



Are you entitled to

Help With Health Costs?

- NHS dental treatment
- Glasses and contact lenses
- Travel to hospital for NHS treatment

Introduction

This document gives guidance about NHS charges in Scotland.

Most NHS treatment is free, although there can be charges for some things. This document 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;**
- **Glasses and contact lenses;**
- **Necessary costs of travel to an NHS hospital for treatment.**

This Document Gives General Guidance Only And Should Not Be Treated As A Complete And Authoritative Statement Of Law.

How To Use This Document

You can quickly check if you are entitled to free treatment by reading pages 8-10.

For more detailed guidance see pages 4-6 of this document and find the group you most easily fit into, then go to the page number shown.

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

When you have found the group or groups you belong to and what help you can get, go on to: 'Claiming Help When You Go For Treatment' (pages 28-30).

Refunds. You can also get information about refunds in this document – read pages 31-32.

The Penalty Charge. If you are found to have made a wrongful claim for help with health costs, you will face penalty charges and may be prosecuted. Read page 32.

Current Rates. The current rates of NHS charges and optical voucher values in Scotland are given in leaflet HCS2 'A Quick Guide to Help with Health Costs – Charges and Optical Voucher Values'

<https://www.gov.scot/collections/help-with-health-costs/>.

This leaflet is also available from GP Surgeries, Community Pharmacies, Citizens Advice Scotland and Jobcentre Plus.

Contents Page

Introduction	2
How to use this document	3
NHS Prescription Charges	7
Free NHS Eye Examinations	7
Free NHS Dental Examinations	7
Free NHS Dental Treatment	8
NHS Optical Vouchers	9
Repair or Replacement of Glasses or Contact Lenses	10
Travel Costs (to hospital for NHS treatment)	10

Age Groups

Children under 16 and Young People in Full-time Education aged 16, 17 and 18	12
Qualifying Young People aged between 16 and under 20	13
Other Young People (up to age 26)	13

Income Groups

Income Support	14
Employment and Support Allowance – Income-related or Contributory	14
Pension Credit Guarantee Credit	15
Jobseeker’s Allowance – Income-based or Contribution-based	16
Universal Credit	16
Other Benefits	16
Tax Credits	17
NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificates	18-19
The NHS Low Income Scheme	20-22

Other Groups

Pregnant Women or Women who have had a Baby in the Previous 12 months	23
People Registered Blind or Partially Sighted	23
People Who Have Lost or Damaged Their Glasses or Contact Lenses	23
People with Impaired Hearing	24
People Who Live in a Care Home	24
Young People Supported by a Local Authority After Leaving Care	24
NHS Hospital In-patients	25
NHS Hospital Dental Service Patients	25
NHS Hospital Eye Department Patients	25
People who Travel to Hospital for NHS Treatment	26
People Living in the Council Areas of Highland, Argyll & Bute, Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland	26
War Pensioners	27
People from Abroad	27
Asylum Seekers	27

Further Advice

Claiming Help when you go for Treatment	28
Claiming Free NHS Dental Treatment	28
NHS Vouchers for Glasses or Contact Lenses	29
Repair or Replacement of Glasses or Contact Lenses	29
Claiming Help with Travel Costs to and from Hospital	30
Information about Checks of Entitlement	30
How to Claim a Refund	31
NHS Dental Treatment Refunds	31
Glasses or Contact Lens Refunds	32
Lost or Damaged Glasses or Contact Lenses	32
Hospital Travel Costs Refunds	32
The Penalty Charge	32
Further Information	33
Health Costs Advice Lines	33
NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificates	33
Other Health Advice	33
National Services Scotland, Practitioner Services Division Regional Offices	34

Proof of Entitlement Tables

Free NHS Dental Treatment	35-36
NHS Optical Vouchers	37-38

NHS Prescription Charges

Prescription charges were reduced to zero on 1 April 2011. No charge is applied to drugs and appliances dispensed by a community pharmacist or dispensing GP practice. No charge is applied to wigs and fabric supports supplied through a hospital service.

Free NHS Eye Examinations

Free NHS eye examinations were introduced in Scotland on 1 April 2006. NHS eye examinations are free to people ordinarily resident in the UK or who belong in one of the categories for exemption from NHS charges set out in the NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) (Scotland) Regulations 1989, were obtained in Scotland.

