

**This guide answers the questions you may have about
Pharmacy, Dental and Ophthalmic Services in Grampian**



English



A Guide to NHS Grampian Pharmacy, Dental and Ophthalmic Services

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Pharmacy Services

A **pharmacist** is a highly skilled professional who has undergone specialist training and upon completion of that training, is licensed to prepare and dispense prescription drugs and other medicines. They can:

- Dispense prescription drugs
- Sell non-prescription medicines
- Provide advice and medicines for minor ailments to patients exempt from prescription charges
- Supply some of your repeat prescription medicines in an emergency if you run out
- Give advice on:
 - minor ailments (e.g. coughs and colds)
 - all medicines – how and when to take them
 - healthy living – taking more exercise, eating well
 - preventative treatments e.g. drugs to lower cholesterol, sun care protection and sexual health
 - complementary or alternative medicines – which ones are suitable for your condition and can be taken along with your regular medicine
 - care of babies, children and the elderly, whose needs may differ because of their age
- Provide help, advice and nicotine replacement therapy to help people stop smoking
- Supply and give advice on the emergency hormonal contraception (morning after pill)
- Give advice on travel healthcare – some pharmacies can provide travel immunisation and malaria prophylaxis

- Some pharmacies can provide flu immunisation

Pharmacists can answer any questions you may have about choosing and using the right medicine. They also provide advice on treating everyday ailments and will help you decide if you need to see a doctor.

Opening Hours

Most pharmacies are open from Monday to Friday and on Saturday mornings. Some are also open on Saturday afternoons and Sundays. In some areas, pharmacies open outside of normal working hours on a rota basis. The **NHS helpline** on: **0800 22 44 88** operates from 8am to 10pm, seven days a week, and can advise you where to find your nearest dispensing pharmacy which is open. The opening times of pharmacies which take part in the rota are often displayed in pharmacy windows and in local newspapers.

Supermarkets, corner shops and some petrol station shops stock a few 'over the counter' medicines, which can be purchased without the advice of a pharmacist. These shops may be open after your local pharmacy has closed.

If you are ill or feeling unwell when your GP Practice is closed your pharmacist may be able to provide you with advice and medicine.

If your pharmacist cannot help and you feel that you cannot wait to see a doctor, you should phone **NHS 24** on: **08454 24 24 24**. If you or your family have a serious accident or a medical emergency, contact the ambulance service by dialing **999** or **112**.

Prescription Drugs and Medicines

These are items which are usually prescribed by a qualified doctor or dentist. In addition, a number of NHS Grampian Community Staff such as nurses, midwives, pharmacists and allied health professionals, have completed a Non-Medical Prescribing Course. This course qualifies them to prescribe a limited range of drugs and medicines.

Prescription drugs and medicines tend to be more powerful than 'over the counter' medicines and the law requires that they are tightly controlled.

Prescription Charges

You may be entitled to free NHS prescriptions, if at the time the prescription is dispensed, you:

- Are under 16 years of age
- Are 16, 17 or 18 years of age and in full time education
- Are 60 years of age or over
- Have a valid maternity or medical exemption certificate (EC92)
- Have a valid prescription pre-payment certificate
- Have a valid War Pensioner exemption certificate
- Are named on a current NHS HC2 certificate

- Were prescribed free-of-charge contraceptives
- Were prescribed free-of-charge medicine to treat tuberculosis
- Get or have a partner who gets Income Support
- Have a partner who gets Pension Credit guarantee credit (PCGC)
- Get or have a partner who gets Income based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Are entitled to, or named on, a valid NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificate
- Get or have a partner who gets income related Employment Support Allowance

Note: Prescription charges in Scotland are different from those in England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

There is no charge to anyone for:

- Drugs or medication administered in a hospital
- Prescribed contraceptives
- Medication personally administered by a GP – for example on a home visit
- Medication supplied at a hospital or clinic for the treatment of a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI)

The Scottish Government has announced its intention to introduce new legislation, which aims to abolish all NHS prescription charges in Scotland by 1st April 2011.



NHS Grampian Dental Services

Am I entitled to free NHS dental care?

All UK citizens and nationals of other qualifying countries, are entitled to use NHS dental services. However, unlike GP services, there is usually a charge made for NHS dental services. The charge depends on the type of treatment provided.

