

Health and Social Services Councils



Eastern Health and Social Services Council
19 Bedford Street
BELFAST BT2 7EJ
Phone: 028 9032 1230
Minicom: 028 9032 1285
Freephone: 0800 3285420



Northern Health and Social Services Council
8 Broadway Avenue
BALLYMENA BT43 7AA
Phone: 028 2565 5777
Minicom: 028 2565 5777

Health and Social Services Boards

Eastern Health and Social Services Board
12-22 Linenhall Street
BELFAST BT2 8BS
Phone: 028 9032 1313

Northern Health and Social Services Board
County Hall
182 Galgorm Road
BALLYMENA BT42 1QB
Phone: 028 2565 3333

Other useful phone numbers

Central Services Agency
25 Adelaide Street
BELFAST BT2 8FH
Phone: 028 9032 4431



Southern Health and Social Services Council
Quaker Buildings, High Street
Lurgan BT66 8BB
Phone: 028 3834 9900
Minicom: 028 3834 6488



Western Health and Social Services Council
Hilltop
Tyrone and Fermanagh Hospital
OMAGH BT79 0NS
Phone: 028 8225 2555



Health and Social Services Councils for Northern Ireland

Choosing your hospital

If you need to go into hospital, your General Practitioner (GP) will discuss the choice of hospital with you.

Your GP will refer you to the hospital and consultant of your choice depending on the type of treatment you require.

Hospital appointments

When your GP refers you to hospital for an outpatient's appointment you should:

- get a letter from the hospital within two weeks;
- have an appointment at the hospital within three months;
- have at least two weeks' notice of your appointment or earlier with your consent;
- be given the name of the consultant in charge of your treatment; and
- receive clear information about when to attend, where to go and what to bring with you.

Travelling to the hospital

In certain medical circumstances, your GP can arrange transport to the hospital.

You can get help with the cost of travelling to hospital if:

- you or your family are getting certain benefits;
- you are on a low income; or
- you get a war or disablement pension and are being treated in a health service hospital for your disability.

People who visit you in hospital may also be entitled to help with their travel costs. Leaflet HC11 available from social security offices, post offices or the Central Services Agency gives fuller details. If you need help seek advice from the hospital before travelling.

At the outpatients' department

When you arrive at the hospital for your appointment:

- you should be seen by a doctor or nurse within 30 minutes of your appointment time;
- you will be given a reason for any delay;
- a senior doctor or consultant will see you on your first appointment;
- the hospital doctor will send a report to your GP within a week of your appointment; and
- you will get clear information about any treatment planned for you.

Going into hospital

When you need to go into hospital for treatment;

- your consultant will put your name on a waiting list;
- your GP can give you information on waiting times for each hospital and consultant;
- when you receive your admission date you will also receive a copy of the hospital information booklet;
- you will be introduced to the nurse who is responsible for organising your care while you are in hospital (your 'named nurse');
- if your operation is cancelled, you will receive another appointment within a month; and
- your operation should not be cancelled on the day your surgery is arranged for.

Leaving hospital

If you still need care after you leave hospital, arrangements will be made before you leave.

Emergencies

In an emergency go to your nearest accident and emergency department where you will be seen immediately. After assessment you will be advised about how long you will have to wait for treatment.

Access to medical records

In most cases, you have a right to read your medical notes. There is more information in a separate leaflet called 'Seeing your medical records'.

If things go wrong

If you can't keep your appointment, you should contact the hospital as soon as possible.

If you are not satisfied with the treatment and care you have received you can:

- discuss the problem with your consultant, your named nurse or the person in charge; or
- contact the Complaints Officer.

You have a right to have your complaint investigated. For more information on how to complain, contact your Health and Social Services Council.

You have a right to be treated politely and with respect for your privacy and dignity