

# Access to health services

## Information for visitors to Northern Ireland



**Emergency  
services**



**Community pharmacy  
services**



**General Practitioner  
(GP) services**



**Dental  
services**

This document on Health and Social Care (HSC) services is for visitors to Northern Ireland. It provides information on eligibility for medical treatment, hospital emergency departments, and how to contact a General Practitioner (GP), pharmacist or dentist across the five HSC Trust geographical areas (see the Northern Ireland map below).

If you have a medical emergency and require an ambulance, **call 999 or 112** from any phone.

Text Relay – dial 18000 for emergency calls.

A medical emergency is something that is potentially immediately life-threatening.



Information on health services such as GPs, pharmacies and dentists across Northern Ireland is also available from the following website: [www.hscni.net](http://www.hscni.net)

Further information, including an A-Z symptom search, is available at: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/health-and-wellbeing/illnesses-and-conditions](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/health-and-wellbeing/illnesses-and-conditions)

**Lifeline**

If you, or someone you know, is in distress or despair, call Lifeline, the Northern Ireland crisis response helpline on 0808 808 8000 (or Textphone: 18001 0808 8000 for deaf and hard of hearing users only) or visit the website [www.lifelinehelpline.info](http://www.lifelinehelpline.info)

## Entitlement to medical treatment

All visitors to Northern Ireland are entitled to avail of accident and emergency services free of charge, eg a sudden onset of illness, an accident or the sudden worsening of any pre-existing condition. Routine monitoring or treatment that could wait until a person returns to their home country does not fall within this definition.

Where any treatment provided to a person does not fall into this category, eg any subsequent treatment following an accident or emergency, the person will be charged unless they meet an exemption, as set out in the Health and Personal Social Services Provision of Health Services to Persons Not Ordinarily Resident Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

- **UK:** (entitled to full health care). Needs to provide details of their UK GP.
- **EU:** (entitled to free immediate and necessary treatment including medicines). Needs to provide a valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).
- **Countries with a reciprocal agreement with the UK, eg Canada and Australia:** (entitled to free immediate and necessary treatment including medicines).
- **Others:** (pay for treatment, including appointment/consultation and pay for medication; a GP can decline to provide this service).

**If a condition is deemed to be non-urgent and a GP or GP out-of-hours service is consulted, there may be a charge.**

Follow this link for a slide show tool to help an individual determine their entitlement to access HSC services:

[www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/pdf/ACCESS\\_TO\\_HEALTH\\_ASSESSMENT\\_TO\\_ENTITLEMENT\\_AID\\_FINAL\\_2017.ppsx](http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/pdf/ACCESS_TO_HEALTH_ASSESSMENT_TO_ENTITLEMENT_AID_FINAL_2017.ppsx)

Follow this link for the list of reciprocal country agreements:

<https://assets.nhs.uk/prod/documents/reciprocal-healthcare-agreements-table.pdf>

For further information, please refer to the following website:

[www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/1785.htm](http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/1785.htm)

**Please consult relevant travel insurance or private medical care provider to check entitlement to medical treatment, as appropriate.**



## Medical emergency

If you have a medical emergency and require an ambulance, call **999 or 112** from any phone. Text Relay – dial 18000 for emergency calls.

A medical emergency is something that is potentially immediately life-threatening. Here are some examples:

- sudden collapse and the person unresponsive or not breathing;
- suspected stroke or heart attack;
- person unconscious, perhaps after heavy blood loss or accident;
- collapse preceded by facial swelling and wheeze (probable anaphylactic shock) or choking episode.

In an emergency, you can also go to one of the following hospital emergency departments without an appointment. The emergency department will treat serious injuries or conditions, including fractures.

Emergency departments below are open 24 hours, 7 days a week unless indicated.



These hospitals can be contacted via the Belfast HSC switchboard on tel: 028 9024 0503

Follow this link for maps:  
[www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/contact/EmergencyContacts.htm](http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/contact/EmergencyContacts.htm)

**Royal Victoria Hospital (adults)**  
274 Grosvenor Road  
**Belfast**  
BT12 6BA

**Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children** (located on the Royal Hospitals site)  
274 Grosvenor Road  
**Belfast**  
BT12 6BA

