landfall

LANDFALL GUIDE · HEALTHCARE

How does healthcare work when you move to the UK?

THE SHORT ANSWER

Most visa holders pay the Immigration Health Surcharge with their visa application. That gives you NHS care on broadly the same terms as people who live here. Once you arrive, you register with a local doctor, called a GP.

For US citizens and green card holders moving to the UK. Build your free, personal move plan at **yourlandfall.com/plan**.

The Immigration Health Surcharge

If you're coming on most types of visa for more than six months, you pay the **Immigration Health Surcharge** as part of your application. It's charged per person, per year of the visa, and paid upfront. Some visas are exempt. Check the current amount on GOV.UK when you apply.

Once you've paid it, you can use the NHS on broadly the same basis as people who live here.

Registering with a GP

In the UK, your first stop for almost everything is a **GP**, a family doctor at a local practice. Specialist referrals usually go through your GP.

- Register once you have a UK address. You can usually do it online.
- You don't need to wait until you're ill. Registering early makes everything easier later.

Prescriptions

- **Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland:** prescriptions are free.
- **England:** most adults pay a flat charge per item, with exemptions and prepayment options.

Dentists and eye tests

NHS dental care isn't free for most adults in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. You pay set charges by type of treatment, and NHS dentists taking new patients can be hard to find, so start looking early. Many people use private dentists. In Scotland, NHS dental check-ups and eye examinations are free.

Emergencies

Call **999** in an emergency, or **111** for urgent medical advice that isn't an emergency. Accident and emergency (A&E) departments treat emergencies free of charge.

Private health insurance

Many people use the NHS alone. Some add private insurance for faster access to specialists or particular treatments, and some employers include it. It works differently from US insurance: it usually covers planned treatment, not emergencies, which the NHS handles.

What to do next

Build your move plan to see healthcare alongside the other steps for your first month.

See every step for your move. Answer five questions and get a free plan in the right order: yourlandfall.com/plan