to produce evidence.
- **Visit our website** for information and guidance on patient exemptions.
- If a patient incorrectly claims free or reduced cost NHS dental treatment and they subsequently aren't able to prove their exemption, they're at risk of getting a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) of up to £100, as well as the cost of the original treatment.
- Receiving a PCN incorrectly can cause inconvenience and distress for a patient.

Short copy (123 words)

From 1 September 2021, any time a patient makes a declaration that they are entitled to free or reduced cost NHS dental treatment, the dental practice must ask them to complete and sign a declaration form (FP17PR) before any treatment begins, and to produce evidence.

The NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) has produced guidance to help primary care contractors understand their legislative requirements, follow the correct procedure, and provide support to patients.

Not all benefits entitle people to help with health costs. Patients can find out if they're entitled to free or reduced cost NHS dental treatment and help with other NHS costs using the online eligibility checker at **www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/check**

Full guidance and information for dentists is available on the ***NHSBSA website***.

Long copy (337 words)

From 1 September 2021, any time a patient makes a declaration that they are entitled to free or reduced cost NHS dental treatment, the dental practice must ask them to complete and sign a declaration form (FP17PR) before any treatment begins, and to produce evidence.

In response to the pandemic, and to help limit the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care approved a temporary measure in England to suspend the need for patients to sign for free or reduced cost NHS dental treatment. The suspension was initially for a period of five months and was later extended to 31 August 2021.

The aim of the suspension was to protect primary care staff and patients, avoid cross-contamination and help minimise the handling of paperwork when collecting medicines or receiving dental and eye care.

The temporary signature suspension has been lifted.

This means that, from 1 September 2021, any time a patient makes a declaration that they are entitled to free or reduced cost NHS dental treatment the dentist must:

- ask them to complete and sign a declaration form (FP17PR) before any treatment begins
- ask the patient to complete the 'Claim for free or reduced cost NHS dental services' section of the form, if they are entitled
- ask to see evidence of their eligibility
- note on their practice records if the patient shows a valid exemption certificate, along with the expiry date of the certificate.

To coincide with the move, the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) has produced guidance to help primary care contractors understand their legislative requirements and follow the correct procedures.

The rules around entitlement to free or reduced cost NHS dental treatment can be confusing. It's important to remember that not all benefits entitle people to help with their health costs.

Full guidance and information for NHS dentists is available on the ***NHSBSA website***.

For information about help with health costs, visit: ***www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-help-health-costs***

Information for patients about exemptions and the online eligibility checker can be found here: ***www.nhs.uk/CheckBeforeYouTick***

Suggested social media content

Suggested posts for communicating with dental teams:

- # Any time a patient makes a declaration that they are entitled to free or reduced cost NHS treatment, you must ask them to complete and sign a declaration form (FP17PR) before treatment begins, and to provide evidence.
Visit: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/dental-exemptions
- ♥ Is your patient exempt from paying for NHS dental treatment? The NHSBSA has produced guidance to help dentists understand their legislative requirements, follow the correct procedure, and provide support to patients.
Visit: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/dental-exemptions

Suggested posts for patient facing channels:

- # Not all benefits entitle people to free or reduced cost NHS dental treatment. Find out if you're entitled using the online eligibility checker:
www.nhs.uk/CheckBeforeYouTick
#CheckBeforeYouTick
- ♥ Are you entitled to free NHS dental treatment? Use the online eligibility checker to find out what you're entitled to. Learn more:
www.nhs.uk/CheckBeforeYouTick
#CheckBeforeYouTick

Social media images



Not all benefits entitle people to free or reduced cost NHS dental treatment.

Exemptions guidance for dentists:
www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/dental-exemptions

NHS
Business Services Authority

Download



Not all benefits entitle people to free or reduced cost NHS dental treatment

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Is your patient exempt from paying for NHS dental treatment?

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Download

Printable posters and leaflets

Patient-facing printable posters and leaflets are available to download from our website. These can be displayed in waiting rooms and high footfall areas.

Dental 'check before you tick' leaflet



NHS

Are you claiming free dental treatment?

Don't assume you're entitled.

If you claim when you're not entitled, even by mistake, you could face a **penalty charge of £100** plus the cost of your treatment.

See inside for more information.



Check before you tick

 Download

Dental 'check before you tick' easy read leaflet



NHS
Business Services Authority

Claiming free NHS dental care?



An easy read guide about who can have free NHS dental care and what happens if you wrongly claim.

 Download

Dental 'check before you tick' easy read poster



Claiming free NHS dental treatment?

If you claim free NHS dental treatment when you are not allowed it you will have to pay for your treatment and could be **fined up to £100**.

Even if you are not allowed free NHS dental treatment you might be able to get help with some costs.

Not all people on benefits are allowed free NHS dental treatment.

If you are sure that you are allowed free treatment, please **show proof** of this to the practice staff before signing the patient form.

If you don't know if you are allowed free NHS dental treatment, please pay for your treatment. You might be able to get your money back later.

