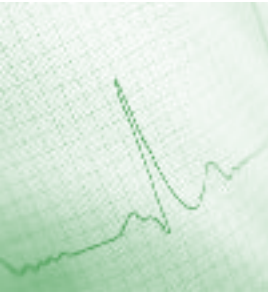




NHS Charges and The Low Income Scheme

- NHS dental treatment
- Sight tests, glasses and contact lenses
- Travel to hospital for NHS treatment



Introduction

This booklet gives guidance about NHS charging arrangements in Wales only.

Most NHS treatment is free, although there can be charges for some things. This booklet tells you what you are entitled to. It also tells you about the help you might get with the cost of the following if you are on a low income:

- NHS dental treatment;
- Sight tests;
- Glasses and contact lenses;
- Necessary costs of travel to and from hospital for NHS treatment under the care of a hospital consultant;

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

You can quickly check if you are entitled to free treatment by going to the Quick Check Guide which starts on page 6.

For more detailed guidance you need to go to pages 4-5 of this booklet and find the group you most easily fit into, then go to the page number shown (for example, if you are 60 or over, go to page 11).

After reading about the group that most applies to you, **check** to see if any others also apply (you may fit into more than one group).

For instance, you might be:

- 60 or over **and** also on a low income; or
- Pregnant **and** also have a specified medical condition.

If this applies to you, you need to make sure you read about both groups.

Introduction

When you have found the group or groups you belong to and what help you can get, go on to page 31. This tells you how to get help with NHS health costs when you go for treatment.

REFUNDS. You can also get information about refunds in this booklet – read page 35.

PENALTY CHARGES. If you are found to have made a wrongful claim for help with health costs, you will face penalty charges and may be prosecuted under powers introduced by the Health Act 1999.

CURRENT RATES. The current rates of NHS charges and optical voucher values are listed at www.healthcosts.wales.nhs.uk

THIS LEAFLET GIVES GENERAL GUIDANCE ONLY AND SHOULD NOT BE TREATED AS A COMPLETE AND AUTHORITATIVE STATEMENT OF LAW.

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Quick Check Guide

FREE PRESCRIPTIONS

You can get free NHS prescriptions dispensed in Wales if at the time the prescription is dispensed:

- You have a Welsh prescription form;
- You have an equivalent English (FP10) prescription form and a valid entitlement card. (see page 21); or
- You have an equivalent prescription form (e.g. English/Scottish) and are in one of the exemption categories listed on the reverse.
- You are not normally resident in Wales but in possession of a valid medical exemption certificate for the current list of prescribed medical conditions.

Welsh residents who have a valid Medical Exemption Certificate for a specified medical condition will not have to pay for their prescription irrespective of where in the UK they are issued or dispensed.

See page 22 for more information.

Also Supplied free:

- Medication administered at a hospital or Walk in Centre;
- Prescribed contraceptives, medication personally administered by a GP;
- Medication supplied by a hospital for the treatment of a sexually transmissible infection (STI).

FREE NHS DENTAL TREATMENT

You get free dental examinations if you are:

- Aged under 25 on the day you are examined in Wales; or
- Aged 60 or over on the day you are examined in Wales.

Quick Check Guide

You can get free NHS dental treatment if when the treatment starts you:

- Are aged under 18;
- Are aged 18 and in full time education;
- Are pregnant or have had a baby within the 12 months before treatment starts;
- Are an NHS in-patient and the treatment is carried out by the hospital dentist;
- Are an NHS Hospital Dental Service out-patient;*
- Are a Community Dental Service patient.*

**There may be a charge for dentures and bridges.*

Or, when the treatment starts or when the charge is made:

- You get or are included in an award of someone getting: Universal Credit, Income Support, or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Related Employment & Support Allowance or Pension Credit guarantee credit;
- You are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate;
- You are named on a valid HC2W certificate.

Partial help: if you are named on an HC3W certificate you might get some help towards the cost of your NHS dental treatment.

War pensioners – read page 29.

Any subsequent treatment as a result of the free examination carries the appropriate charge, unless you are entitled to treatment free of charge.

Quick Check Guide

FREE NHS SIGHT TESTS

You can get free sights tests if you:

- Are under 16;
- Are in full-time education and aged 16, 17 or 18;
- Are aged 60 or over;
- Are a diagnosed glaucoma patient;
- Are aged 40 or over and are a parent, brother, sister, son or daughter of a diagnosed glaucoma patient, or
- Have been advised by an ophthalmologist that you are at risk of glaucoma;
- Have been diagnosed as diabetic;
- Are registered blind or partially sighted;
- Need complex lenses;
- Are someone whose sight test is carried out through the hospital eye department as part of the management of your eye condition;
- Get or are included in an award of someone getting: Universal Credit, Income Support, or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related employment and support allowance, or Pension Credit guarantee credit;
- Are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate;
- Are named on a valid HC2W certificate.

Partial help: if you are named on a valid HC3W certificate you might get some help towards the cost of a private sight test.

