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HOW TO USE THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE



A GUIDE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

September 2022

This leaflet explains how the National Health Service (NHS) works in the UK

The National Health Service provides health care in the UK and is funded by taxation.

NHS is divided into primary and secondary care. Primary care covers the services that operate within the community. Secondary care are the services into which primary care refer for more specialist management. Secondary care is usually based at a hospital or at a clinic (for example gynaecology, paediatrics, gastroenterology). Secondary care can only be accessed via a referral from your General Practitioner (GP). GPs must comply with the referral criteria set by the individual specialties. Your GP is trained to be able to diagnose and manage many conditions across the full range of specialities.

None of the people who work for the NHS, including doctors, nurses or administration staff, will pass on any information about you to any other person or organisation without your permission. All medical care is confidential.

How do I get help with my health?

The General Practitioner (GP) service at the University Health Centre provides registered patients with access to help and advice for many of their healthcare needs. If you are ill, or worried about your health or the health of anyone in your family, you should go to see your GP.

You should therefore register yourself and your family with a GP as soon as possible so that you can get medical care if you need it; don't wait until you are ill. To register with the University Health Centre go to [Registration form](#) and complete the form.

Once our nurses have reviewed the information you provide we will contact you to arrange any necessary appointments, health screening and immunisations. It is important that you attend any appointment.



How do I make an appointment?

Before you visit your doctor or one of the nurses at the surgery you will need to make an appointment in person or by telephone or online. You can ask to see or speak to a male or female doctor or nurse, although this may not always be possible. You may have to wait a few days for a non-urgent appointment. If you think you need to see a doctor urgently tell the receptionist when you make the appointment, and you will be seen that day if appropriate. In exceptional cases, if the doctor thinks you are too ill to come to the surgery, he/she may visit you at home.

Appointments with the doctor will be for ten minutes. You need to make a separate appointment for each member of the family that wishes to speak to the doctor.



Please make sure that you **arrive on time for your appointment and if you are unable to attend your appointment please make sure you cancel it.**

The staff at the Health Centre are working tirelessly to provide you with the best service possible but there are many factors that are not within our control and, while we understand that you might find the system frustrating, we would ask that you please remain polite and courteous to all the Health Centre staff. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards aggressive or abusive language and behaviour to any of our staff.

What if I do not speak English?

If you need an interpreter you must tell the receptionist when you make the appointment. Tell the staff which language you speak and they will book an interpreter for you or get an interpreter on the phone. It is important that you and the doctor understand each other so that he/she can make an accurate diagnosis of the problem.

Who else works with my GP?

- Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANP) are highly trained and skilled. They will see you in a doctor appointment slot and can prescribe. They do have access to a doctor if necessary.
- Nurses are very highly trained in the UK. They take care of many health needs including vaccinations for travel, contraception advice and chronic illnesses such as asthma and can give general health advice.
- Midwives look after pregnant women and their newborn babies. Care before the birth is called 'ante-natal' and care after the birth 'post-natal'
- Routine Childhood Immunisations Immunisation has caused dramatic improvements in health. Because of immunisation, diseases such as diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (whooping cough), measles and polio which used to be major causes of ill health are now rare in the UK. Please make sure your child is up to date with his/her immunisations. Speak with the practice nurse or health visitor for advice.

What if I need to see a specialist doctor?

Your GP will usually provide most of your health care and will decide if you need a specialist doctor (a consultant), or if you need to go to hospital. Everyone in the UK has to wait to see these specialist doctors.

The NHS provides services that are free at the point of contact for all eligible patients. However, it operates within very tight budgets and is currently experiencing huge strain. As such, you might experience significant waits to be seen in secondary care as you will be on a waiting list to be seen. Please be patient, but if you have a query you can contact the appointments department at the hospital to which you have been referred. Your GP does not have any influence over the waiting list.

The hospital will write to you or text you with details of your appointment. If you receive any contact from the hospital and are asked to reply or confirm information you must reply otherwise your referral may be cancelled. You must also contact the hospital if you need an interpreter to be present at your appointment.

Hospital appointments may sometimes be in hospitals some distance from where you live, although you can get help with costs of travel if you have an HC2. These forms are available at the Health Centre.

Who else can help me?



Medicines: There are some medications, including all antibiotics, that can only be obtained with a prescription from a clinician. If your doctor wants you to take one of these medicines he/she will write you a prescription. Take the prescription to a pharmacy or chemist shop. In England, each item on a prescription attracts a “prescription charge”, which is a minimal amount charged for the processing and issuing of the medication. The charge is set by the government. There are a small number of conditions and social situations for which the charge is waived – please see [Who can get free prescriptions](#)

If your doctors agrees that this is a repeat medication then request this by email, using the Patient Access App or on-line through the website. Prescriptions will be ready to collect 48hrs after the request.