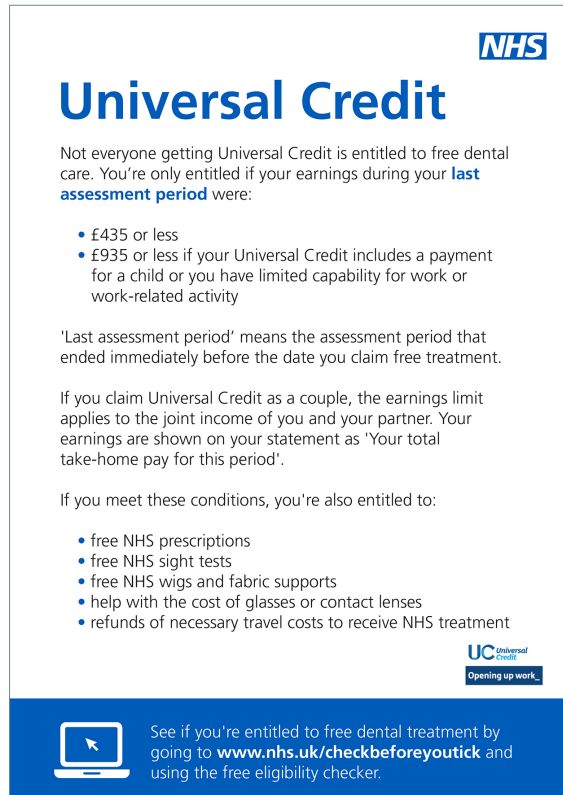
Please see the 'Claiming free NHS dental treatment?' easy read guide for more information

or visit: www.nhs.uk/nhsbsa.nhs.uk/healthcosts

You can also find us on Twitter: [@NHSHealthcosts](https://twitter.com/NHSHealthcosts)

 Download

Universal Credit A4 poster



The poster features the NHS logo in the top right corner. The title 'Universal Credit' is prominently displayed in a large blue font. Below the title, a paragraph explains that not everyone on Universal Credit is eligible for free dental care, and lists the income thresholds for eligibility. A bulleted list follows, detailing the specific conditions. A definition of 'last assessment period' is provided. Another paragraph explains the earnings limit for couples. A final paragraph states the additional benefits available if conditions are met, accompanied by another bulleted list. The 'UC Universal Credit Opening up work' logo is in the bottom right. A blue footer bar contains a laptop icon and text directing users to the NHS eligibility checker website.

NHS

Universal Credit

Not everyone getting Universal Credit is entitled to free dental care. You're only entitled if your earnings during your **last assessment period** were:

- £435 or less
- £935 or less if your Universal Credit includes a payment for a child or you have limited capability for work or work-related activity

'Last assessment period' means the assessment period that ended immediately before the date you claim free treatment.

If you claim Universal Credit as a couple, the earnings limit applies to the joint income of you and your partner. Your earnings are shown on your statement as 'Your total take-home pay for this period'.

If you meet these conditions, you're also entitled to:

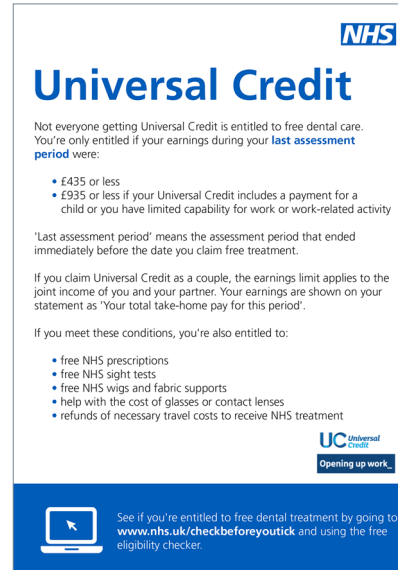
- free NHS prescriptions
- free NHS sight tests
- free NHS wigs and fabric supports
- help with the cost of glasses or contact lenses
- refunds of necessary travel costs to receive NHS treatment

UC Universal Credit
Opening up work

See if you're entitled to free dental treatment by going to www.nhs.uk/checkbeforeyoutick and using the free eligibility checker.



Universal Credit A5 flyer



The flyer features the NHS logo in the top right corner. The title 'Universal Credit' is prominently displayed in a large blue font. Below the title, a paragraph explains that not everyone on Universal Credit is eligible for free dental care, and lists the income thresholds for eligibility. A bulleted list follows, detailing the specific conditions. A definition of 'last assessment period' is provided. Another paragraph explains the earnings limit for couples. A final paragraph states the additional benefits available if conditions are met, accompanied by another bulleted list. The 'UC Universal Credit Opening up work' logo is in the bottom right. A blue footer bar contains a laptop icon and text directing users to the NHS eligibility checker website.

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UC Universal Credit
Opening up work

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Digital resources

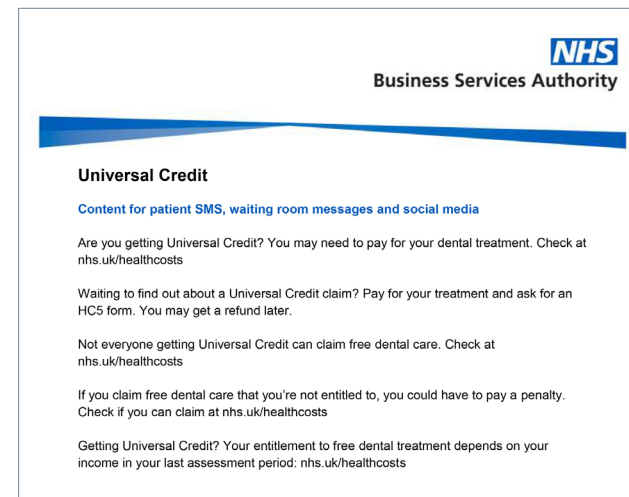
You can download digital resources to use across your digital platforms, including websites, social media channels and waiting room display screens.

Universal Credit waiting room screens



 Download

Universal Credit SMS and waiting room content



 Download

Contact

If you have any questions, comments or you receive any media enquiries, please contact the NHSBSA communications team:



communicationsteam@nhsbsa.nhs.uk