War pensioners – read page 29.

Quick Check Guide

NHS VOUCHERS TOWARDS THE COST OF GLASSES OR CONTACT LENSES

You can get vouchers if you:

- Are under 16;
- Are in full-time education and aged 16, 17 or 18;
- Need complex lenses – read page 24;
- Get or are included in an award of someone getting: Universal Credit, Income Support, or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related employment and support allowance, or Pension Credit guarantee credit;
- Are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate;
- Are named on a valid HC2W certificate.

Partial help: if you are named on a valid HC3W certificate you might get some help.

NOTE: If your glasses or contact lenses cost more than your voucher value, you will have to pay the difference.

War pensioners – read page 29.

NHS VOUCHERS FOR REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT OF GLASSES OR CONTACT LENSES

You can get vouchers if you:

- Are under 16;

If you are 16 or over conditions apply – read page 24.

Quick Check Guide

NHS TRAVEL COSTS

You can get help with necessary travel costs to receive NHS treatment under the care of a consultant, if you:

- Are included in the assessment of someone getting:
 - Income Support
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (Incapacity Benefit, Universal Credit, or Disability Living Allowance do not count as they are not income related)
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Pension Credit Guarantee Credit
- Are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate
- Are named on a valid HC2W certificate (includes travel by your dependent children)
- Are a war pensioner and the treatment is for your accepted disablement

Children under 16 and those aged 16 to 18 – read page 28

Partial help: If you are named on a valid HC3W certificate you might get some help.

Age Groups

YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN WALES

You get free:

- NHS dental examinations carried out in Wales before your 25th birthday. Any subsequent treatment as a result of the free examination carries the appropriate charge.
- NHS sight tests if you are under 16 or aged 16,17 or 18 and in full-time education.



PEOPLE AGED 60 OR OVER IN WALES

You get free:

- NHS sight tests;
- NHS dental examinations carried out in Wales. Any subsequent treatment as a result of the free examination carries the appropriate charge.

If you need help with other health costs, check to see if you fit into any of the groups on pages 4-5.

Income Groups

PEOPLE GETTING THE FOLLOWING BENEFITS:

Either you or your partner may be getting the benefit or credit.

INCOME SUPPORT (IS)

You and your partner get free:

- NHS dental treatment;
- NHS sight tests.

You also get:

- A voucher towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses;
- Refunds of necessary travel costs to and from hospital for NHS treatment for you, your partner and any dependent children and young people under 20.

If you are waiting for your IS claim to be settled and need help urgently with any health costs – read page 18.

PENSION CREDIT GUARANTEE CREDIT (PCGC)

If you get PCGC read the information for people who get Income Support.

If you are aged under 60 and your partner gets PCGC, you should also read the Income Support information.

IMPORTANT: If you only get Pension Credit savings credit on its own, this does not entitle you to help with health costs. If you have to pay health costs, check to see if you are in any of the other groups listed on pages 4-5. Or you might be able to get help if you are on a low income – read page 17.

Income Groups

INCOME-BASED JOB SEEKER'S ALLOWANCE – JSA (IB)

You and your partner are entitled to the same things as people getting Income Support. If you get JSA (IB) read the information for people who get Income Support.

CONTRIBUTION-BASED JSA – JSA(C)

IMPORTANT: On its own, JSA(C) does not entitle you to help with health costs. If you have to pay health costs, check to see if you are in any of the groups listed on pages 4-5. Or you might be able to get help if you are on a low income – read page 16.

If you are not sure about the type of JSA you are getting, ask at your Jobcentre Plus office.

If you are waiting for your JSA claim to be settled and need help urgently with any health costs, read page 17.

CONTRIBUTION-BASED EMPLOYMENT & SUPPORT ALLOWANCE ESA(C)

IMPORTANT: On its own, ESA(C) does not entitle you to help with health costs. If you have to pay health costs, check to see if you are in any of the groups listed on pages 4-5. You may be able to get help if you are on a low income – read pages 17-20.

INCOME-RELATED EMPLOYMENT & SUPPORT ALLOWANCE – ESA(IR)

You, your partner and any dependent children and young people under 20 included in an ESA(IR) claim are entitled to the same things as people getting income support – read page 12.

Income Groups

UNIVERSAL CREDIT – UC

You and your partner are entitled to the same things as people getting Income-Support. If you get UC read the information for people who get IS.

OTHER BENEFITS

Only IS, PCGC, ESA (IR) or JSA (IB) count for automatic help with health costs.

Other benefits such as Incapacity Benefit or Disability Living Allowance don't count because they are not income-related. If you have to pay health costs, check to see if you are in any of the other groups listed on pages 4-5. Or you might be able to get help if you are on a low income – read page 17.

TAX CREDITS

- Working Tax Credit (WTC);
 - Child Tax Credit (CTC).
1. If you meet the qualifying conditions (read paragraph 3) you will be sent an NHS tax credit exemption certificate by the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA). They will send you one automatically, you do not need to apply for one – but read paragraph 8.
 2. If you meet the qualifying conditions you can get free:
 - NHS dental treatment;
 - NHS sight tests.