Free NHS Dental Examinations

NHS dental examinations are free to people ordinarily resident in the UK or who belong in one of the categories for exemption from NHS charges set out in the NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) (Scotland) Regulations 1989, were obtained in Scotland.



Free NHS Dental Treatment

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

- aged under 26;
- pregnant or have borne a child within the 12 months before treatment starts;
- an NHS in-patient and the treatment is carried out by the hospital dentist;
- an NHS Hospital Dental Service out-patient;*

* There may be a charge for dentures and bridges.

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

- are included in an award of someone getting:
 - Income Support;
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) paid on its own or with contribution-based ESA;
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) paid on its own or with contribution-based JSA;
 - Pension Credit Guarantee Credit paid on its own or with Saving Credit; or
 - Universal Credit:
 - and had no earnings or net earnings (take-home pay) of £435 or less during the most recent assessment period; or
 - which includes an element for a child and/or limited capability for work or limited capability for work-related activity, and had no earnings (take-home pay) or net earnings of £935 or less during the most recent assessment period;
 - are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate;
 - are named on a valid HC2 certificate for full help under the NHS Low Income Scheme.

Note: contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance or contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance on their own do not entitle you to free NHS dental treatment.

Partial help:

- if you are named on a valid HC3 certificate under the NHS Low Income Scheme you might get some help towards the cost of your NHS dental treatment. The HC3 certificate will tell you how much you have to pay.

War pensioners:

- help may be available. Read page 27.



NHS Optical Vouchers (towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses)

You can get a voucher if you:

- are under 16;
- are in full-time education and aged 16, 17 or 18;
- need complex lenses – read page 29;
- get or are included in an award of someone getting:
 - Income Support;
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) paid on its own or with contribution-based ESA;
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) paid on its own or with contribution-based JSA;
 - Pension Credit Guarantee Credit paid on its own or with Savings Credit; or
 - Universal Credit;
 - and had no earnings or net earnings (take-home pay) of £435 or less during the most recent assessment period; or
 - which includes an element for a child and/or limited capability for work or limited capability for work related activity, and had no earnings (take-home pay) or net earnings of £935 or less during the most recent assessment period;
- are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate;
- are named on a valid HC2 certificate for full help under the NHS Low Income Scheme.

Note: contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance or contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance on their own do not entitle you to NHS optical vouchers.

Partial help:

- if you are named on a valid HC3 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:

- help may be available – read page 27.



Repair Or Replacement of Glasses or Contact Lenses

You can get a voucher if you:

- are under 16;
- are 16 or over conditions apply – read page 29.



Travel Costs (to hospital for NHS treatment)

You can get help with necessary travel costs (including travel costs for your dependent children) if you:

- get or are included in an award of someone getting:
 - Income Support;
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) paid on its own or with contribution-based ESA;
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) paid on its own or with contribution-based JSA;
 - Pension Credit Guarantee Credit paid on its own or with Savings Credit:
- Universal Credit;
- and had no earnings or net earnings (take-home pay) of £435 or less during the most recent assessment period; or
- which includes an element for a child and/or limited capability for work or limited capability for work related activity, and had no earnings (take-home pay) or net earnings of £935 or less during the most recent assessment period;
- are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate;
- are named on a valid HC2 certificate for full help under the NHS Low Income Scheme;
- are a war pensioner and the hospital treatment is for your pensionable disablement.

Note: contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance or contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance on their own do not entitle you to help with travel costs.

- **For children under 16 and those aged 16 to 18 – also read page 24.**

Partial help:

- if you are named on a valid HC3 certificate you might get some help with travel costs.

Age Groups

Children Under 16

You get free:

- NHS dental treatment.

You also get:

- Vouchers towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses, including when you have lost or damaged your glasses or contact lenses.

If you need help with travel costs to and from hospital for NHS care – read page 25.

Young People In Full-Time Education Aged 16, 17 And 18

Full-time education means you must be receiving full-time instruction at a recognised education establishment or in another setting comparable to a school, college or university (for example, home education).

You are generally not considered to be receiving full-time education once you have come off a school or college register, or have finished receiving comparable education. However, if you do plan to continue in full-time education and have a letter offering you a place for the following term, you may be entitled to help during the break until your 19th birthday.

