



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

Your Health

How to get help and advice



YOUR HEALTH

How to get help and advice

UK / EU students

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This leaflet and the **website links** are available on the Healthy Living website go.le.ac.uk/healthyliving

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Information for UK students

1 Do I need to register with a local doctor?

Illness can affect any one of us at any time. For this reason you are advised to register with a local doctor/General Practitioner (GP). Doctors, nurses and administrative staff at the Victoria Park Health Centre have expertise in 'student health' and they work closely with the University to support students at times of ill health.

2 How do I find out about local doctors?

Information about the Victoria Park Health Centre and how to register can be found on their website **www.victoriaparkhealthcentre.co.uk**.

The Victoria Park Health Centre usually have registration sessions during the first week of the academic year on campus. It is advisable to register during your first week. However if this is not possible, registration can be done at any time.

Victoria Park Health Centre will register students and staff living locally. Information about other health centres can be found at **www.nhs.uk/Service-Search**

3 What if I am already registered with a doctor elsewhere?

If you are currently registered with a doctor elsewhere, the University recommends that you transfer to the Victoria Park Health Centre whilst you are a student at the University of Leicester so that the doctors have access to your medical history and are then better equipped to help you. If you are currently registered with a doctor in Leicestershire and continue to live in their catchment area there is no need to transfer.

4 What if I need health care whilst away from Leicester?

If you are elsewhere during vacation and in need of medical help, you can register there as a temporary resident at the time. If or when you move away from Leicester, possibly after completing your course you should register again with a health centre in the area you move to.

It should be possible to re-register with your original health centre if you return to your home town/area.

5 What information do I need to register with a local doctor?

When you register, the health centre will require your address in Leicester and details of the doctor you are currently registered with; if you have it, take along your current NHS card. Once you have registered with a local doctor / health centre you will be sent a new NHS card. This is proof that you are registered for NHS treatment. If you have not received the card within two months of registering, contact the health centre who will advise what you should do. The card will be sent to the address you provided so it is essential that you notify the health centre if your address changes.

6 Will I have to pay to register?

- Registration is free
- You can only be registered with one doctor / Health Centre at any time

7 Disabled Student Allowance (DSA)

DSA helps to pay for the extra costs associated with studying which may be incurred by students as a direct result of their disability or long term condition. For example, students may have a specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia, a mobility impairment, a sensory impairment, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, AD(H)D, a mental health difficulty, or be dealing with the impact of a long term condition or illness. DSA can help to pay for support in the form of Specialist Mentoring for students with mental health difficulties or conditions on the autistic spectrum, and/or one to one study skills support for students who have a specific learning difficulty or conditions on the autistic spectrum. DSA may also fund equipment, assistive software, and travel costs. The allowance is neither means tested nor repayable.

There is a detailed application process, for more information and assistance with DSA applications go to:

www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ssds/accessability/practical-support/DSA

International students

A guide to The National Health Service (NHS)

The National Health Service (NHS) might seem very complicated if you have not used the system before. The NHS is a public funded system which provides health care for residents in the United Kingdom (UK).

1 Will I have to pay for NHS health care treatment in the UK?

Most non-EEA (non-European Economic Area) nationals applying for a UK visa will have to pay an Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) to allow them to access NHS health care.

If you are an EEA national you will be entitled to use the NHS by showing that you have a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). This must be obtained from your home country.

The UK has a health care system which is paid for through workers' taxes. All UK nationals and most residents have equal access to the NHS without being charged each time they visit a doctor or hospital. The immigration health surcharge has been introduced to help fund the NHS, and will give migrants the same access to the NHS as UK citizens.

2 Who has to pay?

All Tier 4 visa applications will require you to pay the IHS (Immigration Health Surcharge).

If you come to study in the UK on a Standard Visits Visa you should take out private health insurance to cover the cost of any medical treatment you might require in the UK. Without any insurance you will have to pay directly for any NHS treatment you receive in the UK.

