

Groundswell

Out of homelessness



CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Registering with a GP during COVID-19

What is a GP?

- A General Practitioner (GP) or a 'family doctor' is a **doctor based in the community**

What does a GP do?

- GP's can treat minor issues
- Identify any more serious health issues
- Refer you for further treatment to a hospital or other specialist health service

Who can register?

- Anyone in England may register and see a GP for free
- You do not need a fixed address
- Your immigration status does not matter
- You do not need identification, documentation or an NHS number

*Sometimes GP practices ask for identification or documentation. **If you are asked for documentation or identification, and you do not have any, explain that you are currently homeless, and they should still register you.**

*If the GP cannot support you to manage your condition, they will refer you to a **specialist**

***If your condition is an emergency go to Accident and Emergency**

COVID-19 and registering

- Most GP surgeries are closed due to COVID-19, however some are doing phone and online appointments
- Registration has moved on-line or over the phone
- If you are having difficulties registering, ask a support worker or advocacy worker for help.

If you are unable to access a GP and have an urgent medical problem, please ring 111 or go to an Accident and Emergency department.

What services are provided at my GP?

Your GP will be able to help you with:

- Physical health problems, including minor illnesses, minor injuries and the management of all ongoing more serious health problems
- Mental health issues
- Substance misuse issues
- Preventative care e.g. health screening and vaccinations (see other leaflet)
- Wound dressings
- Support with your pregnancy
- Contraception and sexual health
- Referral to termination of pregnancy services (If you prefer not to attend your GP for this you can alternatively call 0333 999 9951)

How to get help

If you have any problems registering with a GP, have questions about health care charges or concerns about data sharing please contact

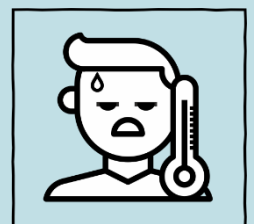
Doctors of the World (0808 164 7686). Monday - Friday 10am – 12pm



COVID-19 symptoms

Call 111 and self-isolate until further advice if you have any of the following symptoms.

- **Fevers or sweats**
- **A persistent cough**
- **Shortness of breath**
- **A loss of sense of smell or taste**



If you cannot manage your symptoms you should go to A&E.

This information is correct as of 17/06/20

Using the GP services

I need to book an appointment

- During COVID-19 phone or on-line booking systems are the only way to access GP appointments
- Speak to support staff or an advocacy agency if you have any issues registering
- GP appointments are usually 10 minutes long, but you can always request longer appointments if you need

I need an interpreter

- If English is not your first language NHS services must provide telephone interpreting services
- You can ask a receptionist or health care provider for an interpreter to help you register and you can also ask for an interpreter for your appointment with the GP or nurse

Specialist GP practices

- There may be GP practices in your area that are especially for people who are currently homeless or migrants, asylum seekers or refugees
- Advocacy and support services should be able to tell you if there is a specialist GP practice in your area

Will I be charged?

- Health care provided within a GP surgery is free. **However**, you may have to pay for prescribed medicines depending on what benefits you receive and what health conditions you have. **See section below about help with health costs.**
- If you have no current immigration status or your application is in process you can be charged for hospital care and some community services. See section below about help with health costs.
- If you cannot pay in advance you might not be able to get treated. **However**, if a clinician thinks the treatment is urgent you will be given the treatment. You may receive a bill after treatment. There are some exceptions to this e.g. **treatment related to COVID-19 is free.**

I need help with the costs of medicines, dental treatment and sight care

- Depending on which benefits you receive and your medical conditions you might also be required to pay for prescriptions, dental care, eye tests and glasses
- **However**, if you have a low income, you may be eligible for an **NHS HC2 certificate** which entitles you to free prescriptions, dental treatment, sight tests and vouchers for glasses. **If you are not entitled to benefits you can still apply for this.**
- An HC1 form is used to apply for this certificate.
- Your health provider should be able to give you an HC1 form. If not, this form can be downloaded from the internet. And you can also apply online <https://services.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/apply-for-help-with-nhs-costs/apply-online>
- **Ask for help to fill in the form if you need it**

Will my GP share information about me?

- GP practices and other NHS services will **NOT** share your information with any other Government department
- GP practices do not share information with the Home Office currently
- The only situation in which a GP might have to share information about you is if you are at risk or there is risk to others

Translated versions of this document are available here:

<https://www.healthy london.org/resource/homeless-health-during-covid-19/>