Education-based exemption applies until your 19th birthday and includes education beyond A levels or equivalent. It does not depend on entitlement to Child Benefit or on your family's income.

If you are not entitled to education-based exemption, you may be able to claim for help with health costs under the NHS Low Income Scheme – read pages 20-22.

You get free:

- NHS dental treatment for any course of treatment that starts before your 26th birthday (this applies even if you are not in education).

You also get:

- **A voucher towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses:**
- If you have lost or damaged your glasses or contact lenses – read page 23.
- If you need help with travel costs to and from hospital for NHS treatment – read page 26.

Qualifying Young People aged between 16 and under 20

You will qualify if you are aged between 16 and under 20, and someone (usually a parent) gets:

- Child Tax Credit payment for you and their income used to work out their Child Tax Credit is within the qualifying level;
- Child Tax Credit for you and they receive Income Support (IS) or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA-IB), or Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA-IR) or Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit); or
- Universal Credit for you and their earnings for Universal Credit are within the qualifying level.

You may also qualify if someone (usually a parent) receives a benefit, for example Income Support, with an amount for you.

If you meet all the conditions on pages 14-17, you are entitled to the same things as the person getting the benefit – see pages 14-17. This exemption depends on your family's income and entitlement to the benefit.

If you do not meet all the above conditions, you may be able to claim for help with health costs under the NHS Low Income Scheme – read pages 20-22.

Other Young People (Up To Age 26)

- You get free NHS dental treatment for any course of treatment which starts before your 26th birthday, whether or not you are in full-time education;
- If you need help with travel costs to and from the hospital for NHS treatment – read page 26;
- If you are aged 16 or 17 and supported by a Local Authority because you have recently left Local Authority care – read page 24;
- If you don't have much money to pay other health costs, you can still apply for help under the NHS Low Income Scheme – read pages 20-22.

Income Groups

Income Support

You get free:

- NHS dental treatment.

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 Income Support claim to be settled and need help urgently with any health costs – read pages 20-22.

Income-Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA(IR))

If you get ESA(IR) paid on its own or with contribution-based ESA you are entitled to the same help with health costs as people getting Income Support (see above).

Contribution-Based Employment and 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 and 5. Or you might be able to get help if you are on a low income – read pages 20-22.

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

If you are waiting for your ESA claim to be settled and need help urgently with any health costs – read pages 20-22.

Pension Credit Guarantee Credit

If you:

- get Pension Credit Guarantee Credit;
- get Pension Credit Guarantee Credit with Savings Credit; or
- are aged under 60 and your partner gets Pension Credit Guarantee Credit;

you are entitled to the same help with health costs as people getting Income Support or income-related Employment and Support Allowance – see page 14.

How to check if you are getting Pension Credit Guarantee Credit

Your payment book (if you have one) is simply marked 'Pension Credit'. Only your award notice tells you what type of Pension Credit you get. This is shown on the page entitled 'How your Pension Credit has been worked out'. If you have not received an award notice or have mislaid it, you should ring the Pension Service on Freephone 0800 991234 and ask for a copy.

IMPORTANT: If you get Pension Credit Savings Credit paid 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 and 5. Or you might be able to get help if you are on a low income – read pages 20-22.

Income-Based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA(IB))

If you get JSA(IB) paid on its own or with contribution-based JSA you and your partner are entitled to the same help with health costs as people getting Income Support – see page 14.

Contribution-based Job Seeker's Allowance (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 and 5. Or you might be able to get help if you are on a low income – read pages 20-22.

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 pages 20-22.

Universal Credit

If you get Universal Credit:

- and had no earnings or net earnings (take-home pay) of £435 or less during the most recent assessment period; or
- which includes an element for a child and/or limited capability for work or limited capability for work related activity, and had no earnings (take-home pay) or net earnings of £935 or less during the most recent assessment period;

you are entitled to the same help with health costs as people getting Income Support – see page 16.

Your assessment period will run for a calendar month from the date of your claim for Universal Credit (which will be shown on your award notice), and between the same dates each month after that.

Other Benefits

Only Income Support, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Pension Credit Guarantee Credit, Universal Credit and in your last assessment period you had no earnings, or earnings within the allowed limit, or Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance count for automatic help with health costs.

