

Help your patients avoid penalty charges

If your patients claim free NHS dental treatment that they're not entitled to, they could be facing a penalty charge of up to £100 – as well as the original treatment charge. This guide will help you to protect both your patients and NHS funds.

Do:

- ✓ encourage your patients to check that they're entitled before claiming free treatment. A patient factsheet, Easy Read guidance and other resources are available at: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/freedental
- ✓ explain to patients who aren't sure that they can pay and claim a refund if they are entitled to free treatment. They'll need their receipt and an HC5(D) or HC5W(D) form. In England, the form can be requested online at: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/healthcosts. In Wales, the form can be requested by calling 0345 603 1108.
- ✓ ask to see evidence of patients' entitlement and check it thoroughly using this guide. If a patient can't provide proof, select 'No' for question 'Evidence of exemption or remission seen' box on their declaration form and remind them that their entitlement could be checked at a later date.
- ✓ check that patients have completed all relevant boxes on the declaration, including their signature and their National Insurance number.
- ✓ stay up to date with the rules on entitlement. Search for NHS Help with Health Costs on Facebook and follow @NHShealthcosts on Twitter.
- ✓ ask patients to confirm that the personal details you hold for them are correct.

Don't:

- ✗ make assumptions. Remember that not all benefits/certificates entitle patients to free treatment and even if you've seen a patient's evidence before, their circumstances could have changed.
- ✗ hurry the patient (or their representative). Give them plenty of time to read the patient declaration and information materials.
- ✗ forget that if a patient makes an incorrect claim, intentionally or otherwise, they could have to pay a penalty charge of up to £100. An additional charge of up to £50 may apply if they don't pay on time.
- ✗ turn a blind eye. If you suspect that a patient is fraudulently claiming free NHS treatment, call the NHS Fraud and Corruption Reporting Line on 0800 028 4060.

Your role is crucial in making sure patients can access the treatment they need and that taxpayers' money is spent appropriately, so please keep this guide and a copy of the 'Are you claiming free treatment?' factsheet handy to help you. More information and resources are available at:

www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/freedental

Evidence checking guide

A patient can get free NHS dental treatment if they are:	The proof they need to have:
under 18 years old* *In Wales, they're entitled to a free dental examination if they're under 25 or 60 or over.	Any official document showing their name and date of birth, such as a birth certificate, NHS medical card or passport.
aged 18 and in full-time education	A current Child Benefit award notice, or proof of their date of birth (such as a birth certificate or passport) plus proof that they are a full-time student.
pregnant or have had a baby in the previous 12 months	MatB1 certificate, NHS maternity exemption certificate, notification of birth form, birth certificate or stillbirth certificate.
included in an award for Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)	Their entitlement letter from either the DWP or their Jobcentre Plus office.
included in an award for Universal Credit and their earnings in their last assessment period were £435 or less, or £935 or less if they get an element for a child or have limited capability for work	Their most recent statement.
included in an award for Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit)	Their award notice from the Pension Centre.
included in an award of Child Tax Credit, or Working Tax Credit with a disability element (or both), and the annual family income used to calculate the tax credit award was £15,276 or less	A valid NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate, or their tax credit award notice.
covered by HC2 or HC2W certificate. Patients covered by a valid HC3 or HC3W certificate may be entitled to help with the cost of their treatment. Their certificate shows how much they need to pay.	An HC2 certificate for full help with health costs, or an HC2W certificate in Wales.

The benefits listed above are the **only** benefits that automatically entitle patients to free NHS treatment. Patients who receive any other benefits, including contributions-based JSA and ESA, and Pensions Credit (Savings Credit), may qualify for help with health costs through the NHS Low Income Scheme. They'll need to complete an HC1 application form (HC1W in Wales) and pay for their treatment, but if their application is successful the charge can be refunded. They will need to indicate on the form that they're claiming a refund and include their receipt. If you want to keep a supply of HC1 or HC1W forms in your practice, please call 0300 123 0849.

Disclaimer: the information in this guide was correct as of March 2018. You can find the latest version at: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/freedental