Income Groups

You also get:

- Vouchers towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses;
 - Refunds of necessary travel costs to and from hospital for NHS treatment for you, your partner or any dependent children and young people under 20. You can also get refunds of travel costs if any of the children need to go to hospital. (They are already entitled to the other help.)
3. The qualifying conditions for help with health costs are (A) + either (B1) or (B2) or (B3) when:
- (A) your family income for tax credits is £15,276** or less (this is on your tax credit award notice) **and** one of the following applies:
- (B1) you are working and have children = you get WTC and CTC, **or**
- (B2) you are working and disabled = you get WTC with a disability element – check your award notice, or
- (B3) you are not eligible for WTC but get CTC. This might be because you don't work 16 hours per week, or your income doesn't count as earnings, e.g. because you are a student nurse.
- ** The £15,276 limit applies from 6 April 2016. If you are reading this after 5 April 2017, you should check to see if this figure has been updated.*
4. The HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) issues tax credit award notices that tell families they might be entitled to other help. Only the HMRC can say whether you are eligible or not for WTC or CTC.
5. If you are unsure about the amount of income for tax credit purposes, you can check this with the HMRC Helpline on: 0345 300 3900 (England, Scotland and Wales).

Income Groups

If you have made a claim for tax credit but not yet received your award notice, you should contact the HMRC on the above number (not the NHSBSA).

For people with hearing or speech difficulties the Helpline number is 0345 300 3909 (England, Scotland, Wales).

NHS TAX CREDIT EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES

6. The NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) – an NHS body based in Newcastle – sends out certificates for the whole of the UK on behalf of the health departments in Wales, Scotland, England and Northern Ireland. You don't have to make a separate application for a certificate.

(Please expect to wait up to six weeks for your certificate after you get your award notice. Read paragraph 8.)

7. The HMRC will send information to the NHSBSA each month about families who are entitled to a certificate.

8. The NHSBSA cannot send you an exemption certificate until they receive the information from the HMRC. **This could be up to six weeks after you get your tax credit award.** If you meet the conditions for help listed in paragraph 3, you can sign NHS treatment forms to say you do not have to pay because you get tax credits. Use your award notice as evidence of your entitlement until your certificate arrives.

If you are still unsure about whether or not you are entitled to an NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate, ring the NHSBSA on 0300 330 1347, and have your Tax Credit Award notice ready so you can tell the NHSBSA what is on it.

Income Groups

IF YOU LOSE YOUR TAX CREDIT EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE

9. Tell the NHSBSA by writing to the:

Exemption Issue Office, Bridge House, 152 Pilgrim Street,
Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 6SN, and let them know what
happened. They will send you a duplicate.

IF YOU DO NOT QUALIFY FOR HELP THROUGH TAX CREDIT EXEMPTION

10. Tax credit exemption is for people who are working or are disabled or who have children.

11. If you do not qualify for help through tax credits you may be able to claim help through the NHS Low Income Scheme – see below.

12. Ring the HMRC Helpline on 0345 300 3900 for advice about other help that might be available through tax credits. Read paragraphs 4 and 5.

THE NHS LOW INCOME SCHEME

The Low Income Scheme doesn't entitle you to NHS treatment. However if you have been accepted for NHS treatment and have to pay for any of the items listed on page 2 of this leaflet, the NHS Low Income Scheme may be able to help you with the cost. If you have capital which is over the capital limits as shown on claim form HC1W currently £16,000 (£24,000 for people living permanently in a care home), you cannot claim any help through this scheme.

If you have a partner, their property, savings and any other money is counted with yours.

Income Groups

A partner is a person you live with as part of a couple of the same or opposite sex, whether or not you are married or have a civil partnership.

Children will not be included in the NHS Low Income Scheme Assessment. You will need to claim Child Tax Credit from HMRC. To find out more about Tax Credits visit www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits or phone 0345 300 3900

If you would like to find out if the scheme can help you, order an HC1W form (claim for help with health costs) by calling the publication order line on 0345 603 1108

You can fill in a special short claim form, the HC1(SC)W if the following applies to you:

- You live permanently in a residential care or nursing home and the local authority helps you with the cost; or
- You are supported by the local authority because you are aged 16 or 17 and recently left local authority care.



Ask your home manager/local authority/ care worker to order an HC1(SC)W claim form. Otherwise, use the normal form, the HC1W.

If you are aged 16 or over you can make your own claim on an HC1W, but you needn't do this if you count as a dependant of someone who is getting an eligible benefit or credit listed on pages 12-17.

If a dependent child under 16 has to go to hospital for NHS treatment, you

Income Groups

can claim help with their travel costs. Any help will be based on the parent's income, not the child's.

Fill in the HC1W or HC1(SC)W and send it off in the envelope that comes with it. The claim form tells you what to do and may ask you to send in evidence of your income.