Other benefits such as Incapacity Benefit, Contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance, Contribution-based Jobseeker's

Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Personal Independence Payment and Disability Living Allowance don't count. If you have to pay health costs, check to see if you are in any of the other groups listed on pages 4 and 5. Or you might be able to get help if you are on a low income – see pages 20-22.

If you are not sure what type of benefit you are getting, ask at your Jobcentre Plus Office.

Tax Credits

There are two types of tax credit:

- Working Tax Credit (WTC)
- Child Tax Credit (CTC)

If you meet the following conditions, you automatically qualify for full help with health costs. You get:

- WTC and CTC;
- WTC on its own which includes a disability element or severe disability element – check your award notice or decision letter; or
- CTC on its own.

In each case, your family income for tax credits must be £15,276 or less. This is on your tax credit award notice or decision letter sent to you by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

If you meet the qualifying conditions you can get:

- free NHS dental treatment;
- a voucher towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses;
- a voucher towards the cost of repair of glasses, if under 16, or if over 16 and in accordance with certain conditions (see page 3);
- refunds of necessary travel costs to and from hospital for NHS treatment for you, your partner or any dependent children and young people under 19.

HMRC issues tax credit award notices that tell families they might be entitled to other help. Only HMRC can say whether or not you are eligible for WTC or CTC.

If you are unsure about the amount of your income for tax credit purposes, you can check this with HMRC Helpline on: 0845 300 3900.

For people with hearing or speech difficulties the helpline number is 0845 300 3909.

If you have made a claim but not yet received your tax credit award notice you should contact HMRC.

NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificates

If you meet the qualifying conditions you will be sent an NHS Tax Credit Exemption certificate. This will be sent automatically, you do not need to apply for one. Use your certificate as evidence of entitlement to help when you go for treatment.

Patient Services of the Business Services Authority – an NHS body based in Newcastle – sends out NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificates on behalf of the Health Departments in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

HMRC will send information to the BSA each month about families who are entitled to a certificate. The BSA cannot send you an exemption certificate until they receive the information from HMRC.

If you meet the qualifying conditions, as explained on page 16, for help through your tax credits you can sign NHS treatment forms to say you don't have to pay because you get tax credit. Use your award notice or decision letter as evidence of your entitlement until your exemption certificate arrives.

If you pay and subsequently find that you qualify for help you can claim a refund on form HC5, available from your dentist or optician, NHS hospital or Jobcentre Plus office. You can only get a receipt at the time you pay the charge.

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

If you lose your NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate

Tell the BSA by writing to:

NHS Help with Health Costs
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

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

If you do not qualify for help through tax credits you may be able to claim help through the NHS Low Income Scheme – read pages 20-22.

You can also phone HMRC Helpline 0845 300 3900 for advice about other help that might be available through tax credits.

For people with hearing or speech difficulties the helpline number is 0845 300 3909.

The NHS Low Income Scheme

If you have to pay for any of the items listed on page 4 of this document, and are not getting any of the qualifying benefits listed on pages 14-19, the NHS Low Income Scheme may be able to help you with the cost. This scheme provides help for people on low incomes and anyone may make a claim, including people who are working or who are students.

Your entitlement to help through the Low Income Scheme is worked out by comparing your income to your needs. Your needs include a personal allowance for day-to-day living expenses, premiums for special circumstances, housing costs (for example, rent or mortgage payments, including capital repayments – the repayment which covers the main amount borrowed not the interest) and council tax.

If you have a partner, their income, savings, property and needs are counted with yours. 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.

If you have capital (saving, or the value of a property you don't live in) which is more than £16,000, or £23,250 for people who live permanently in a care home, you cannot get any help through the Low Income Scheme.

If a dependent child under 16 has to go to hospital for NHS treatment, you can claim help with their travel costs (if you are not already getting a qualifying benefit); it's your income that counts.

If you would like to find out if the scheme can help you, pick up an HC1 form (claim for help with health costs) from a Jobcentre Plus office or NHS hospital. Your dentist or optician may have copies too or ring **0131 275 6000 to get a copy by post.**

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

- you live permanently in a care 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 for an HC1(SC) claim form. Otherwise, use the normal form, the HC1.

