



## **COMING TO SCOTLAND TO STUDY? WHAT ARE YOUR HEALTH CARE ENTITLEMENTS?**

Entitlement to NHS care in Scotland is generally based on residency status not nationality. Visitors to Scotland (ie those not ordinarily resident in Scotland for more than 3 months of each year) are not entitled to NHS care without charge unless they are accepted for care under one of the negotiated reciprocal health care agreements or fall within a specific exemption category as set out in the NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) (Scotland) Regulations 1989.

### **Am I entitled to National Health Service (NHS) treatment?**

Under the current Regulations an overseas student who is pursuing a full time course of study in Scotland is exempt from NHS charges. In this respect, an introductory course and a main course are regarded as one course of study.

Once established, exemption from NHS charges continues for the period of study and for one month thereafter. Exemption also apply to the spouse, registered civil partner and children (under the age of 16, or 19 if in further education) of the student.

### **Does this include entitlement to General Medical (or GP) Services?**

Yes. Advice is that on arrival, you should approach a local GP who is willing to register you. Further advice, including help with finding a GP can be obtained from the local NHS Board. Some Universities or Colleges may have onsite medical facilities.

### **What evidence will prove my entitlement to NHS treatment?**

It is for the NHS practitioner to determine entitlement and you may be expected to provide documentation that supports your claim to be a student.

Students from European Economic Areas (EEA) should obtain a European Health Insurance Card from their own local health or social benefits/insurance office before arriving in Scotland. Presenting this to the NHS practitioner should suffice.

Students from outwith the EEA can present a letter from the student's academic institution showing acceptance on a full time course of study, the start date and duration.

In all cases, the responsibility for providing such evidence lies with the individual and the NHS practitioner will base their decision on the evidence provided and in accordance with the Regulations.

### **What happens if I need medical treatment before I have established my entitlement?**

Emergency treatment received at General Practitioner (GP) surgeries or in Accident and Emergency departments of hospitals is free of charge. Any charge that is made for other treatment needs and before eligibility is confirmed will be refundable.

### **What happens after the "free" accident and emergency treatment?**

Unless you are exempt, charges as a paying NHS patient will apply once a patient is formally admitted as an in-patient or registered at an outpatient clinic. The option for receiving treatment as a *private* patient, which is also chargeable, is also available.

### **If I am entitled to NHS treatment, is there anything I have to pay for?**

There are a number of statutory charges for a variety of medical treatments that can apply to all in Scotland, eg dental and medication/prescriptions etc. NHS practitioners will advise in each case.

For information on help with health costs please see leaflet HC11 "*Are you entitled to help with health costs?*". This is available from main post offices, social security offices and NHS Hospitals. Some dentists, opticians, pharmacists or doctors may also hold copies. ] HC11 is also available on the Internet at ([www.doh.gov.uk/nhscharges/hc11.htm](http://www.doh.gov.uk/nhscharges/hc11.htm)). This form covers the Scottish position also.

**Please note that this fact sheet is a general guide and not a full statement of the current regulations**