

- HIV treatment during pregnancy.

This is not always widely understood and you may have to insist that the maternity service follows the NHS guidelines. If you have problems, contact a PAFRAS caseworker for support.

Your right to understand

It is important that you understand your doctor and that your doctor understands you. While doctors and nurses are not obliged to provide interpretation to you when providing you with medical care they do have an ethical responsibility to ensure that they understand what you are telling them and that you understand them.

If you do not understand your doctor, or you think that they do not understand you, you should ask if they can use a Language Line interpreter. Some doctors may refuse to do this. They often find it awkward and they worry about the amount of time it takes.

If your doctor refuses to use interpretation and you do not understand them you should contact PAFRAS, the Refugee Council or a Refugee Community Organisation for help.

Remember!

Always seek medical help if you believe you need it.

Always seek advice and support if you are refused or charged for medical treatment.

Directory

This is a short list of key NHS services in Leeds. It is not comprehensive. If you have any difficulties accessing a service you can ask a PAFRAS caseworker for support.

Key Services

York Street Practice

Confidential support, signposting and referral for asylum seekers to access healthcare.

Help with GP registration, HC2s and mental health, drugs and alcohol services.

Telephone interpreting services are available to those who need them.

68 York St, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS9 8AA T: 0113 295 4840

NHS Walk-in Centre

Burmantofts Health Centre, 1 Cromwell Mount, Burmantofts, LS9 7ST. Open 8am-8pm every day. Call 0113 844 0102 for further advice and information.

Minor Injuries Unit

St. George's Centre, St. George's Road, Middleton, Leeds, LS10 4UZ. Call 0113 392 9801. Open 8am-10.30pm everyday including bank holidays (closing times may vary call if you can).

Dental Advice Line

Call 0800 298 5787. It is open between 9am and 5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am and 4.30pm on Fridays.

If you need a dentist we recommend that you attend the PAFRAS drop-in so that a caseworker can help you register or get you to an emergency service if you have an urgent need.

Specialist Services

Specialist Midwife

If you are pregnant you can contact NHS Leeds' specialist midwife for advice, support and medical care. Call 077 48 33 400. If you need support doing this contact a PAFRAS caseworker.

Leeds Centre for Sexual Health

Investigation and treatment of sexually transmitted infections. By appointment, call 0113 3926725. To cancel an appointment call 0113 3926724. There is also a Walk-In Session on Thursday Mornings. Arrive by 8.45am if you wish to be seen.

Department of Genito-urinary Medicine, Sunnybank Wing, Leeds General Infirmary, Leeds, LS1 3EX.

right to health a guide for refused asylum seekers



**Positive
Action
For
Refugees &
Asylum
Seekers**

Refugees and asylum seekers who have an on-going claim and are entitled to the same NHS care as resident British citizens. As a refused asylum seeker you are denied some rights, nevertheless you should always be provided with care when you really need it.

As a refused asylum seeker you may be refused certain types of care and charged for others. Some types of care are always free regardless of your status. The purpose of this leaflet is to help you to understand what rights to healthcare you do have and to advise on what you should do if you are ever refused or charged for healthcare.

If you are not well you should always seek medical help.

Free healthcare

There are several types of care that you should not have to pay for. These include

- care provided by GPs and pharmacists,
- some types of dental care.

To get free healthcare from a dentist or pharmacist you must have an up-to-date HC2 certificate. You do not need a HC2 to get free health care from a GP.

You are also entitled to free accident and emergency services when provided in an Accident & Emergency (A&E) Department of a hospital or an NHS Walk-in or minor injuries centre.

Treatment for a number of serious infectious diseases and all sexual transmitted diseases (excluding HIV/AIDS) is always free. Free HIV/AIDS testing and counselling is available to all. Pregnant women are entitled to free HIV/AIDS treatment during their pregnancy.

HC 2 Certificate

If you don't have a HC2 and don't know where to get one contact a PAFRAS caseworker or visit the Refugee Council or York Street Medical Practice.

Remember! You must renew you HC2 every 6 months and it takes up to eight weeks to renew.

Healthcare you can be charged for

You can be charged for some types of treatment. Nevertheless, if you need care urgently, the NHS should treat you even if you cannot pay. A doctor should decide whether your condition is urgent. If you disagree with their decision it may be possible to consult another doctor. If a nurse or a non-medical member of staff tells you that you cannot have treatment you should seek further advice.

As a refused asylum seeker you can be refused treatment care that is not considered medically necessary if you do not pay the full estimated cost of the care in advance. If you are refused care or asked to pay before care is provided you should always contact a PAFRAS caseworker, or the Refugee Council for further advice and support.

All aspects of maternity care (including antenatal care) should be provided before attempting to get payment from you. Under no circumstances should maternity care or any other urgent or immediately necessary care be withdrawn if you are unable to pay

The law says that the NHS should try to recover money that is owed to it, but the NHS can also 'write-off' or cancel debts which it knows cannot be paid.

- You cannot be arrested or sent to prison for owing money to the NHS or anyone else. You cannot pay money that you do not have.
- If you receive a bill for treatment that you have been given you should contact a PAFRAS caseworker or the Refugee Council.

If you are refused treatment you should seek further advice from a PAFRAS caseworker or the Refugee Council.

Your right to health

As we say above, if you believe you need medical attention you should always seek it out. If you are unsure of where and how to access care you should come to the PAFRAS drop-in and speak to a caseworker.

Alternatively you can contact one of the services in the Directory on the back of this leaflet.

Your right to a GP

As a refused asylum seeker you can still register with a GP. GPs can choose whether to allow you to register or not. To register at with a GP you have to live, or have your postal address, within a certain area. If you live a long way from the GP's surgery they may refuse to register you and treat you there. If you need emergency treatment they should not turn you away.

If you can't find a GP, or if the GPs you do find refuse to register you, you should:

- contact PAFRAS or the Refugee Council for help registering or
- see a nurse or doctor at the York Street Medical Practice.

Contact details can be found in the Directory.

Your right to dental care

As a refused asylum seeker you have some entitlement to free dental care. You are entitled to a free regular dental check-up and to any urgently necessary treatment. You are not entitled to any free dental surgery which is considered cosmetic, or optional.

To access free dental care you must have a HC2 Certificate. If you do not have a HC2 Certificate your dentist will charge you for treatment and they may refuse to treat you if you cannot pay in advance.

Your right to medicine

You are entitled to free medicines if your doctor has prescribed you them. You must make sure that you have an up-to-date HC2 Certificate to be able to collect your medicines without being charged.

If you have a HC2 and are refused your medicine, or charged for it, you should contact a PAFRAS caseworker.

Your right to maternity care

Women who are refused asylum seekers are entitled to access NHS maternity care but may be charged for it. You should always be provided with care even if you cannot pay.

Maternity care includes:

- antenatal care,
- birth and postnatal care and