If you are aged 16 or over you can make your own claim on an HC1, but you needn't do this if you count as a dependant of someone who is getting a qualifying benefit or tax credit (read pages 14-19), because their benefit or tax credit award includes you.

Fill in the HC1 or HC1(SC) 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 Patient Services of the Business Services Authority on 0300 330 1343, or write to:

NHS Help with Health Costs
Bridge House
152 Pilgrim Street
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 6SN

Patient Services uses the information you have supplied to work out how much help you might get towards your health costs. The HC1 tells you more about this and explains what counts as income.

NHS Low Income Scheme Certificates

If you qualify for help you will be sent an NHS certificate HC2 which entitles you to full help or an NHS certificate HC3 which entitles you to partial help with health costs. The certificate will tell you who it covers, what help is provided and how long it lasts.

If you need help urgently with any health costs while you are waiting for Income Support, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit or tax credits to be awarded, make a separate claim on a Low Income Scheme form HC1. Don't wait for your benefit or credit claim to be settled. But if you have a tax credit award notice – read pages 17-19 to see if you can get help without making a low income claim.

If you need emergency NHS dental treatment, or don't want to delay your NHS treatment or wait for your glasses or contact lenses to be repaired or replaced (read pages 31-32) you will need to pay and claim a refund later.

If you want to claim a refund of any health cost – read pages 31-32, 'How To Claim a Refund'.

People seeking asylum who are supported by the National Asylum Support Services will be sent an NHS Charges Certificate (HC2) for full help along with their first support payment. Also – read page 27, 'People From Abroad'.

Other Groups

Pregnant Women or Women Who Have Had a Baby in the Previous 12 Months

You get free:

- NHS dental treatment if, when you are accepted for a course of treatment, you have a valid maternity exemption certificate issued by Practitioner Services Division of NHS National Services Scotland.

To apply for your maternity exemption certificate ask your doctor, midwife or health visitor for form FW8. The form tells you what to do.

People Registered Blind or Partially Sighted

If you need help with health costs, check if you are in one of the groups listed on pages 4-5.

People Who Have Lost or Damaged Their Glasses or Contact Lenses

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

If you are 16 or over you may be entitled to a voucher towards the cost of repair or replacement if Practitioner Services, Division of NHS National Services Scotland, agrees that:

- the loss or damage was due to illness or disability; **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 32.

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, please ask your GP.

People Who Live In a Care Home

These were previously called residential care or nursing homes. Living in a care home does not automatically entitle you to help. But you may be entitled to help if:

- you are under 60 and getting Income Support, or Income-related Employment and Support Allowance – read page 14;
- you are 60 or over and getting Pension Credit Guarantee credit – read page 15;
- otherwise check to see if you can get help via the NHS Low Income Scheme – read pages 20-22.

Young People Supported By a Local Authority After Leaving Care

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 pages 20-22.

If you are not supported by a local authority and you are not getting Income Support, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, you may still be able to get help through the Low Income Scheme – read pages 20-22. Also check if you are in any of the groups on pages 4-5.

NHS hospital In-Patients

You get free:

- NHS treatment;
- wigs and fabric supports supplied while in hospital (including spinal or abdominal supports and surgical brassieres);
- glasses or contact lenses supplied through the hospital eye department (you must choose the cheapest glasses frame available. If you choose a more expensive one, except for medical reasons, you will have to pay the difference);
- medication to take home with you when you leave hospital.

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 4-5 to see if you are in a group that can get free NHS dental treatment or an NHS Optical voucher towards your glasses.

NHS Hospital Dental Service 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 Patients

Eye examinations are free to Hospital Eye Service (HES) patients.

If your consultant decides that for clinical reasons you need frequent changes of glasses or contact lenses 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.

People Who Travel to Hospital for NHS Treatment

You may be entitled to help with necessary travelling costs to and from hospital for NHS treatment. This includes check-ups and visits to clinics for treatment of sexually transmissible infections.

You can get help:

- if you are getting benefits or credits – read pages 14-19;
- if you have a low income – read pages 20-22;
- for your companion if you qualify for help and, for medical reasons, you need a companion to travel with you. Their travel costs are added to your travel costs and it's your income that counts;
- if you are 16 or over but under 20 and are counted as a dependant of someone getting help on the basis of the benefits/credits listed on pages 14-19, or through the NHS Low Income Scheme – see pages 20-22. Otherwise you can make your own claim, even if you live with your parents – read page 13.

