**Great Western Hospital**

**Overseas Patients: Important information about their entitlement to free NHS hospital treatment**

The Great Western Hospital’s Overseas Patients Administration Team investigates people’s entitlement to free NHS Hospital treatment in line with the guidance set out by the DHSC in accordance to charging overseas patients legislation.

This applies to anyone who has not been a resident in the UK for the last 6 months known as Ordinarily Resident in the Legislation. Even if a person has British Nationality, holds a British passport, are registered with a GP in UK, has an NHS number, owns property in the UK: or has (or is currently paying) National Insurance Contributions and Taxes, they might not qualify as Ordinarily Resident.

The guidance quotes as below:

1“A person is not ordinarily resident in the UK simply because they have British nationality; hold a British passport; are registered with a GP in the UK; have an NHS number; own property in the UK; or have paid (or are currently paying) National Insurance contributions and taxes in the UK.

When assessing the ordinary residence status of a person seeking free relevant services, we will need to consider whether they are:  living lawfully in the United Kingdom voluntarily and for settled purposes as part of the regular order of their life for the time being, whether of short or long duration.”

It is really important for local GPs to be aware of potential cost implications to their patient, should they be referred to hospital and are not entitled to free NHS hospital treatment. NHS hospitals are bound by law to charge for treatment, regardless of the urgency of the patient’s medical needs. In cases of urgent or emergency treatment, the hospital will issue an invoice in retrospect to ensure the patient receives the treatment they require. However, the patient will be charged upfront for non-urgent treatment. The hospital is aware that in some cases, the initial appointment needs to take place first to determine the urgency of the treatment and this will still be invoiced retrospectively.

For patients who are subject to the Health Surcharge route of entry into the UK, Assisted Conception investigations and treatment are not available on the NHS. A good indication that the Surcharge route applies is a green banner on the Summary Care Record in Spine. Please contact the Overseas Patients Administration Team directly to check on the patient’s status before you refer them to hospital.

For more information, please read the [Overseas Patients Information Leaflet](https://www.gwh.nhs.uk/media/432576/Advice-for-Overseas-Vistors-and-those-who-Live-Abroad.pdf). If you have any other questions, please get in touch with the team:

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