

Getting help with the cost of NHS dentistry.

Dentistry is one of the few NHS services where you have to pay a contribution towards the cost of your care. Most people need to pay for their NHS dental treatment. Other people will get treatment for free or at a reduced cost. With the increasing Cost of Living crisis, you may have more patients asking about getting help with the costs of NHS dental treatment.

You can see an NHS dentist for free if:

- You are under 18 years old, or under 19 years old and in full-time education.
- Are pregnant or have had a baby in the last 12 months before your treatment starts regardless of immigration status.
- You or your partner get the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit)
- are named on or entitled to a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate – if you don't have a certificate, you can show your award notice you qualify if you get Child Tax Credits, Working Tax Credits with a disability element (or both) and have income for tax credit purposes of £15,276 or less
- Universal Credit – but only if your earnings in your last assessment period were **£435** or less, or **£935** or less if you get an element for a child or have limited capability for work

- You are under 20 and a dependant of someone receiving the above benefits
- You are named on an HC2 certificate
- You have an NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate/Card (or entitled to one)
- You are being treated in an NHS hospital and your treatment is carried out by the hospital dentist (but you may have to pay for any dentures or bridges)

Full details are available here: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/help-with-health-costs/get-help-with-dental-costs/>

and here: [NHS Low Income Scheme \(LIS\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/help-with-health-costs/get-help-with-dental-costs/)

- You **still need to pay** if you just get the following benefits (and not any of the ones in the blue box above):
 - Incapacity Benefit
 - Contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance
 - Contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - Disability Living Allowance
 - Council Tax Benefit
 - Housing Benefit or Pension Credit Savings Credit when paid on their own.
- Like for other people, people with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) will have to pay the NHS dental charges unless they can provide documents to show they can see a dentist for free or lower cost.
- A person with NRPF, a refused asylum seeker or those that do not have leave to remain may be entitled to full or partial help through the NHS Low Income Scheme by obtaining an HC2 certificate.
- If you have a medical condition or a disability doesn't mean you get free or cheaper treatment as an NHS dental patient unless you also fit the blue criteria above.
- Older people and people in care homes, residential homes or in supporting living or extra care housing still have to prove they are in one of the categories in blue above. If someone else is filling in the form for you they need to help you to make sure that you don't need to pay. If you are filling in a form for someone else you need to make sure they don't need to pay.

[Check if you have an exemption from paying NHS costs - NHSBSA](#)

There is a specific dental health guide for migrants and refugees:

[Dental health: migrant health guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The BSA have a dedicated page to help people see if they are exempt or can get help with costs.

If patients have paid for treatment, they can claim at a later date using the [HC5 \(D\) refund claim form for dental charges \(PDF, 59kb\)](#)

Homeless people can still fill in the forms but they just need to put the dental practice address onto it instead of a home address – and this applies to other NHS forms and treatment claims as well.

What is a HC2 certificate and how do I get one?

If you need help with paying for a dentist because you have a low income you will need to fill out an HC1 form which are available online. You need to go to the website below and download the form and print it out: [NHS Low Income Scheme \(LIS\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/low-income-scheme/)

When you have filled it in and sent it and if they say you are 'eligible' you should receive a HC2 certificate (full help with health costs) or HC3 certificate (limited help with health costs). It is best to bring the certificate, or at least the certificate number to each dental appointment.

If you have a valid HC3 certificate, write in the certificate number and the maximum your certificate says you can pay. You'll pay either what appears on the certificate or the actual charge, whichever is the least.

If you have limited leave to remain subject to a condition that you cannot have recourse to public funds (NRPF), are a refused asylum seeker or do not have leave to remain you may be entitled to full or partial help through the NHS Low Income Scheme by obtaining an HC2 certificate.

If you are not receiving any formal sources of support but are receiving support from other sources, such as social services, charities, food banks or the destitution projects, you should include this information in the form. It may also help to get a letter from any organisations that are supporting you. If they are receiving financial support from social services they should provide a letter from social services detailing what support is being provided.