Note: If a child under 16 is the patient, 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.

People Living in the Council Areas of Highland, Argyll & Bute, Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland

You get help with the cost of travel to hospital for NHS treatment, provided you have to travel at least 30 miles (48km), or more than 5 miles (8km) by sea, to get to hospital.

There is a set maximum you have to pay unless you get free travel, or help with the costs. Leaflet HCS2 tells you how much this is.

War Pensioners

You may be able to get money back for NHS dental treatment, hospital travel costs, 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.
Otherwise, check if you are in any of the groups listed on pages 4-5.

People From Abroad

People who come from abroad and are accepted as ordinarily resident in the UK (including asylum seekers who have been 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 in the same way as other residents.

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 20-22.

Being in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits does not entitle you to NHS treatment. It only helps with the cost if you are given NHS treatment.

Asylum Seekers

People seeking asylum who are supported by the National Asylum Support Services will be sent an NHS charges certificate (HC2) for full help along with their first support payment.

People seeking asylum who are not supported, or are failed asylum seekers, may be entitled to help with health costs because of their age. Otherwise, they may be eligible for one of the qualifying benefits or may claim under the NHS Low Income Scheme – see pages 20-22.

Further Advice

Claiming help when you go for treatment

Free 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 HC2 certificate, write in the certificate number.

If you have a valid HC3 certificate for partial help, write in the certificate number and the maximum amount your certificate says you can pay. You will pay the amount that appears on the certificate, or the actual charge, whichever is less. See leaflet HCS2 for details of charges.

If your circumstances change before you are asked to pay, read page 8 to see if you are entitled to free NHS dental treatment.

You will be asked to show proof of your entitlement to help with NHS dental charges – read page 30 and the tables on pages 35 and 36 for more information about this.

When you claim help with NHS dental charges, you are responsible for knowing whether or not you are entitled and for the declaration you make when signing the form for treatment.

You cannot get help with charges for private dental treatment or for other items such as toothbrushes.

You should ask your dentist how much your treatment plan will cost. You will only pay one charge for a course of treatment, even if you need to go to the dentist more than once to complete the course. However, your dentist may collect the charge in instalments.

NHS Vouchers for Glasses or Contact Lenses

If you are entitled to a voucher towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses you will be issued with a GOS(S)3 voucher form following your NHS eye examination. If you become entitled to a voucher after your eye examination ask the person who is supplying your glasses or contact lenses for one. Not all suppliers have GOS(S)3 voucher forms and you might have to go back to the person who undertook your eye examination to get one.

A GOS(S)3 voucher form is valid for 2 years, but you can only use it if you are still entitled to a voucher for glasses or contact lenses when you order them.

You will be asked to fill in and sign the GOS(S)3 when you order glasses or contact lenses to say why you are entitled to the voucher and to confirm that you have received your glasses or contact lenses. If you have a valid NHS Low Income Scheme HC2 certificate for full help with health costs, or HC3 certificate for partial help, write in the certificate number. If you have a valid HC3 certificate you must also write in the amount your certificate says you have to pay towards your voucher. Your voucher value will be reduced by this amount.

Repair or Replacement of Glasses or Contact Lenses

Ask your optician for form GOS(S)4 – it tells you what to do.

Claiming Help With Travel Costs to and From Hospital

When you go for treatment, tell the hospital that you want to claim back the cost of your journey and show proof of your entitlement such as your Pension Credit entitlement notice, your NHS tax credit exemption certificate or your LIS HC2 certificate. Also, keep any tickets or receipts you have as proof of the cost.

If you have a valid HC3 certificate and your journeys cost more in total in any one week than your certificate says you have to pay, show the HC3 certificate at the hospital and ask if you are entitled to any money back.

Information About Checks of Entitlement

If you are claiming free NHS treatment, or using an optical voucher, you should show proof of why you don't have to pay or why you can use a voucher, e.g. a benefit book or birth certificate. For more information about this read the tables on pages 35 onwards.

If you cannot show proof, you will get your NHS treatment free, or be able to use your optical voucher. However, your treatment form will be marked 'no evidence seen' and your entitlement may be checked later.