**Mater Hospital**  
45-54 Crumlin Road  
**Belfast**  
BT14 6AB

### Downe Hospital

2 Struell Wells Road

#### Downpatrick

BT30 6RL

Tel: 028 4461 3311

Emergency department open 08.00 –  
20.00, Mon – Fri only

Minor injuries unit open 09.00 – 17.00  
Sat and Sun

### Lagan Valley Hospital

39 Hillsborough Road

#### Lisburn

Co Antrim

BT28 1JP

Tel: 028 9266 5141

Emergency department open 08.00 –  
20.00 daily

### Ulster Hospital

Upper Newtownards Road

Dundonald

#### Belfast

BT16 1RH

Tel: 028 9048 4511

### Antrim Area Hospital

Bush Road

#### Antrim

BT41 2RL

Tel: 028 9442 4000

### Causeway Hospital

4 Newbridge Road

#### Coleraine

BT52 1HS

Tel: 028 7032 7032

### Craigavon Area Hospital

68 Lurgan Road

#### Portadown

BT63 5QQ

Tel: 028 3756 1750

### Daisy Hill Hospital

5 Hospital Road

#### Newry

BT35 8DR

Tel: 028 3756 2090

### Altnagelvin Area Hospital

Glenshane Road

#### Derry/Londonderry

BT47 6SB

Tel: 028 7134 5171

### South West Acute Hospital

124 Irvinestown Road

#### Enniskillen

Co Fermanagh

BT74 6DN

Tel: 028 6638 2000

### Urgent Care and Treatment Centre (UCTC)

### Omagh Hospital and Primary Care Complex

7 Donaghane Road

#### Omagh

Co Tyrone

BT79 0NR

Tel: 028 8283 3100

This is a nurse-led minor injuries unit





## Community pharmacies / chemists

All community pharmacies / chemists have a qualified pharmacist working in the pharmacy who is registered with the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland.

Pharmacists can give free expert advice on medicines and many common health conditions. For example, they are trained to advise whether your symptoms can be treated without the need to see a doctor, or whether you should seek further advice from a GP. Pharmacists can also give you information about other local health services.

- You do not need an appointment to speak to a pharmacist.

You can buy over-the-counter medicines (which don't need a prescription from your doctor), and can have medicines dispensed that are prescribed by a GP. Community pharmacy opening hours do vary, but Monday – Friday they are usually open 09.30 – 17.00. Some pharmacies may be open for a longer period.

Some pharmacies are closed on Saturdays and most are closed on Sundays.

Those pharmacies that are most likely to be open during the evening to 21.00 and Sunday afternoons from 13.00 – 17.30 are located in shopping centres and city centres.

- For more information about community pharmacies, see: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/community-pharmacists](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/community-pharmacists)
- For a list of pharmacies, addresses and their contracted opening hours, please refer to the following website: [www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2053.htm](http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2053.htm)
- In certain towns, pharmacies open on a rota basis for a limited time on Sundays and public holidays. Details of these rota opening times are available at: [www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2286.htm](http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2286.htm)



## GP services

Family doctors are known as GPs and work in GP practices located throughout Northern Ireland.

GPs provide a wide range of family health services including advice on health problems, physical examinations, diagnosis and treatment, care for more longstanding medical conditions, prescribing of medication, and referrals to other health services.

You will be able to speak to a health care professional the same day if you have a medically urgent condition, although usually appointments are booked in advance.

GP practices are open on weekdays Monday – Friday, excluding bank holidays, and exact opening times differ between practices. **Always contact the GP practice first by telephone.**

To find a GP practice, follow the link below:  
[www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/gp-practices](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/gp-practices)

Enter your location or town to find the nearest GP practice and their telephone contact details.

When practices are closed, a GP out-of-hours service is available for urgent medical problems as detailed below.

Private GP services are also available through several local providers.

18:03



## GP out-of-hours service

If you require urgent primary medical care when GP surgeries are closed, you can telephone the nearest GP out-of-hours provider.

GP out-of-hours services operate from 18.00 each evening Monday - Friday and 24 hours on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. **You must make contact first by telephone.**

Please note: if the patient's condition is potentially immediately life-threatening, eg suspected heart attack or stroke, telephone **999** or **112** direct.

To locate your nearest Trust, refer to the Northern Ireland map of HSC Trust areas at the beginning of this booklet.



### North and West Belfast GP out-of-hours centre

Tel: 028 9074 4447

### South and East Belfast GP out-of-hours centre

Tel: 028 9079 6220



### North Down and Ards GP out-of-hours centre

Tel 028 9182 2344

### Lisburn and Downpatrick GP out-of-hours centre

Tel: 028 9260 2204



### Dalriada Urgent Care

Tel: 028 2566 3500



### Southern GP out-of-hours centre

Tel: 028 3839 9201



### Western Urgent Care

Tel: 028 7186 5195

Text Relay: Dial 18001 followed by the full GP out-of-hours telephone number.

For further information on the GP out-of-hours service, see:

[www.gpoutofhours.hscni.net](http://www.gpoutofhours.hscni.net)



## Dental services

Emergency dental treatment may be accessed from local dental practices during normal working hours from Monday – Friday. A payment may be required.

A list of dental surgeries and contact telephone numbers can be accessed at: [www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2070.htm](http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2070.htm)

Outside of normal working hours, Relief of Dental Pain Clinics can be accessed for the treatment of dental emergencies only. A dental emergency is:

- trauma;
- swelling;
- uncontrolled bleeding;
- severe pain.

Please note: the Relief of Dental Pain Clinics **do not** have facilities for permanent restoration of lost crowns or bridges, or denture repairs.

For further information, please refer to the following website: [www.gpoutofhours.hscni.net/services/emergency-dental-services/](http://www.gpoutofhours.hscni.net/services/emergency-dental-services/)