

Coronavirus (COVID-19) (/coronavirus)

Guidance and support

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Part of

[Brexit: guidance for individuals \(/guidance/brexit-guidance-for-individuals-and-families\)](#)

Guidance

Healthcare for UK nationals living in Ireland

How to get state healthcare if you're living, working or studying in Ireland.

From:

[Department of Health and Social Care \(/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care\)](#), [Foreign & Commonwealth Office \(/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office\)](#), and [Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office \(/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-development-office\)](#)

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Stay up to date

This guidance will be updated if anything changes to how you get state healthcare in Ireland.

[Sign up for email alerts \(https://www.gov.uk/email-signup/?topic=/world/living-in-ireland\)](https://www.gov.uk/email-signup/?topic=/world/living-in-ireland)

This information is about living in Ireland. [There's different guidance if you're visiting Ireland \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-for-uk-nationals-visiting-ireland\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-for-uk-nationals-visiting-ireland).

If you're a UK national living in Ireland, you're entitled to state healthcare in Ireland on the same basis as an Irish citizen.

You can access state health services if you're 'ordinarily resident' in Ireland. This means that you have lived or you intend to live in Ireland for at least a year.

You'll need to pay a fee for some services. The amount you pay for healthcare depends on your circumstances.

Ways to get healthcare in Ireland

If you're ordinarily resident in Ireland, you can access Irish healthcare system in one of 2 ways:

- paying standard patient charges
- with a medical card

Some people who pay charges may also be able to get a GP visit card which entitles them to free GP services.

If you're temporarily living in Ireland but normally live in the UK, for example because you are studying or posted to work in Ireland, you may qualify for necessary healthcare paid for by the UK.

Medical card

You can get a range of health services and medicines for free if you have a medical card, including:

- GP services
- public hospital services
- dental, optical and aural services
- community care and personal social services
- prescription drugs and medicines, subject to a small charge for each item

Medical cards are 'means tested', which means they're based on your income and personal circumstances.

[Find out more about applying for a medical card \(https://www2.hse.ie/services/medical-cards/medical-card-application-process/what-a-medical-card-covers.html\)](https://www2.hse.ie/services/medical-cards/medical-card-application-process/what-a-medical-card-covers.html)

If you do not have a medical card

If you do not have a medical card, you're entitled to the following:

- public hospital services
- maternity and infant care services

- child health services
- some other needs-based health services

You may have to pay inpatient and outpatient hospital charges.

GP services are not free in Ireland. You can apply for a GP visit card to access GP services for free.

You'll qualify for a GP visit card if you're:

- over 70 years old
- under 6 years old
- earning below the qualifying income limit

[Find out more about applying for a GP visit card \(https://www2.hse.ie/services/gp-visit-cards/gp-visit-cards.html\)](https://www2.hse.ie/services/gp-visit-cards/gp-visit-cards.html)

Registering with a GP

If you have a medical card or GP visit card, you need to register with a [GP who accepts these cards \(https://www2.hse.ie/services/medical-cards/gps-who-accept-medical-cards.html\)](https://www2.hse.ie/services/medical-cards/gps-who-accept-medical-cards.html).

If you do not have either of these, you'll have to register as a private patient. Private patients can register with any doctor, but you'll be charged for GP services.

You can [find local health services, including a GP, on the Health Service Executive \(HSE\) website \(https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/lho/lholist.html\)](https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/lho/lholist.html). You can also contact them by phone.

HSE infoline

Telephone (from Ireland): 1850 24 1850

Telephone (from outside Ireland): +353 41 684 0300

Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm

Saturday, 10am to 5pm

Frontier workers living in the UK or Ireland

If you live in the UK or Ireland but work in the other country and return to your country of residence at least once a week, you can access healthcare in both countries.

All frontier workers are entitled to healthcare in Ireland on the same basis as an Irish resident and can apply for a [medical card \(https://www2.hse.ie/services/medical-cards/medical-card-application-process/what-a-medical-card-covers.html\)](https://www2.hse.ie/services/medical-cards/medical-card-application-process/what-a-medical-card-covers.html) if eligible.