Other Services in the Community

There are other services in the community that you should be aware of. Your local Pharmacist can advise you on many minor ailments such as coughs, colds, sore throats, skin problems, and offer health and wellbeing advice. Some pharmacies offer extra services such as smoking cessation and travel vaccinations. Many medications are available to buy “over the counter” from your local pharmacy



Dental Care. Your GP will not be able to help you with dental problems, for this you must register with an NHS dentist via 111. For dental emergencies please call 111.

Eyesight. For routine eye checks, you can attend a high street optician and via the PEARS scheme (see separate leaflet) you can also be seen by a high street optician for acute eye problems eg. Infections, red eye.

When your GP surgery is closed

See the practice website for surgery opening times. At all other times – at night, on a Saturday or Sunday and on public holidays – medical assistance is available for health problems that cannot wait until the GP surgery is open.

Outside of normal surgery hours you can still phone the GP surgery on the number below, but you will be directed to out-of-hours service or you can **telephone 111** who will provide advice and support over the telephone. You may be asked to visit a GP surgery, or you may receive a visit from a medical professional at your home.

If you do not speak English, 111 and the out-of-hours service can provide an interpreter. All you need to do is say in English the language you would prefer to use at the beginning of your call. If you do not speak any English ask a friend or relative to make the call for you and wait until an interpreter is on the line before you describe your problem. You will be asked for some details such as your name and address: this information is important and is not shared with anyone else.



Accident & Emergency Department (A&E)

The Accident and Emergency department (also known as A&E department or casualty) at the Hospital (Huddersfield Royal Infirmary) is for genuine life-threatening emergencies, such as:

- loss of consciousness
- acute confused state and fits that are not stopping
- persistent, severe chest pain
- breathing difficulties
- severe bleeding that cannot be stopped
- severe allergic reactions
- severe burns or scalds

- stroke
- major trauma such as a road traffic accident

If an ambulance is needed, call 999, the emergency phone number in the UK. You can also dial 112, which is the ambulance number and is also used throughout the European Union.

Less severe injuries can be treated in urgent care centres or minor injury units.

 **Please do NOT visit the A&E Department for routine problems**

A&E is **not** an alternative to a GP appointment.

Please make us your first point of contact during opening hours. Outside our opening hours call 111, or go to 111.nhs.uk which will direct you to the best local service.

 **Minor Illnesses**

Visit our website on www.universityhealthhuddersfield.co.uk for information on various conditions. Information is available in 20 other languages.

Summary Care Record (SCR)

The SCR is meant to help emergency doctors and nurses to help you when you contact them when the surgery is closed. Initially it will contain just your medication and allergies. Further details and a form to opt out are available on the practice website.



Change of personal details

Please inform us when you have a new address, a new mobile number or email address in case we need to contact you. You can do this by telephone, in person or use the 'your contact details' button on the website and complete the form



Check our website: www.universityhealthhuddersfield.co.uk

Contact details for The University Health Centre:



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HD1 3AL



01484 430386

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Out of hours' telephone numbers:



when it's less
urgent than 999

You can contact 111 for health advice or for medical support when the surgery is closed. Alternatively you can telephone the Health Centre on 01484 430386. Your call may be automatically redirected to the out-of-hours service or you may require a pen and paper ready to take down details of who to contact – PLEASE LISTEN TO THE WHOLE OF THE MESSAGE!

Email: u.healthcentre@nhs.net

Website: www.universityhealthhuddersfield.co.uk



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**University Health Centre
Huddersfield***

twitter



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NHS App:



What is the Choose well campaign?

The Choose well campaign aims to help people choose the right NHS service to make sure they get the best treatment if they become unwell or injured.



By going to the most appropriate place patients can be seen quicker, get the most appropriate care and also help alleviate pressure on Accident & Emergency (A&E) departments.

The campaign is not about dissuading anyone from coming to A&E. It is about informing people that there is a wide range of NHS services which they can access which may better serve their needs. This can also make a big difference to the workload of the A&E doctors and nurses.

For example

For hangover, grazed knee, sore throat or cough – self care

For diarrhoea, runny nose, painful cough or headache – pharmacist

For vomiting, ear pain, stomach ache or back ache – GP

For cuts, strains, rashes or sprains – GP

For choking, chest pain, severe bleeding or blacking out – call 999

If you are still unsure of which service to use you can call NHS Direct on 111



What is 111? The telephone number to call when you need medical help fast but it's not an emergency – an **emergency** is when someone needs medical help to save their life

If someone needs medical help to save their life, you must call 999