If you have any queries about how to fill in these forms, or what to send, you can call NHS Business Services Authority on 0300 330 1343, or write to NHS Business Services Authority, Bridge House, 152 Pilgrim Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 6SN.

After you have sent off the claim form, the NHSBSA uses the information you have supplied to work out how much help you might get towards your health costs.

NHS LOW INCOME SCHEME CERTIFICATES

If you qualify for help you will be sent an NHS certificate HC2W for full help or an NHS certificate HC3W for partial help with health costs. The certificate will tell you who it covers and how long it lasts.

If your circumstances change for the better, you do not need to report it. If your circumstances change for the worse, you should make another claim.

People seeking asylum and who are supported by the Border and Immigration Agency (BIA), including those on subsistence support only, will be sent an NHS charges certificate (HC2W) for full help with health costs with their first support payments – also read pages 29-30.

IMPORTANT: An HC2W certificate does not entitle you to NHS treatment. It entitles you to full help with health costs if you have been accepted for NHS treatment.

Income Groups

If you need help urgently with any health costs before Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Universal Credit, Pension Credit or tax credits are awarded, make a separate claim on an HC1W. Don't wait for your benefit or credit claim to be settled. But if you have a tax credit award notice, read pages 12-17 to see if you can get help without making a low income claim.

If you don't want to delay your NHS treatment or repair/replacement of glasses (but read page 24 first) or need emergency NHS dental treatment, you may need to pay and claim a refund later.

If you want to claim a refund of any health cost – read pages 35-36.

Other Groups



PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN WALES BUT HAVE A DOCTOR BASED IN ENGLAND

ENTITLEMENT CARDS

- If you are resident in Wales but your GP is in England the prescriptions you receive will be English (FP10) and not Welsh (WP10).
- You will need an Entitlement Card to prove you qualify for free prescriptions.
- You will need to take the Entitlement Card with you to a pharmacy in Wales and show it to the pharmacist/dispenser each time you give them a prescription to ensure that they do not charge you for your medication.

Your entitlement card should be sent to you automatically by the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership, but if you think you should have a card and have not received one, please contact the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership, Mamhilad House, Mamhilad Park Estate, Pontypool, NP4 0YP Tel: 01495 332000.

Other Groups

PEOPLE WITH A SPECIFIED MEDICAL CONDITION

If you suffer from or have recently been diagnosed with any of the conditions listed below, you can apply for a Medical Exemption Certificate.

Prescriptions are free for everyone in Wales (see page 6), but in the event that you need treatment elsewhere in the UK a Medical Exemption Certificate will allow you to obtain free prescriptions from another pharmacy within the UK.

You can get a Medical Exemption Certificate if you have one of the following:

- A permanent fistula (for example, caecostomy, colostomy, laryngostomy or ileostomy) requiring continuous surgical dressing or requiring an appliance;
- A form of hypoadrenalism (for example, Addison's Disease) for which specific substitution therapy is essential;
- Diabetes insipidus and other forms of hypopituitarism;
- Diabetes mellitus except where treatment is by diet alone;
- Hypoparathyroidism;
- Myasthenia gravis;
- Myxoedema;
- Cancer, the effects of cancer or the effects of cancer treatment;
- Epilepsy requiring continuous anti-convulsive therapy; or
- You have a continuing physical disability which means you cannot get out without the help of another person.

We ask doctors to advise you about free prescriptions. But it is up to you to find out if you are entitled or not.

Other Groups

Only the conditions listed count. If you are unsure about the name of your condition, check with your doctor.

To apply for a Medical Exemption Certificate ask your doctor for form FP92W (Wales). The form tells you what to do.

Your exemption certificate will be posted to you. Medical Exemption Certificates normally last for five years and then need to be renewed.

You may receive a reminder that your certificate needs to be renewed, but it is your responsibility to ensure that it is renewed.

PREGNANT WOMEN AND THOSE WHO HAVE HAD A BABY IN THE PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS

If you are pregnant, or you have had a baby in the last 12 months, you are entitled to free NHS dental treatment providing that you start a course of treatment while pregnant, or during the 12 months after giving birth.

To claim your free dental treatment you will need a valid maternity exemption certificate, or card, issued by the Local Health Board. To apply for your maternity exemption card, ask your doctor, midwife or health visitor for Form FW8W. Your doctor, midwife or health visitor will sign the form to confirm your statement.

Your exemption card will last until 12 months after the expected date of birth. If your baby is born early, you can continue to use your exemption card until it expires. If your baby is born late, you can apply for an extension. If you apply after your baby is born, your exemption card will run for 12 months from your baby's birth.

Other Groups

PEOPLE REGISTERED BLIND OR PARTIALLY SIGHTED

You get free NHS sight tests. If you need help with other health costs, check if you are in one of the groups listed on pages 5-6.

PEOPLE WHO NEED COMPLEX LENSES

You get free NHS sight tests if you're prescribed complex or powerful glasses with at least one lens which:

- Has a power in any one meridian of plus or minus 10 or more dioptres; or
- Is a prism-controlled bifocal lens.