UK-funded healthcare in Ireland

Some people can get their healthcare in Ireland paid for by the UK. This could be because you're:

- temporarily living in Ireland and normally live in the UK
- receiving a UK State Pension or some other benefits
- living in Ireland and working in the UK as a frontier worker

If your UK employer has sent you to Ireland temporarily ('posted workers')

A [posted worker \(https://www.gov.uk/working-abroad/posted-workers\)](https://www.gov.uk/working-abroad/posted-workers) is someone who is employed or self-employed in the UK but temporarily sent to another country to work.

As a posted worker, you're entitled to necessary healthcare in Ireland paid for by the UK.

Not all state healthcare is free in Ireland and you may have to pay for services that you'd get for free on the NHS.

When you use a health service, show one of the following alongside photo ID:

- UK-issued Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) or European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)
- UK driving licence
- UK biometric residence permit
- Northern Ireland voter's card or medical card
- 2 documents showing your UK address (for example, a bank statement or utility bill), issued in the last 3 months

You may also be asked to provide documentation demonstrating the nature and length of your posting.

HMRC has a [helpline for National Insurance enquiries from non-UK residents \(https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/contact/national-insurance-enquiries-for-non-uk-residents\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/contact/national-insurance-enquiries-for-non-uk-residents). They can answer questions about posted worker status and explain which documents you will need to get healthcare while posted.

If you're studying in Ireland

You should apply for a Student GHIC to get medically necessary, state-provided healthcare for the duration of your study period in Ireland, whether this is for part or all of your course. This means that you'll get necessary healthcare services on the same basis as an Irish citizen either for free or at a reduced cost.

If you already hold a valid Student EHIC you can use this until the card expires.

[Read more about eligibility and how to apply \(https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/\)](https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/)

If you're a UK resident living and studying in Ireland, you're entitled to 'necessary healthcare' paid for by the UK.

Not all state healthcare is free in Ireland and you may have to pay for services that you'd get for free on the NHS.

When you use a health service, show one of the following alongside photo ID:

- UK-issued Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) or European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)
- UK driving licence
- UK biometric residence permit
- Northern Ireland voter's card or medical card
- 2 documents showing your UK address (for example a bank statement or utility bill), issued in the last 3 months

You may also need a letter from your educational institution confirming you're enrolled in study.

If you were living in Ireland before 1 January 2021

If you've been living in Ireland since before 1 January 2021, you may be entitled to an Irish [medical card \(https://www2.hse.ie/services/medical-cards/medical-card-application-process/what-a-medical-card-covers.html\)](https://www2.hse.ie/services/medical-cards/medical-card-application-process/what-a-medical-card-covers.html) funded by the UK if you're an Irish resident and:

- a frontier worker (someone who works in one state and lives in another) who began frontier work in the UK before 1 January 2021
- receiving a UK State Pension
- receiving another 'exportable benefit'

Not all UK benefits that can be claimed while abroad entitle you to UK-funded healthcare in Ireland. Read more about [claiming benefits if you move abroad \(https://www.gov.uk/claim-benefits-abroad/where-you-can-claim-benefits\)](https://www.gov.uk/claim-benefits-abroad/where-you-can-claim-benefits).

If you are in scope, you will also be entitled to:

- a UK-issued [European Health Insurance Card \(EHIC\) \(https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-ehic-european-health-insurance-card/\)](https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-ehic-european-health-insurance-card/) for travel in the EU
- UK-funded [planned treatment \(https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/going-abroad-for-treatment/what-is-the-s2-route/\)](https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/going-abroad-for-treatment/what-is-the-s2-route/) in other EU countries

Planned treatment

UK and Irish residents can access pre-approved healthcare in the other country via the [planned treatment route \(https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/going-abroad-for-treatment/going-abroad-for-medical-treatment/\)](https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/going-abroad-for-treatment/going-abroad-for-medical-treatment/).

