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Guidance

Healthcare for UK nationals visiting Ireland

How to get state healthcare when you're on holiday or travelling to Ireland.

Published 31 January 2020

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From:

Department of Health and Social Care (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care>), Foreign & Commonwealth Office (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office>), and Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-development-office>)

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Coronavirus (COVID-19) travel advice

See the latest health advice for UK travellers following the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>).

Sign up for Ireland travel advice email alerts. (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/ireland/email-signup>)

This information is about visiting Ireland. There's different guidance for healthcare if you're going to live, study or work in Ireland (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-ireland>).

If you're ordinarily resident in the UK, you can get 'necessary healthcare' from state healthcare services in Ireland during your visit.

'Necessary healthcare' means healthcare which becomes medically necessary during your stay, and you cannot reasonably wait until you're back in the UK to get it.

This includes medically necessary treatment for a pre-existing or chronic condition. Some treatments will need to be pre-arranged with the relevant healthcare provider in Ireland, for example kidney dialysis or chemotherapy.

It does not include treatment that you travel to Ireland specifically to receive.

This is not a replacement for travel insurance. Take out travel insurance before your trip.

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.

How to get healthcare in Ireland

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 bank statement or utility bill) issued within 3 months

If you do not have valid documentation

If you need treatment and you do not have valid documentation, you can apply for a Provisional Replacement Certificate (PRC). This proves you're entitled to healthcare in Ireland.

Call the Overseas Healthcare Services to apply for a PRC. This is part of the NHS Business Services Authority (BSA).

NHS Overseas Healthcare Services
Telephone +44 (0)191 218 1999
Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

If you are unable to get a PRC, for example because you're accessing healthcare outside of business hours, you'll need to pay in full for treatment. You can then apply to the NHS Business Services Authority for reimbursement if your treatment meets the criteria for 'necessary healthcare'.

What you're entitled to

If you're ordinarily resident in the UK, you can access medically necessary state health services on the same basis as an Irish resident. You may still need to pay a fee for some services, just like an Irish resident.

You will not have to pay for hospital care including A&E or inpatient treatment.

You'll need to pay in full for private healthcare.

Travelling with a health condition

Buy travel insurance (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/foreign-travel-insurance>) with healthcare cover for your condition.

Read the Money and Pensions Advice Service guidance for buying travel insurance for people with pre-existing medical conditions (<https://www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/articles/travel-insurance-for-over-65s-and-medical-conditions>).

If your condition means that you'll need treatment while you're in Ireland, you may need to pre-arrange it. For example, if you need dialysis or oxygen treatment. Speak to your doctor in the UK for advice before you travel.

Getting prescriptions

You can use a UK prescription to get medicines from pharmacies in Ireland.

You will have to pay in full for any prescription medicine.

Bringing medicine with you

You need a letter to prove your medicine is prescribed to you if it contains a 'controlled drug'. You may need to show this at the border when you're entering or leaving the UK.

You may also need a licence for controlled drugs if:

- your trip is longer than 3 months
- you're travelling with more than 3 months' supply

Read more about travelling with controlled medicines (<http://www.gov.uk/travelling-controlled-drugs>).

Travelling to have planned treatment

If you want to have planned treatment in Ireland, you can apply for NHS funding. For example, if you're going abroad to give birth.

Read the NHS guide to seeking medical treatment abroad (<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/going-abroad-for-treatment/going-abroad-for-medical-treatment/>) for more information on planned treatment.

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1. 31 December 2020

Page updated to reflect healthcare arrangements for UK nationals visiting Ireland under the new rules of the UK's deal with the EU. Now explains meaning of 'necessary healthcare'. Revised list of documents accepted as proof of UK residence.

2. 13 March 2020

Link to the latest coronavirus (COVID-19) travel advice added.

3. 31 January 2020

First published.

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Brexit

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Related content

- [Healthcare for UK nationals living in Ireland \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-ireland\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-ireland)
- [Spain: medical facilities and practitioners \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spain-list-of-medical-facilitiespractitioners\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spain-list-of-medical-facilitiespractitioners)
- [Healthcare for UK nationals living in Iceland \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-iceland\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-iceland)
- [Ireland: medical facilities and practitioners \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ireland-list-of-medical-facilitiespractitioners\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ireland-list-of-medical-facilitiespractitioners)
- [Travelling to Ireland \(https://www.gov.uk/world/travelling-to-ireland\)](https://www.gov.uk/world/travelling-to-ireland)

Detailed guidance

- [Healthcare for UK nationals living in Ireland \(https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-ireland\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-in-ireland)

Collection

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

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