



Belfast Health and
Social Care Trust



**First steps to using
health and social care
services in Northern Ireland**

Patient Rights

Any person using the Northern Ireland Health and Personal Services has the right to:

- > Be treated courteously with respect for their privacy, dignity and religious and cultural beliefs
- > Receive care and treatment on the basis of need regardless of your ability to pay
- > Receive emergency care at any time
- > Be given clear information about any treatment or care proposed, including any risks taken into account as far as possible
- > Give or withhold your consent to medical or other care or treatment
- > Choose whether or not you wish to take part in research or student training
- > See any reports made for insurance or employment purposes and information held about you on computer.

Taken from the Charter for Patients and Clients 1992

Interpreting

If you need an interpreter for your appointment with health and social care services, please ask the staff for it and they can arrange an interpreter for you. It is free of charge.

Get a Medical Card

- > You will need a Medical Card to register with a family doctor or dentist.
- > To get a Medical card you must fill out form HS22X.



You can obtain form HS22X from any Health Centre or the Central Services Agency. (www.centralservicesagency.com/translation).

This form is available in different languages. You should fill it in then take it to register with a doctor (see below).

If you need any help to fill in the form you can contact the ethnic minority community groups listed on the back of this leaflet.

Register with a Doctor

- > Your local doctor/family doctor is known as a GP (General Practitioner).
- > You must register with a GP.
- > You will need to find a GP who will take you as a patient.
- > The GP service is free to all residents.
- > You can ask to be treated by a GP of your own gender.
- > You need to let the staff know if you require an interpreter for your appointments.



Register with a Doctor (continued)

A list of GP's can be obtained from:

- > Central Services Agency (CSA)
- > Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)
- > Your local Health and Social Care Trust.

The CSA can advise you which GPs are closest to where you live.

It is **very important** to register with a GP because they are often the person who arranges first contact with health and social services. If the GP accepts you, he or she will sign your HS22X form and you will receive your medical card.

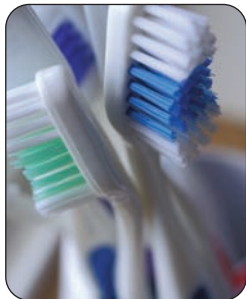
GP practices are usually open Monday to Fridays during daytimes. If you need urgent medical care for nights, weekends and public holidays, you can use the Out of Hours services. Your GP will have the information of this service.

Register with a Dentist

To register with a dentist, you must have a Northern Ireland Medical Card.

To choose your dentist you can obtain lists of dentists from the;

- > CSA, CAB and your local health care trust.
- > You should check that the dentist will treat you on the public health service (NHS). Check your entitlement, you may not have to pay for some dental services.



Optician Services

If you need to have your eyes tested contact a registered optician.



A list of opticians can be obtained from;

> CSA, CAB and your local health care trust.

If you are entitled to free prescriptions you can also get help to pay for a sight test or glasses.

Pharmacy Services

Your Doctor (GP) will decide which medicine you need. He or she will give you a form (called a prescription) giving you permission to buy the medicine in a pharmacy. Without it your chemist cannot give you medicines. Some medicines can be bought from the pharmacy including painkillers and cough medicine.



Medicines dispensed with a prescription all cost the same. However, you do not have to pay if;

- > You are under 16 years
- > You are under 19 and in full time education
- > You are aged 60 years or over
- > You or your partner are getting certain benefits
- > You are pregnant or have given birth in the last 12 months.

If you are on a low income you may be also be entitled to free medicines but you must fill in form HC1 in your local Social Security Office.

Emergency Services

All GP's have an emergency number if you need to see them out of their normal hours. You should ask in your GP's surgery/health centre for this number.



All GP's will provide medical treatment in an emergency, even if you are not registered with them.

If you need urgent medical treatment you can go to the Accident and Emergency Department of any hospital or telephone 999 or 112 and ask for an ambulance.

Family Planning Services

Family planning services offer advice on contraception, breast and cervical screening and sexual health screening.



These services are provided by local family planning clinics and by some GP's.

You can get details of their services from your GP, midwife and health visitor or call the Family Planning Association Helpline 04851 228960.

Family Planning Services are free and strictly confidential.

How to make a complaint

You can make a complaint if:

- > You are dissatisfied with the service provided.
- > A service has not been provided when you feel it should have been.



You can complain if this has happened to you, a relative or somebody in your care.

How to complain:

- > Tell the person directly dealing with you; this may mean the problem can be sorted out straight away.
- > If you cannot agree or find it hard to approach the person, then ask to speak to their manager.
- > If you still cannot agree or find it hard to approach the manager, then contact the organisation's Complaint Officer.

Local Hospitals

- > Belfast City Hospital Tel: 028 9032 9241
Textphone 028 9023 9581
- > Royal Victoria Hospital Tel: 028 9024 0503
Textphone 028 9063 3883
- > Mater Hospital Tel: 028 9074 1211
Textphone: 028 9080 2557

Belfast Trust Headquarters

Knockbracken Healthcare Park
Saintfield Road, Belfast BT8 8BH
Telephone: 028 9056 5656
Freephone: 0800 228844

Some useful contacts

Al-Nisa Association
c/o 46 Mount Eden Park,
Belfast, BT9 6RB
02890 228135

An Munia Tober (The
Traveller Community)
Site 12-2 Blackstaff
Complex,
77 Springfield Road,
Belfast, BT12 7AE
02890 438265
mail@anmuniatober.org

Belfast Islamic Centre
38 Wellington Park,
Belfast, BT9 6DN
028 9066 4465
info@belfastislamiccentre.org.uk

Chinese Welfare
Association
133-135 University Street,
Belfast, BT7 1HQ
028 9028 8277
contact@cwa-ni.org

FilCom-NI
(The Filipino Community)
c/o MCRC,
9 Lower Crescent,
Belfast, BT7 1NR
07718 998273
jkit@filipino-ni.com

Indian Community Centre
86 Clifton Street,
Belfast, BT13 1AB
028 9024 9746
info@iccbelfast.com

Multi-Cultural Resource
Centre
9 Lower Crescent,
Belfast, BT7 1NR

028 9024 4639
info@mcre-ni.org

NI Committee for Refugees
and Asylum
Seekers
c/o One Vision,
129 Ormeau Road,
Belfast, BT7 1SH
07948 727014
nicras@hotmail.co.uk

NI Council for Ethnic
Minorities
3rd floor, Ascot House,
24-31 Shaftsbury Square,
Belfast, BT2 7DB
info@nicem.org.uk

NI Muslim Family
Association
7 Rugby Road,
Belfast, BT7 9RB
nimfabelfast@aol.com

Polish Association
7 North Street,
Belfast, BT1 1NH
028 9032 1232
info@polishassociation.org

Central Services Agency
(CSA)
25 Adelaide Street,
Belfast, BT2 8FH
028 9032 4431
adminoff@csa.ni.nhs.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau
(CAB)
6 Callender Street,
Belfast, BT1 5BN
centralbelfast@citizensadvice.co.uk