Getting treatment in the UK

Because the NHS is a residency-based system, under NHS rules UK nationals who move abroad on a permanent basis may lose their entitlement to free NHS healthcare.

If you are a UK national and move to the EU, you should not expect to be able to use NHS services for free when visiting the UK unless you have an EHIC, PRC or S2 to show your healthcare costs are funded by the EU country in which you now live, or another exemption applies.

Some former UK residents do not have to pay for NHS treatment when visiting England. This includes:

- UK war pensioners
- UK government employees
- UK nationals living in the EU on or before 31 December 2020, once they have a registered, UK-issued S1

Read more about using the NHS when you no longer live in the UK (see 'UK nationals who no longer live in the UK' in [Healthcare for visitors to the UK from the EU \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-for-eu-and-efta-citizens-visiting-the-uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-for-eu-and-efta-citizens-visiting-the-uk)).

If you return to live in the UK you'll be able to use the NHS like any other UK resident.

Read more about [using the NHS when you return to live in the UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/using-the-nhs-when-you-return-to-live-in-the-uk) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/using-the-nhs-when-you-return-to-live-in-the-uk>).

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Last updated 21 October 2021 - [hide all updates](#)

1. 21 October 2021

Updated 'Studying in Ireland' to include more information on Student GHIC and Student EHIC cards. Updated 'Getting treatment in the UK' to provide additional detail about NHS access when visiting the UK.

2. 31 December 2020

Page updated to reflect healthcare arrangements for UK nationals in Ireland under the new rules of the UK's deal with the EU. New sections added: 'Ways to get healthcare in Ireland' and 'Frontier workers living in the UK or Ireland'.

3. 31 January 2020

Details on the ways that you access healthcare have been updated. The guidance now only covers living, working and studying. Information on visiting has been moved to: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-residents-visiting-the-eueea-and-switzerland-healthcare>

4. 28 August 2019

First published.

Related content

- [Healthcare for UK nationals living in Cyprus \(/guidance/healthcare-in-cyprus\)](/guidance/healthcare-in-cyprus)
- [Healthcare for UK nationals living in Portugal \(/guidance/healthcare-in-portugal-including-madeira\)](/guidance/healthcare-in-portugal-including-madeira)
- [Healthcare for UK nationals living in Italy \(/guidance/healthcare-in-italy\)](/guidance/healthcare-in-italy)
- [Healthcare for UK nationals living in Greece \(/guidance/healthcare-in-greece\)](/guidance/healthcare-in-greece)
- [Healthcare for UK nationals living in Malta \(/guidance/healthcare-in-malta\)](/guidance/healthcare-in-malta)
- [Ireland travel advice \(/foreign-travel-advice/ireland\)](/foreign-travel-advice/ireland)

Detailed guidance

- [Living in Ireland \(/guidance/living-in-ireland\)](/guidance/living-in-ireland)
- [Healthcare for UK nationals visiting Ireland \(/guidance/healthcare-for-uk-nationals-visiting-ireland\)](/guidance/healthcare-for-uk-nationals-visiting-ireland)

Collection

- [Healthcare in the EU, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland \(/government/collections/healthcare-in-the-eu-norway-iceland-liechtenstein-and-switzerland\)](/government/collections/healthcare-in-the-eu-norway-iceland-liechtenstein-and-switzerland)

Brexit

[Check what you need to do \(/brexit\)](/brexit)

Explore the topic

- [British nationals overseas \(/going-and-being-abroad/british-nationals-overseas\)](/going-and-being-abroad/british-nationals-overseas)
- [Living abroad \(/going-and-being-abroad/living-abroad\)](/going-and-being-abroad/living-abroad)

- [Health and social care \(/health-and-social-care\)](/health-and-social-care)
 - [Brexit: guidance for individuals \(/brexit/guidance-individuals\)](/brexit/guidance-individuals)
 - [Living in Ireland \(/world/living-in-ireland\)](/world/living-in-ireland)
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