

REGISTERING WITH A GP

Access to NHS for mission partners during their stays in England

Revised May 2026



GP Contract Regulations state that NHS England **must** remove a patient from a practice's list if the patient intends to be away from the UK for a period of at least three months, but as there is no obligation on practices to inform NHS England if a patient is absent from the UK, there is some discretion on the GP practice. However, the removal is to ensure the practice does not receive payments for patients to whom they are not responsible for providing primary medical services, so there is some rationale behind it. **Do not be either surprised or alarmed if you are removed from a GP practice list whilst you are overseas.**

Anyone, regardless of their country of residence, is entitled to receive NHS primary medical services at a GP practice. This means tourists, or those from abroad visiting friends or family in England, should be treated in the same way as a UK resident. It also means GP practices cannot charge for this. *"The main principle is that anyone, regardless of nationality and residential status, may register and consult with a GP without charge"* – see [BMA guidance on patient registration](#) for further details.

If you have difficulty finding a GP practice who will accept you onto their list, you can contact [NHS England](#) who can assign you to a practice.

Please note some changes you need to be aware of when registering with a GP:

- GPs are now expected to help identify patients with a non-UK issued EHIC or S1 form, or who may be subject to the NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 2015.
- The new guidance states that practices are required to provide all new permanent patients with the revised [PRF1 form](#) (replaces the old GMS1 form), which includes optional supplementary questions for those people not ordinarily resident in the UK to help determine a patient's eligibility to free NHS secondary healthcare.
- GPs have been given guidance for patients filling in the PRF1 form, but please note that it clearly states in Part C of the form that the information provided on the form will be used *"to establish your chargeable status in order to recover NHS costs from countries responsible for your healthcare where applicable. This will not impact your entitlement to register with the GP practice or to receive free GP services."*
- This section only needs to be completed where the patient is 'from abroad' (or not ordinarily resident in the UK). If you consider yourself definitely or likely to be deemed ordinarily resident, there is no need for you to complete this section. (But if you are clear that you are an overseas visitor, please complete.)
- There is no requirement to be ordinarily resident in the UK to register with a GP practice as an NHS patient. The patient **MUST** be registered by the practice, unless the practice has reasonable grounds to decline (not related to the patient's residency status).
- GP practices are not required to make a decision on a patient's chargeable status, nor are they required to assess if charges apply to overseas visitors. This responsibility remains with the NHS Trust/Overseas Visitor Managers working within secondary healthcare providers - should the patient find that they need to access secondary healthcare.

Please note that if you are staying in the UK for under three months your GP practice might ask you to register as a temporary patient (using form [GMS3](#)). Whilst this could lead the practice to assume you are potentially chargeable, do be assured that if you need secondary healthcare your chargeable status would need to be verified by the NHS Trust/Overseas Visitor Manager at that stage - at which point you can make your case that you are ordinarily resident. You could request to be registered as a permanent patient using the PRF1 form if you wish to.

Further information, and downloads covering ordinary residence, guidance on meeting the ordinary residence test, and private medical insurance, are all available in [NHS and missionaries](#).

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