You also get a voucher towards the cost of glasses.

PEOPLE WITH GLAUCOMA OR DIABETES

You can get a free sight test if you are:

- A diagnosed glaucoma patient; or
- 40 and over and are the parent, brother, sister, son or daughter of a person with diagnosed glaucoma; or
- Have been advised by an ophthalmologist that you are at risk of glaucoma; or
- A diagnosed diabetic.

PEOPLE WHO HAVE LOST OR DAMAGED THEIR GLASSES OR CONTACT LENSES

If you are under 16 you get a voucher towards the cost of repair or replacement.

Other Groups

If you are 16 or over you may be entitled to a voucher towards the cost of repair or replacement if your Local Health Board agrees that:

- The loss or damage was due to illness; and
- You can't get any help through a warranty, insurance or after sales service; and
- You would be entitled to an NHS voucher for glasses or contact lenses – read page 9.

If in doubt, contact your Local Health Board.

This does not apply to disposable contact lenses.

PEOPLE WITH IMPAIRED HEARING

You can get free on loan NHS hearing aids. The aids will be supplied with batteries (and replacements) and fitted, serviced and maintained free of charge.

If you want to know more, ask your GP.



Other Groups

PEOPLE IN A RESIDENTIAL CARE OR NURSING HOME

Living in residential care or a nursing home does not automatically entitle you to help.

- If you are under 60 and getting Income Support – or Income-related Employment and Support Allowance read page 12.
- If you are 60 or over and getting Pension Credit guarantee credit – read page 12.
- If the local authority helps you with all or part of the cost – read pages 17-20.
- Otherwise check to see if you can get help via the NHS Low Income Scheme – read page 17.

PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY LOCAL AUTHORITY AFTER LEAVING CARE – CARE LEAVERS

If you are aged 16 or 17 and supported by a local authority because you recently left local authority care, you are entitled to full help with health costs through the NHS Low Income Scheme – read page 17.

If you are not supported by a local authority and you are not getting Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance, you may still be able to get help through the Low Income Scheme. Also check if you are in any of the groups on page 4 or 5.

Other Groups

NHS IN-PATIENTS

You get free:

- All NHS treatment, including dental treatment, plus medication;
- Glasses or contact lenses supplied through the hospital eye department (but you must choose the cheapest frame available). If you choose a more expensive one (except for medical reasons) you will have to pay the difference.

If you ask a dentist or optician to visit you in hospital, you will have to pay the cost in the normal way, as if you were being treated at their practice. Read pages 4 and 5 to see if you are in a group that can get free NHS dental treatment, a free NHS sight test or vouchers towards your glasses.

NHS HOSPITAL DENTAL PATIENTS

NHS dental treatment carried out at the hospital is free, but there may be a charge for dentures and bridges unless you are entitled to free NHS dental treatment.

NHS HOSPITAL EYE DEPARTMENT

Sight tests: If your consultant refers you to an optometrist for a sight test as part of the management of your eye condition, while you are still a patient of the hospital eye department, that sight test is free. If your consultant decides that for clinical reasons a change of glasses or contact lenses is needed shortly after you have bought a pair, you will only have to pay for the first pair. You may also get help towards the first pair if you are in one of the groups entitled to a voucher – read page 9.

Other Groups

PEOPLE WHO NEED TO TRAVEL TO RECEIVE NHS TREATMENT

You may be entitled to help with necessary travelling costs if:

- You attend a hospital, or other place, to receive NHS treatment under the care of a consultant
- You travel by the cheapest means of transport which is reasonable for you to use
- In the opinion of your consultant, you need someone to travel with you, your companion's travel costs are added to your travel costs and it's your income that counts
- You are getting benefits or credits – read page 12
- You have a low income – read page 17
- You are 16 or over but under 20 and are counted as a dependant of someone getting any of the benefits/credits on pages 12-17, you can get help via that benefit or credit
- You are 16 or over and not a dependant of a person who gets benefits or credits, you can make your own claim, even if you live with your parents – read pages 17-20
- The patient is a child under 16; it is their parents' income that counts. If someone else takes them to hospital, it is still the parents' income that counts.

If you are not sure what travel costs you can get help with, ask the hospital before you travel.

Other Groups

NHS TREATMENT ABROAD

You may be able to get help with the cost of travel from home to the international rail terminal, port or airport where you leave Great Britain (GB). The arrangements are the same as if you were travelling from home to a hospital for treatment – read “Need to travel to receive NHS treatment” on page 28.

Regardless of your income, you can get help with the cost of return travel from the point where you leave GB to where you are going to be treated but your method (e.g. air or rail) and cost of travel must be agreed **before** you travel. You should ask the person arranging your treatment about this. If a companion is medically necessary, you should ask about help with their travel costs.

WAR PENSIONERS

You may be able to get money back for dental treatment, hospital travel costs, sight tests, glasses or contact lenses if the treatment, or the reason for travel, is for your pensionable disablement. Write to: The Treatment Group, Veterans Agency, Norcross, Blackpool FY5 3WP. You can get a pre-paid addressed envelope from Post Offices.