3 How much does it cost?

The surcharge for students and their dependants is £150 per person, per year of the visa. Part years of less than six months will be charged at £75. The health surcharge is payable in full at the time of application and is based on the overall length of visa that will be granted to you. For example; if you are studying a four year programme, you will be charged £675 (£150 per year of programme, plus £75 for the four month period at the end of the visa). Each of your dependants will also be charged the same amount.

4 Is anyone exempt from the charge?

Anyone applying for entry clearance for less than six months, and academic visitors coming to the UK for up to 12 months (even if they are here for more than six months) do not have to pay the surcharge.

Nationals of Australia and New Zealand are also exempt and will be able to access the NHS due to reciprocal agreements with the UK government. EEA nationals are also exempt.

5 When do I pay the surcharge?

The Immigration Health Surcharge payment is an integrated process which is part of your online visa application. Whilst completing your visa application you will be directed to make the health surcharge payment. If you do not make this payment you will not be able to complete your visa application.

6 Will I also need private medical insurance?

If you have paid for the health surcharge as part of your visa application you will not need private medical insurance. If you applied to enter the UK as a visitor on a visa which is for 6 months or less you will not be entitled to free NHS health care. It is advisable therefore that you ensure you have adequate private health insurance as payment will be necessary if you receive any health care in this country.

However, the following services are free of charge for everyone:

- Emergency treatment in any Accident and Emergency department
- Emergency treatment in any NHS Walk-in Centre providing Accident and Emergency type services
- Treatment for certain infectious diseases
- Compulsory psychiatric treatment
- Family planning services (sexual health)
- The NHS does not cover for repatriation and so it is advisable for you to arrange insurance for this if required

7 How do I register for NHS health care?

To access health care you will need to register with a General Practitioner (GP) doctor. Most GPs work in Health Centres. GPs are general doctors who have specialised in family health; therefore qualified to see anyone from small babies to the elderly. The University advises students to register at the Victoria Park Health Centre. Doctors, nurses, and administrative staff at the Victoria Park Health Centre have expertise in 'student health' and they work closely with the University to support students at times of ill health. Registration is free and you can only be registered with one doctor / Health Centre at any time. If you require hospital care you will need to provide the hospital with your passport, visa, NHS card and proof of attendance at university.

Information about the Victoria Park Health Centre and how to register can be found on their website

www.victoriaparkhealthcentre.co.uk

The Victoria Park Health Centre usually has registration sessions during the first week of the academic year. It is advisable to register during your first week. However, if this is not possible, registration can be done at any time. When you register, the Health Centre will require your address in Leicester, the date you came into the country, your library card or proof of registration with the University. Victoria Park Health Centre will register students and staff living locally.

Information about other health centres can be found at www.nhs.uk/Service-Search.

Once you have registered with a GP / health centre you will be sent an NHS card. This is proof that you are registered for NHS treatment. If you have not received the card within two months of registering, contact the Health Centre who will advise what you should do. The card will be sent to the address you provided so it is essential that you notify the health centre if your address changes. When you receive the card, keep it safe and take it with you if you visit a health centre, dentist or hospital.

8 Health care for family or friends visiting from abroad

Family or friends visiting from abroad should take adequate health care insurance if they are not eligible for a European Health Insurance Card. The Victoria Park Health Centre will usually register and see visitors as temporary residents if they require urgent necessary care.

9 What If I have a known health condition?

If you have an existing long term medical condition it is important that you register with the Victoria Park Health Centre who will help you with the management of your condition to reduce any impact it may have on your ability to study. Please bring with you an up to date summary from your current doctor which includes details of your condition, current management, recent test results and prescribed medication. The Information needs to be written in English and be a registered translation. Once registered with the Health Centre, make an appointment as early as possible to discuss your condition and treatment with a doctor (even if you do not have an up to date summary).