NHSScotland Counter Fraud Services will check claims for:

- **Full or partial help with NHS dental treatment.**
- **Vouchers towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses.**

How To Claim a Refund

You have to claim a refund within 3 months of paying the health cost.

You will need a receipt which shows you have paid for NHS treatment (see following paragraphs for details). If you are claiming because of low income use form HC5 available from Jobcentre Plus offices or NHS hospitals. Your dentist or optician may have one. The HC5 tells you what to do.

If you want to apply for a refund for other reasons, you will need to write a letter, enclosing your receipt, to your local office of the NHS National Services Scotland Practitioners Services (see addresses on page 34).

NHS Dental Treatment Refunds

Refunds are only available for NHS dental treatment. Ask your dentist for a NHS receipt form GP17D 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 HC5. The form tells you what to do.

If you are paying the NHS dental charge by instalments, you will need a receipt for each instalment. Save all the receipts and send them off with the HC5 when you have finished paying. The claim must be received within 3 months of paying the final instalment.

If you want to claim a refund for another reason, e.g. because you receive confirmation that you are pregnant, you will need to explain in writing why you are claiming a refund. Write to: NHS National Services Scotland, Practitioner Services Gyle Square, 1 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9EB. Enclose your receipt and make sure you include your full name and the address of your dentist.

You cannot have a refund of charges for private dental treatment or for other items such as toothbrushes.

Checks will be made before sending out any payment.

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 HC5 refund form and make sure you enclose your optical prescription and your receipt with your HC5 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, Practitioner Services Division of NHS National Services Scotland has to agree that the loss or damage was due to illness or disability before payment can be made – read page 23.

Hospital Travel Costs 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 HC5 refund claim form – the form tells you what to do.

The Penalty Charge

Any patient found to have falsely 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 falsely 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.

Further Information

- **A Quick Guide to Help with Health costs including NHS Charges and Optical Voucher Values (Leaflet HCS2)**
- **Help with Health Costs Low Income Scheme application form HC1.** To request a form call 0131 275 6386.
- **Refund Claim Low Income Scheme form HC5:** for all health costs. To request a form call 0131 275 6386.

Health Costs Advice Lines

For further information about the NHS Low Income Scheme telephone 0300 330 1343.

NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificates

Telephone enquiries to Patient Services of the BSA, please telephone: 0300 330 1347. Please have your tax credit award notice ready to answer questions.

The BSA does not deal with enquiries about tax credit applications or entitlement to an award notice. Any enquiries about entitlement to Tax Credit should go to:

HM Revenue & Customs – Tax Credit helpline

For enquiries about applications or entitlement to Tax Credit Award Notices: Tel: 0845 300 3900.

For people with hearing or speech difficulties: Tel: 0845 300 3909.

Other Health Advice

NHSScotland offers a 24-hour confidential nurse advice and health information service called NHS 24.

Telephone NHS 24 on: 111.

Please note: NHS 24 does not deal with tax credit queries.

NHS National Services Scotland, Practitioner Services Division Regional Offices

Ayrshire & Arran, Dumfries & Galloway, Greater Glasgow & Clyde, Lanarkshire and Western Isles:

NHS National Services Scotland
Practitioner Services (Medical)
Meridian Court
5 Cadogan Street Glasgow G2 6QE

Borders, Fife, Forth Valley and Lothian:

NHS National Services Scotland
Practitioner Services (Medical)
Gyle Square,
1 South Gyle Crescent
Edinburgh EH12 9EB
Tel: 0131 275 6000

Grampian, Highland, Orkney, Shetland and Tayside:

Practitioner Services (Medical)
Bridge View
1 North Esplanade West
Aberdeen AB11 5QF
Tel: 01224 358400

Proof of Entitlement Tables

The tables on the following pages show who can get NHS treatment. They also set out what proof of entitlement you need to have and how to get proof.

There are separate tables for NHS dental treatment and optical vouchers.

For NHS dental treatment – see pages 35-36.

For optical vouchers – see pages 37-38.