PEOPLE FROM ABROAD

People who come from abroad and are accepted as ordinarily resident in the UK (including those given leave to remain in the UK and people accepted as coming to work or study in the UK) and who are accepted for NHS treatment may claim help with health costs the same way as other residents.

If you are accepted for NHS Treatment, first check to see if you are in one of the groups listed on pages 4-5. Otherwise you can make a claim under the NHS low income scheme – read pages 17-20.

Other Groups

People seeking asylum and who are supported by the Border and Immigration Agency (BIA), including those on subsistence support only, will be sent an NHS charges certificate (HC2W) for full help with health costs with their first support payments.

People seeking asylum, who are not in one of the groups listed on pages 4-5 and are not supported by BIA or failed asylum seekers need to make a claim under the NHS Low Income Scheme – read pages 17-20.

Further Advice

HOW TO GET HELP WITH HEALTH COSTS

NHS DENTAL TREATMENT:

Tell the dentist you want NHS treatment when you make the appointment. Sign the form you are given when you go for treatment. If you don't have to pay, put a cross in the appropriate box. If you have a valid HC2W certificate, write in the certificate number.

If you have a valid HC3W certificate, write in the certificate number **and** the maximum your certificate says you can pay. You will pay either what appears on the certificate, the actual charge or the maximum charge, whichever is the least.

If your circumstances change before you are asked to pay, read page 6 to see if you are entitled to free NHS dental treatment.

You will be asked to show proof of your entitlement to help with dental costs – read page 38 for more information about this.

When you claim help with the cost of your NHS dental treatment, you are responsible for knowing whether or not you are entitled and for the declaration you make. If you are not sure you are entitled to help then you must pay. You can claim a refund, make sure you keep all receipts (see pages 35-36)

SIGHT TESTS

If you are severely sight impaired/blind or sight impaired/partially sighted, the name and address of the Local Authority where you are registered has to be put on form GOS1W.

- If you have a valid HC2W certificate for full help, you must show it to your optician;

Further Advice

- If you are severely sight impaired/blind or sight impaired/partially sighted, the name and address of the Local Authority where you're registered has to be put on form GOS1W;
- If you have diabetes or glaucoma, or have been advised by an ophthalmologist that you are at risk of glaucoma, the name and address of your doctor has to be put on form GOS1W;
- If you already need a complex lens, show the optician your last prescription or the glasses you are wearing.

The optician will give you form GOS2W showing the results of your sight test.

If you have a valid HC3W Certificate, show it to the optician and ask if you are entitled to any help with the cost of your private sight test. You apply for this help on form GOS5W.

NHS VOUCHERS FOR GLASSES/CONTACT LENSES

- There is more information about using vouchers on the back of your GOS2W form.
- Ask for a GOS3W voucher form when you have your sight test, or when you order your glasses or contact lenses if you didn't ask for one earlier, or if you are now entitled to one. Not all suppliers have GOS3W vouchers and you might have to go back to the person who tested your sight to get one. Fill in part 1 when you order your glasses or contact lenses and show the optician a valid HC2W certificate if you have one.
- If you have a valid HC3W certificate, you can ask for a GOS3W voucher form. Show your HC3W to the optician when you order glasses or contact lenses and ask if you can get any help towards the cost. Your voucher value will be reduced by the amount shown on your HC3W.

Further Advice

- A GOS3W voucher form is valid for two years, but you can only use it if you are still entitled to a voucher for glasses or contact lenses when you order them.

If you have a valid HC2W or HC3W certificate, you **must** show it to the optician when you order your glasses or contact lenses. They will ask you to fill in and sign GOS3W to say why you are entitled to the voucher and to confirm that you have received your glasses or contact lenses.

NHS VOUCHERS FOR REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT OF GLASSES OR CONTACT LENSES

Ask your optician for form GOS4W – it tells you what to do.

TRAVEL TO RECEIVE NHS TREATMENT UNDER THE CARE OF CONSULTANT

If you are referred for treatment under the care of a consultant, and you travel to receive that treatment you can claim help with the cost of your travel on low income grounds.

When you go for treatment, tell the hospital (or place where you are being treated) that you want to claim back the cost of the journey. Where your place of treatment has a cashier facility you will be able to claim your money back during your visit. You will be asked to show proof of your entitlement, such as your award notice, your tax credit exemption certificate or your HC2W certificate.

FURTHER ADVICE

Also keep any tickets or receipts you have as proof of the cost.

Where your place of treatment does not issue payments you will need to claim your expenses using claim for HC5W(T). It tells you what to do. Please read pages 35-37.

CHECK OF ENTITLEMENT TO HELP WITH HEALTH COSTS AND THE PENALTY CHARGE

If you are not paying the NHS charge, or you are using an optical voucher, you should show proof of why you don't have to pay or why you can use a voucher. For example, your benefit book, birth certificate or NHS exemption certificate; for more information about this – read the tables on pages 38-43.