Your condition may be managed differently in this country. Licencing law and prescribing requirements here can vary to those in other countries and therefore alternative medication may be prescribed for you. If you are taking medication on a long term basis you will need to bring with you 12 weeks supply. This is to ensure you have enough medication to cover you whilst you are going through the NHS registration process.

Information for all students

1 Existing long term medical condition

If you have an existing long term medical condition it is important that you register with the Victoria Park Health Centre who will help you with the management of your condition to reduce any impact it may have on your ability to study. Please bring with you an up to date summary from your current doctor which includes details of your condition, current management, recent test results and prescribed medication. Once registered with the health centre, make an appointment as early as possible to discuss your condition and treatment with a doctor (even if you do not have an up to date summary).

If you require more specialised or hospital services you will need to be referred by a GP.

If you are taking medication on a long term basis you will need to bring with you 12 weeks supply. This is to ensure you have enough medication to cover you whilst you are going through the NHS registration process.

2 AccessAbility Centre

The AccessAbility Centre offers support and practical help for students with dyslexia or other specific learning difficulties; physical, mental health or mobility difficulties; deafness or visual impairment. The Centre offers the following services and specialised study equipment:

- Study Support Services
- Information and advice on equipment
- Specialised Study Equipment
- Study Advice (e.g. on aspects of spelling and grammar)
- Co-ordinating alternative exam arrangements
- A quiet place to work or rest

For more information please visit

www2.le.ac.uk/offices/accessability

3 What do I do if I am not well?

If you are unwell and need advice about minor ailments such as cold, coughs and sore throats etc. you can:

- Call the telephone helpline NHS Urgent Care (NHS 111)
- Use NHS Choices
- Ask your local pharmacist

These services will help you self-treat yourself at home.

NHS 111 is a confidential 24 hour telephone helpline staffed by expert nurses. By calling 111, you can speak to a nurse for advice at any time day or night. If required there will be an interpreter to provide advice in your own language.

NHS Choices is an internet site which provides information about health services, a variety of conditions; contraception and advice if you are not feeling too good (even for things like a hangover). It also has details of major self-help groups and can be accessed at **www.nhs.uk**

Pharmacists can give you advice about how to deal with a range of minor illness without having to make an appointment. This advice includes what medication you could take to help. You can ask the pharmacist for advice even if you don't buy anything.

Staff in all of the above services are trained to direct you to a doctor if required.

If you are unwell and need to see a doctor you will need to make an appointment with the health centre where you are registered. If this is Victoria Park Health Centre you can telephone 01162 151105, go in person or make the appointment over the internet (this requires additional registration in advance). Opening times for Victoria Park Health Centre can be found at **www.victoriaparkhealthcentre.co.uk**

If you are not well enough to visit your doctor call the Health Centre before 11am. The decision to make a home visit is made by

a doctor and is based on medical need. Having no transport is not a valid reason for requesting a visit.

4 Where do I go if I need to see a GP when the health centre is closed?

111 is the number you should call for a GP appointment when your GP practice is closed. You will be given an appointment to attend a Walk in Centre or Urgent Care Centre.

You are also able to attend a Walk in Centre where you will be seen by an experienced nurse without an appointment.

For more information on locations and opening times visit

<http://www.nhs.uk/111>

5 What should I do if there is an emergency?

In the event of an emergency such as -:

- Severe breathing difficulties
- Unconsciousness
- Severe blood loss
- Suspected broken bones
- Severe chest pain
- A serious accident

You should go to the Accident and Emergency Department at the Leicester Royal Infirmary.

An ambulance should only be requested for cases which are life threatening; if an ambulance is required, dial 999 (calls are free from all telephones including mobiles).

If you are away from Leicester go to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.

6 What if I need health care away from Leicester?

If you travel away from Leicester for a short period of time you will be eligible for NHS treatment wherever you go in the United Kingdom.

It is sensible to take your NHS card with you and if you need to see a doctor for urgent care you can register as a temporary resident.

