

A Quick Guide To

# Help With Health Costs



Includes

# Charges And Optical Voucher Values

August 2021



### Can I Get Help With Health Costs?

#### Young People

##### **Are you aged 16, 17 or 18 and in qualifying full-time education?**

If the answer is YES, then you are entitled to the following NHS items and services free of charge:

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NHS Dental Treatment (young people under 18 do not have to be in education to qualify)

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Voucher towards the costs of glasses or contact lenses.

##### **Are you aged under 26 but do not fall into any of the other categories in this leaflet?**

If the answer is YES, then you are entitled to NHS Dental Treatment free of charge.

#### People Receiving Benefits

##### **Are you included in an award of:**

- Income Support?
- 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 earning (take-home pay) or net earnings of £935 or less during the most recent assessment period.\*

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance?
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance?
- Pension Credit Guarantee Credit? or
- Do you have an NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate?

\*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.

If the answer is YES to any of the opposite then you are entitled to the following:

Free NHS Dental Treatment

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Vouchers towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses

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A refund of any reasonable amount spent on travel to receive treatment at an NHS hospital.

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To claim your entitlement when you have your treatment, tell the practitioner which benefit you are in receipt of. The practitioner will then ask you for evidence of your entitlement and ask you to sign a form.

### People On A Low Income

If none of the circumstances already mentioned applies to you, but you have difficulty paying NHS charges, you may qualify for help under the NHS Low Income Scheme. This is an income-related scheme which looks at your (and your partner's) weekly requirements and income to calculate how much, if anything, you should pay towards your health costs. Help with hospital travel costs may also be available.

The threshold for full help under the Scheme changes from time to time, so if you haven't claimed for a while, it may be worth making a new claim.

If you want to claim help under the Low Income Scheme, pick up form HC1 at Community Pharmacies, GP Practices, Citizens Advice Scotland Offices and Jobcentre Plus offices or on request by calling **0131 275 6386**.

You can get advice on completing the form or information and general advice by calling a helpline on: **0300 330 1343** (calls are charged at local rate).

## Women Who Are Pregnant or Who Have Given Birth in the Last 12 Months

### You are entitled to receive:

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Free NHS Dental Treatment

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To get this, you will need to apply for an NHS **Maternity Exemption Certificate**.

This certificate will also entitle you to free prescriptions if your prescriptions are dispensed in England. Application forms are available from your GP, midwife or health visitor. They will help you to complete the form and will send it to your NHS Board. You will receive your certificate by post.

## What About Prescription Charges?

From 1 April 2011 prescription charges have been abolished in Scotland, therefore you do not have to pay for NHS prescriptions if you:

- Present a Scottish prescription at a pharmacy in Scotland;
- Present an English prescription, with a valid Entitlement Card, at a pharmacy in Scotland; or
- Present an English prescription form at a pharmacy in Scotland and you qualify under exemption arrangements detailed in the NHS (Free Prescriptions

and Charges for Drugs and Appliances) (Scotland) Regulations 2011.

If you present your prescription in Northern Ireland or Wales you will not be charged. If you present your prescription in England you will be required to pay unless you qualify for exemption under English arrangements.

### **Entitlement Cards**

If you live in Scotland but are registered with a GP Practice in England you may apply for an Entitlement Card. This will serve as evidence that you are eligible for free prescriptions in Scotland.

Entitlement Cards will be issued free of charge to eligible applicants.

The Entitlement Card must be shown at the time the prescription is presented for dispensing to benefit from the abolition of prescription charges in Scotland. The address details on the Entitlement Card must match the address details on the prescription form.

### **How Can I Get One?**

Please contact NHS National Services: Practitioner Services Division on 0141 300 1300 who will send you an application form.

## Medical exemption certificates

If you have one of the following medical conditions, you may wish to apply for an NHS Medical Exemption Certificate that will entitle you to receive NHS prescriptions free of charge **if presenting your prescription in England.**

hypoparathyroidism

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hypoadrenalism for which specific substitution therapy is essential (e.g. Addison's Disease)

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diabetes insipidus and other forms of hypopituitarism

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diabetes mellitus except where treatment is by diet alone

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myasthenia gravis

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myxoedema (that is, hypothyroidism requiring thyroid hormone replacement)

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epilepsy requiring continuous anti-convulsive therapy

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or if you have a permanent fistula requiring continuous surgical dressing or requiring an appliance (also referred to as a stoma).

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In addition to these conditions, if you have a continuing physical disability which means that you are unable to leave your home without the help of another person you might also qualify.

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To apply for a **Medical Exemption Certificate**, ask the receptionist at your GP surgery. An application form EC92A will be completed at the surgery, and will be endorsed by your GP. The surgery will send off the application to your NHS Board and you will receive your certificate by post.

### Refunds

Claims must be made within three months of the date you paid the charge.