If you cannot show proof, you will have to sign to say why you do not have to pay (or can have an optical voucher) and you will get your NHS treatment free, or be able to use your optical voucher. But your treatment form will be marked as 'no evidence seen' so your entitlement can be checked later. You won't be able to get partial help unless you show your HC3W.

If you are not sure you are entitled to help with health costs then you must pay. You can claim a refund, make sure you keep all receipts (see page 35-37).

CHECKS WILL BE MADE ON CLAIMS FOR:

- Full or partial help with NHS dental treatment. The checks will be made by the NHS BSA;
- Free NHS sight tests and vouchers towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses. The checks will be made by the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership on behalf of your Local Health Board.

FURTHER ADVICE

THE PENALTY CHARGE

Any patient found to have wrongly claimed help with health costs will face penalty charges and, in some cases, prosecution under powers introduced by the Health Act 1999.

The penalty charge is a civil fine and may be imposed where a patient is found to have wrongly claimed total or partial help with health costs. The penalty charge is five times the amount owed, up to a maximum of £100. This is in addition to the original charge. Payment will be pursued by civil recovery if necessary.

REFUNDS

You will need a receipt which shows you have paid for NHS treatment (see following paragraphs for details). For income-based claims, use form HC5W(T) for travel costs, HC5W(O) for optical charges, or HC5W(D) for dental charges, available by calling 0345 603 1108. The HC5W (T, O or D) tells you what to do. You will need to write a letter (enclosing the receipt) to apply for a refund for other reasons. You have to claim a refund within three months of paying the health cost.

NHS DENTAL TREATMENT REFUNDS

Ask your dentist for a NHS receipt form or a receipt which shows the amount and the date you paid the charge.

If you are claiming on the grounds of low income complete form HC5W(D).

If you want to claim a refund for another reason eg. you confirm you are pregnant, you will need to explain why you are claiming a refund. Enclose your receipt and make sure you include your full name and the address of your dentist, and write to your Local Health Board.

Further Advice

SIGHT TEST REFUNDS

Ask the person who tests your sight for a receipt that shows that you paid for the test and the date of payment. Complete an HC5W(O) refund claim form, making sure you put the date of your sight test on it. The HC5W(O) tells you what to do next.

Glasses or contact lens refunds

If you have already used a voucher towards the cost of your glasses or lenses you cannot get a refund, unless it was only a “complex lens” voucher. Nor can you claim a refund of the difference between the voucher value and the actual cost of your glasses or lenses, even if they cost more than the voucher value.

If you want to claim a refund, ask the person who supplies your glasses or contact lenses for a receipt which shows how much you paid and the date of payment. Complete an HC5W(O) refund form and make sure you enclose your optical prescription and your receipt with your HC5W(O) when you send it off. The form tells you what to do. The maximum refund you can get back will be the voucher value which matches your prescription.

Lost or damaged glasses or contact lenses

If your glasses or contact lenses have been lost or damaged and you pay for replacement or repairs, you will only be considered for a refund if you are entitled to a voucher. But, your Local Health Board has to agree that the loss or damage was due to illness before payment can be made – read page 24.

Further Advice

TRAVEL COSTS TO AND FROM HOSPITAL FOR NHS TREATMENT REFUNDS

Usually, an NHS hospital will give you your refund when you go for treatment. If this is not possible, ask the hospital for an HC5W(T) refund claim form – the form tells you what to do.

MORE INFORMATION

HEALTH COST ADVICE LINES

Medical and Maternity exemption certificates

contact your Local Health Board

NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificates

(Please have your tax credit award notice ready to answer questions):
0300 330 1347

Does not deal with enquiries about tax credit applications or entitlement to an award notice.

OTHER ADVICE LINES

HM Revenue & Customs – Tax Credit helpline

For enquiries about applications or entitlement to Tax Credit Award Notices:

England, Scotland and Wales: 0345 300 3900

For people with hearing or speech difficulties:

England, Scotland and Wales: 0345 300 3909

OTHER HEALTH ADVICE

24-hour confidential nurse advice and health information service:

NHS Direct (Wales): 0845 46 47

Please note: NHS Direct does not deal with tax credit queries.

For people entitled to help with the cost of NHS Dental treatment

You can get free NHS dental treatment if you:	The proof you need to have	Where and how to get proof
Are under 18 years old	Any official document showing your name and date-of-birth, such as NHS medical card, birth certificate, driving licence, travel concession card, or child Benefit order book	NHS medical cards are usually issued when a child is first registered as a patient with a GP. If you need a new card, you should contact your Local Health Board.
Age 18 and in full-time education	A current child Benefit order book, or evidence of age as above and a letter or other document from your school, college or university stating that you are a full-time student	The Child Benefit Helpline on 0300 200 3100. Your school, college, university or your local education authority can give you proof that you are in full-time education.
Are pregnant	MatB1 certificate, or NHS prescription maternity exemption certificate.	MatB1 certificates are issued by your GP or registered midwife.
Have had a baby in the previous 12 months, or have had a stillborn baby in the previous 12 month	Notification of birth form, birth certificate, or stillbirth certificate.	To get a maternity exemption certificate ask your GP, hospital doctor or midwife for application form FW8W. The form tells you what to do. The midwife who delivers your baby will give you a notification of birth form.