If you are travelling or studying abroad you may be eligible for free treatment or treatment at a reduced rate throughout the European Community. To obtain treatment you will need to have a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). More information can be found at

www.nhs.uk/ehic

If you are a student from another country in the European Union or European Economic Area you should obtain your EHIC card from your home country and use this card if you require health care in any country in the European Union.

All students are advised to have additional medical and travel insurance when travelling anywhere abroad to ensure adequate cover for all eventualities and repatriation.

7 What will I have to pay for?

Even if you are entitled to free healthcare, charges are made for some services. The following costs will be charged to all individuals aged 19 and over regardless of nationality or student status unless receiving income support. Students under the age of 19 and in full time education are not required to pay any health care costs.

Prescriptions

If the doctor or nurse you see recommends a course of medication they will usually write a prescription. Once you have been issued with a prescription you will need to take it to a pharmacy (chemist) to obtain the medication. The standard charge for each item on the prescription is £8.40.

www.nhs.uk/prescriptions

Dental treatment

If you have any dental treatment within the NHS scheme, you will have to pay a percentage of the cost. If the dentist prescribes any medication, prescription costs will also apply.

Eye tests

All eye tests, glasses and contact lenses will have to be paid for. Costs will vary depending on where the eye test is carried out, what lenses are required and the frames selected.

8 Can I get help with health care costs?

It is possible to apply for financial help with NHS costs (as listed above) through the Low Income Scheme by completing a HC1 form. You can request a form by telephoning 0300 3301343 or the form can be downloaded from the link below.

Prescription Pre-payment Certificates (PPCs) help people who require large quantities or regular prescriptions to reduce the cost if they are not entitled to free prescriptions. You can apply for a PPC by completing FP95 form which is available from most chemists, can be requested by telephoning 0300 3301341 or can be downloaded from the link below.

Health care travel costs will be covered in some circumstances; full details are included in the leaflet HC11-Help with health costs, which can be downloaded from the link below.

www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/healthcosts

9 How do I find a dentist?

You do not have to register with a dentist to get a dental check or any subsequent treatment. However, you will need to make an appointment with a dentist. Information about local dentists can be found at **www.nhs.uk** or by telephoning the NHS Dental Access Centre: 01162 951278. It is advisable to ask the dentist whether they accept NHS patients as many do not. The dentist will probably want to check you are eligible for NHS treatment and your NHS card is proof of this.

If you are not entitled to NHS treatment, or the dentist you choose does not take NHS patients (some dentists will only accept private patients), you will have to pay for the full cost of your treatment.

10 How do I find an optician?

You do not have to register with an optician to get your eyes tested. However, you will need to make an appointment. Information about local opticians can be found at **www.nhs.uk/Service-Search**

11 Sexual health

Sexual health or family planning includes free confidential advice and information about:

- contraception (birth control/population management)
- free condoms and other contraceptives
- pregnancy testing
- cervical smear (pap) tests
- sexually transmitted Infections (including Chlamydia and HIV)
- termination (abortion)

Attitudes to sex can vary and students from other countries may notice some differences. Choices about sex should be individual and personal to you. You are entirely free to live according to your own standards and should not feel pressured to adopt those of other students.

Using condoms every time you have sex can help reduce the risk of contracting a Sexually Transmitted Infection and can prevent unplanned pregnancy.

Termination (abortion) in this country is legal however it is not considered to be a form of contraception.

You might prefer to speak to someone other than your GP about sexual health matters; there are a number of other services for you to choose from and details can be found at

www.leicestersexualhealth.nhs.uk/

or telephone Choices: 0800 318908

There is also a drop in sexual health clinic 'Choices' on campus every Tuesday between 10.30am and 1.30pm during term time. The Choices clinic is in the Students' Union building and you do not need an appointment. You will see a Sexual Health Specialist Nurse who can offer a full range of contraception, sexual health screening and advice about any sexual health matter. The service is confidential and information will not be passed to your doctor.