Free 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 26 years old	Any official document showing your name and date of birth such as a birth certificate, NHS medical card, passport, travel concession card.	NHS medical cards are given out when you are first registered as a patient with a GP. If you need a card, contact your local NHS Board.
Are aged 18 and in full-time education	A current Child Benefit order book or evidence of age as above. If you do not get Child Benefit, you can show proof of your date of birth and proof that you are a full-time student.	If you do not have an order book, contact the Child Benefit Centre: 0845 302 1444. Your school, college, university or local education authority can give you proof that you are in qualifying full-time education (see page 13).
Are pregnant	MatB1 certificate or NHS exemption certificate.	MatB1 certificates are issued by your GP or registered midwife. You can apply for an NHS exemption certificate as proof. To get one ask your GP, midwife or health visitor for an FW8 application form. The form tells you what to do.
Have had a baby in the previous 12 months, or have had a stillborn baby in the previous 12 months	Notification of birth form, birth certificate or stillbirth certificate.	The midwife who delivers your baby will give you a notification of birth form. Birth certificates and stillbirth certificates are issued by your local registrar of births, marriages and deaths.

Free NHS Dental Treatment

You can get free dental treatment if you:	The proof you need to have	Where and how to get proof
Are named on a valid HC2 certificate	An HC2 certificate for full help with health costs.	Make a claim using form HC1, obtainable from your Jobcentre Plus office or by calling 0131 275 6000.
Are named on a valid HC3 certificate	The charge may be reduced if you are named on an HC3 certificate for partial help with health costs.	You may also be able to get an HC1 from your local hospital, dentist, optician or doctor.
Receive or are included in your partner award of Income Support	An entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office.	You can get proof in the form of an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office.
Receive or are included in your partner's award of Income-related Employment and Support Allowance	An entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office.	You can get proof in the form of an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office.
Receive or are included in your partner's award of Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance	An entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office.	You can get proof in the form of an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office.
Receive or are included in your partner's award of Pension Credit guarantee credit paid on its own or with savings credit	Pension Credit award notice from the Department of Work and Pensions, Pension Services.	If you have lost or mislaid your Pension Service award notice, contact the Pension Service phone line on 0845 606 0265.
Receive or are included in an award of tax credits and meeting the qualifying conditions	A valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate.	If you are eligible an exemption certificate will be sent to you. See page 16 if you haven't yet received your certificate.
Receive or are included in an award of Universal Credit and meet the qualifying conditions	An entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office.	You can get proof in the form of an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office.

NHS Optical Vouchers

You can get optical vouchers if:	The proof you need to have	Where and how to get proof
Are aged under 16	A Child Benefit order book, NHS medical card, passport, birth certificate, travel concession card, showing your name and date of birth.	If you do not have an order book, contact the Child Benefit Centre: 0845 302 1444. To get a new NHS medical card contact your NHS Board.
Are 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.	If you do not have an order book, contact the Child Benefit Centre: 0845 302 1444. Your school, college, university or your local education authority can give you proof that you are in qualifying full-time education (see page 13).
Receive or are included in your partner's award of Income Support	An entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus office.	You can get proof in the form of an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office.
Receive or are included in your partner's award of Income-related Employment and Support Allowance	An entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus office.	You can get proof in the form of an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office.
Receive or are included in your partner's award of Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance	An entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus office.	You can get proof in the form of an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office.
Receive or are included in your partner's award of Pension Credit guarantee credit paid on its own or with savings credit	Pension Credit award notice from the Department of Work and Pensions, Pension Services.	If you have lost or mislaid your Pension Service award notice, contact the Pension Service phone line on 0845 606 0265.

NHS Optical Vouchers

You can get optical vouchers if:	The proof you need to have	Where and how to get proof
You receive or are included in your partner's award of tax credits and meeting qualifying conditions	A valid NHS Tax Credit exemption certificate.	If you are eligible for free treatment, you will be sent a certificate. See page 17 if you haven't received a certificate yet.
You receive or are included in an award of Universal Credit and meet the qualifying conditions	An entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office.	You can get proof in the form of an entitlement letter from your Jobcentre Plus Office.
You are named on a valid HC2 certificate	An HC2 certificate for full help with health costs.	Make a claim using form HC1, obtainable from your Jobcentre Plus office or by calling 0131 275 6000. You may also be able to get one from your local hospital, dentist, optician or GP.
You are named on a valid HC3 Certificate	An HC3 Certificate for practical help with health costs.	Make a claim using form HC1, obtainable from your Jobcentre Plus office or by calling 0131 275 6000. You may also be able to get one from your local hospital, dentist, optician or GP.

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