		<p>Birth certificates and stillbirth certificates are issued by your local register of births, deaths and marriages.</p>
<p>Are named on a valid HC2W certificate</p>	<p>An NHS certificate HC2W for full help with health costs.</p>	<p>Make a claim using form HC1W, obtainable from your Jobcentre Plus office or by calling 0345 603 1108.</p>
<p>Are named on a valid HC3W certificate</p>	<p>The charge may be reduced if you are named on a NHS certificate HC3W for partial help with health costs.</p>	
<p>Or your partner is, getting Income Support</p>	<p>Your Income Support order book or an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus office.</p>	<p>You have to claim the benefit at your Jobcentre Plus office (the address will be in your local telephone book).</p>
<p>Or your partner is, getting Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance</p>	<p>An entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus office.</p>	<p>If payments are made into your bank or building society, you can obtain proof in the form of an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus office.</p>
<p>Or your partner is getting Pension Credit guarantee credit</p>	<p>Your order book, or an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus office.</p>	
<p>Or your partner is, getting Universal Credit</p>	<p>Universal Credit award notice.</p>	

For people entitled to help with the cost of NHS optical services – proof of entitlement

You can get free NHS Dental treatment if you:	The proof you need to have	Where and how to get proof
Or your partner is, getting tax credits and meeting qualifying conditions	You are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate.	If you are eligible for free treatment, you will be sent a certificate. See page 15 if you haven't received a certificate yet.
You can get free sight test if you are:	The proof you need to have	Where and how to get proof
Age 60 or over	Any official document showing your name and date-of-birth such as a birth certificate, NHS medical card, passport, travel concession card, driving licence.	To get a new NHS medical card you should contact your Local Health Board.
Aged 40, or over and the parent, brother, sister, or child of a person with glaucoma	An official document to prove your date-of-birth – see above.	NHS medical card – see above
Registered blind or partially sighted	Certificate of registration as blind or partially sighted.	Contact your local authority

Suffering from diabetes	Repeat prescriptions card, out-patients appointment card, record of blood sugar readings.	Your GP, or your hospital diabetic, or eye clinic. Your repeat prescription or outpatient card should show you are attending a diabetic clinic on a regular basis.
Suffering from glaucoma	Statement that you are a glaucoma sufferer.	Your GP, or your hospital eye clinic
Considered to be at risk of glaucoma	Statement that you are at risk of developing glaucoma.	Your GP, or your hospital eye clinic.
<p>You can get a free NHS sight test and an optical voucher if you are:</p>		
Aged under 16	A Child benefit order book, NHS medical card, passport, birth certificate, travel concession card showing your name and date of birth.	Where and how to get proof The Child benefit Helpline on 0300 200 3100. NHS medical card – see above.

For people entitled to help with the cost of NHS optical services – proof of entitlement

You can get a free NHS sight test and an optical voucher if you are:	The proof you need to have	Where and how to get proof
Aged 16, 17 or 18 and in full-time education	A current Child Benefit order book, or evidence of age as above and a letter or other document from your school, college or university stating that you are a full-time student.	The Child Benefit Helpline on 0300 200 3100. Your school, college, university or your local education authority can give you proof that you are in qualifying full-time education.
Or your partner is, getting Income Support	Your income support order book or an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus office.	You have to claim the benefit at your Jobcentre Plus office (the address will be in your local telephone book).
Or your partner is, getting income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or your partner is getting Universal Credit	An entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office	If payments are made into your bank or building society, you can obtain proof in the form of an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus office.
Or your partner is, getting Minimum Income guarantee or Pension Credit guarantee credit	Your order book, or an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus office.	

<p>Or your partner is, getting tax credits and meeting qualifying conditions</p> <p>Named on a valid HC2W certificate</p> <p>Named on a valid HC3W certificate</p>	<p>You are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate.</p> <p>An NHS certificate HC2W for full help with health costs.</p> <p>You may get help if you are named on a NHS certificate HC3W for partial help with health costs.</p>	<p>If you are eligible for free treatment, you will be sent a certificate. See page 15 if you haven't received a certificate yet.</p> <p>Make a claim using form HC1W obtainable by calling 0345 603 1108.</p>
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Further Information

Leaflets and forms listed below are available from:
by calling **0345 603 1108**

- HC1W Help with Health costs claim form.
- HC1(SC)W Help with Health Costs claim form (special conditions)
- HC5W Refund Claim form.
- HC11W (this leaflet).
- Managing Your Medicines
- Medicines use review: Understand your medicines.

Further information on NHS charges and help with health costs is available at: **www.healthcosts.wales.nhs.uk**

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.