Choices telephone: 0300 1240102

12 Alcohol and Drugs

Peer pressure and the freedom of living away from home can be a big influence on you taking alcohol or drugs. Student life may appear to revolve around alcohol. Attitudes about alcohol and drugs can vary and students from other countries may notice some differences. Choices about alcohol and drugs should be individual and personal to you. You are entirely free to live according to your own standards and should not feel pressured to adopt those of other students. Alcohol and drugs have the potential to cause harm both physically, socially and impact on your academic studies if not used sensibly. Information about drug and alcohol use and how to get confidential help and advice can be found at www.nhs.uk

Meningitis

1 Why do I need to be aware of Meningitis?

Meningitis and meningococcal septicaemia (blood poisoning) are serious diseases that can strike rapidly with little warning and if left untreated could be fatal. Outbreaks of meningitis tend to occur where people live or work closely together, such as university, living in halls of residence, living in shared student accommodation.

2 What is meningitis?

Meningitis is an infection of the meninges (the protective membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord). The infection can be caused by bacteria or a virus, and it leads to the meninges becoming inflamed. This can damage the nerves and brain.

3 How can I prevent meningitis?

There are a number of vaccines that can prevent most cases of viral and bacterial meningitis and include:

- MMR (protects against measles, mumps and rubella)
- Hib/Meningitis C (offers protection against a type of bacteria - meningococcal group C bacteria)
- 6-in-1 vaccine DTa/IPV/Hib/Hep B (protects against the Hib virus, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus and polio)
- Meningitis B vaccine (a new vaccine that offers protection against meningococcal group B bacteria)
- Pneumococcal vaccine (offers protection against serious infections caused by pneumococcal bacteria, including meningitis)
- Meningitis ACWY vaccine (offers protection against four types of bacteria that can cause meningitis – meningococcal groups A, C, W and Y.)

In this country children should receive these vaccines as part of their childhood vaccination programme. Students are advised to have the vaccines before starting university. Your GP should be able to advise if you are up to date with the vaccines and arrange any vaccinations if required.

4 What should I do if I haven't had the vaccines before starting university?

When you have registered with a local GP make an appointment with the Practice Nurse to discuss what vaccines you require.

5 What is the difference between bacterial meningitis and viral meningitis?

It is only possible to distinguish between bacterial and viral meningitis by carrying out clinical tests; it is not possible to tell the difference from symptoms alone. All cases of suspected meningitis should be treated as an emergency because if caused by bacteria the meningitis could lead to septicaemia which can be fatal.

6 What are the symptoms of meningitis?

- Severe headache
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- High temperature (fever) of 38 degrees or over
- Stiff neck
- A distinctive skin rash (not everyone will develop this)
- Pain in the muscles
- Unusually cold hands and feet, or shivering
- Pale or blotchy skin and blue lips
- Muscle or joint pain
- Diarrhoea
- Photophobia (sensitivity to light)

7 What should I do if meningitis is suspected?

Early treatment is essential – If you or a friend develops any of the above symptoms you should seek immediate medical help. Contact Victoria Park Health Centre, Tel: 01162 151105 or contact the health centre you are registered with and tell them you suspect meningitis. When the Health Centre is closed call 111 for medical assistance or visit Accident and Emergency Department at the Leicester Royal Infirmary www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/emergencycare/

If you require help with this and are living in University halls of residence contact your site reception.

8 Where can I find more information about meningitis?

www.meningitis-trust.org/

www.meningitis.org/

www.nhs.uk



Where can I get more information about health and wellbeing?

www.nhs.uk

How to make a complaint about your GP, dentist, NHS or mental health services.

Healthwatch are the independent national champion for people who use health and social care services. Healthwatch's sole purpose is to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to speak out on their behalf. If you have any issues, complaints visit www.healthwatch.co.uk/complaints

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