If you have applied for help under the NHS Low Income Scheme but have not yet received a reply complete form HC5 and send it with the receipt to:

NHS Business Services Authority  
Bridge House  
152 Pilgrim Street  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne  
NE1 6SN

You can get an HC5 from:

- your local Jobcentre Plus office
- your local hospital
- some dentists and opticians
- by request from Patient Services on:

**0300 330 1343**

(calls are charged at the local rate)



### Hospital Travel Costs

You may be eligible to receive help with necessary travel costs (see pages 2-3).

The maximum you will pay if you live in the Scottish Highlands and Islands is:

- Scottish Highlands and Islands      £10.00
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### NHS Dental Treatment from 1 November 2020

- Basic examination FREE\*

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- Extensive clinical examination FREE\*

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- Simple scale and polish £12.00

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- Two small X-rays and one small filling from £13.48

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- Two small X-rays and one large filling from £26.24

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- A precious metal crown from £121.12

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- Full set of plastic dentures from £166.04

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- An upper or lower metal denture from £146.40

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You pay 80 per cent of the cost of the treatment up to a maximum of £384 if you can't get free treatment or help with the cost. The above are only examples of what you might pay for courses of treatment that start on or after 1 November 2020.

The total cost of NHS treatment may be different from these examples because of the number, or types of treatment involved. If you are registered for Continuing Care with your dentist, you may ask your dentist for a treatment plan. This is provided free of charge and explains what treatment your dentist recommends, the price for each part of the treatment, and the likely total cost.

\* To people who are 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.

### Sight Tests and Eye Examinations

• NHS eye examination	FREE*
• NHS eye examination at home	FREE*
• Hospital eye department test	FREE
• Private sight test	<i>see your optician</i>
• Private sight test at home	<i>see your optician</i>

## NHS Vouchers For Glasses and Contact Lenses From 1 April 2016

### Optical vouchers

#### Maximum value per pair of glasses or contact lenses

• Single vision	A	£39.10
	B	£59.30
	C	£86.90
	D	£196.00
• Bifocal	E	£67.50
	F	£85.60
	G	£111.20
	H	£215.50
• Hospital eye department	I	£200.80
	J (per lens)	£57.00
• Complex lens – single vision		£14.60
• Complex lens – bifocal		£37.40

\* To people who are 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.

### Supplements to vouchers where clinically necessary

			per lens
• Prism	P	Single vision	£12.60
	P	Bifocal	£15.40
• Tint	T	Single vision	£4.40
	T	Bifocal	£4.90
• Photochromic		Single vision	£4.40
		Other lenses	£4.90
• Special frames		per frame up to	£64.20

### Repairs/replacements of glasses or contact lenses

If, exceptionally, you are entitled to a voucher for repair or replacement, its value will be up to the figures shown in this leaflet, depending on the part which needs replacing or repairing.

### The Penalty Charge

A penalty charge may be imposed on patients who are 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. For example:

### Dental costs penalty charge

A patient who wrongly claims free dental treatment when the charge for the course of treatment is £30 will have to pay:

• The original dental charge of	£30
• The maximum penalty charge of	£100
• TOTAL	£130

### Counter Fraud Services (CFS)

NHSScotland Counter Fraud Services offers a free and confidential service for reporting potential fraud. You can contact CFS on 08000 151628.

You can obtain an application form for an Entitlement Card from one of the following addresses:

**If you live in Dumfries & Galloway please contact:**

NHS National Services Scotland  
Practitioner Services (Medical)  
Meridian Court, 5 Cadogan Street  
Glasgow G2 6QE  
Tel: 0141 300 1300

**If you live in the Borders please contact:**

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

Any queries regarding medical or maternity certificates should be directed to the relevant regional office of NHS National Services Scotland at the following addresses:

**For Ayrshire & Arran, Dumfries & Galloway, Greater Glasgow & Clyde, Lanarkshire and Western Isles write to:**

NHS National Services Scotland  
Practitioner Services (Medical)  
Meridian Court, 5 Cadogan Street  
Glasgow G2 6QE  
Tel: 0141 300 1300

**For Borders, Fife, Forth Valley and Lothian write to:**

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

**For Grampian, Highland, Orkney, Shetland and Tayside write to:**

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

**Other special needs**

This leaflet can also be made available by request on audio cassette, on disk and in large print.

All of the numbers on this leaflet offer Typetalk for people who are hard of hearing. This is available Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm.

NHS Helpline on **0800 224488** will be able to provide both these services.

## Help With Health Costs

This is not a definitive guide to the help available. For more detailed information go to the following websites to access the booklet HCS 1, 'Are you entitled to help with health costs?':

**[www.gov.scot/Publications](http://www.gov.scot/Publications)**

or further information at

**[www.NHSinform.co.uk](http://www.NHSinform.co.uk)**