You will be exempt from dental charges, if, when your dental treatment begins, you are:

- Under 18 years of age
- 18 years of age and in full time education
- Pregnant, or have had a baby in the 12 months before treatment starts
- An NHS in-patient and the treatment is carried out by a hospital dentist
- An NHS Hospital Dental Service out-patient (although there may be a charge for dentures and bridges)
- Receiving, or your partner is receiving;
 - income support
 - Income based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - Pension Credit (guaranteed credit)
- Entitled to or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate
- Named on a valid HC2 certificate

If you hold a HC3 certificate, you may receive some help towards the cost of your NHS dental treatment.

How is NHS dental care provided?

NHS dental care is provided in two main ways.

These are:

Salaried NHS Dentists

Salaried Dentists are employed by the NHS and only undertake NHS work.

General Dental Practitioners

These are independent contractors. Many often provide a mix of both NHS and private dental treatment. However, some only accept private patients.

How do I find an NHS Salaried Dentist or a General Dental Practitioner who offers NHS treatment?

Unfortunately, at the present time, there is a national shortage of NHS Salaried Dentists and General Dental Practitioners willing to provide NHS dental treatment. This means that it can be difficult to register with a dentist for NHS dental treatment.

To help people seeking to register for NHS dental treatment, NHS Grampian operates a **Dental Information and Advice Line (DIAL)** which is open 8.15am to 5.45pm Monday to Friday and can be accessed by telephoning: **0845 456 5990**. The service can give advice on what NHS dental provision is available in your area. If there is no NHS dental service immediately available, they can advise about joining the NHS Grampian Dental Waiting List.



What is NHS Grampian doing to improve the availability of NHS dental services in Grampian?

NHS Grampian has begun an ambitious Dental Action Plan to improve the availability of NHS dental services. The Action Plan includes:

- The construction of a Dental School in Aberdeen to train new dentists
- From 2013 onwards, a minimum of 20 new dentists per year will graduate from the new Aberdeen Dental School
- A recruitment campaign to increase the number of Salaried NHS Dentists by 20 per year, for the next four years
- By 2012, the creation of 124,000 new NHS dental places in Grampian
- By 2010, NHS Grampian aiming to meet and exceed, the Scottish targets of 60% of Primary 1 and Primary 7 children, having no dental decay

A great deal of time and effort is going into improving the availability of dental services in Grampian, however, this work will take some time.

What if I am in acute dental pain?

If you live in Aberdeen City or Aberdeenshire and you are not registered with a dentist, either NHS or private, or you are a visitor to the Grampian area, NHS 24 can arrange an emergency appointment for you at one of the NHS Dental Practices in Aberdeen City or Aberdeenshire. Please call **NHS 24** on: **08454 24 24 24**. Normal NHS dental charges apply.



Ophthalmic Services

Optometrists are highly skilled professionals who are trained to attend to your visual needs, from pre-school screening to managing conditions such as glaucoma, cataracts or macular degeneration.

Optometrists will:

- Assess urgent eye care problems
- Perform thorough eye examinations
- Check for eye disorders
- Manage and treat a wide range of eye conditions
- Prescribe glasses and contact lenses

Your local optometrist provides free eye health care, which is paid by the NHS. To find an optometrist call the **free** NHS Grampian helpline on **0500 20 20 30**.

NHS eye examinations

These are **free** to all patients resident in Scotland and nationals of other qualifying countries. If glasses are required the optometrist will provide a prescription which is valid for two years.

NHS Optical vouchers

Some people are entitled to vouchers which help towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses. You are entitled to receive an NHS optical voucher if you are:

- Under 16 years of age
- 16, 17 or 18 years of age and in full-time education
- Receiving, or your partner is receiving;
 - Income support
 - Income based Jobseeker's Allowance

- Pension Credit (guaranteed credit)
- Entitled to or named on, a valid NHS tax credit exemption certificate
- Named on a valid HC2 certificate

If your glasses or contact lenses cost more than the value of your voucher, you will have to pay the difference.

Opening hours

Most optometrists are open during normal working hours from Monday to Friday and some are open at weekends.

For out of hours urgent eye care, please call **NHS 24** on: **08454 24 24 24**. In the event of a serious eye injury or trauma, contact the ambulance service by **dialing 999** or **112**.





Will I be able to communicate with the doctors and nurses if I speak little or no English?

All GP Practices, Hospitals and Community staff in Grampian are equipped with the "Language Line" telephone interpretation service. "Language Line" gives access to expert interpreters on the telephone, for 120 different languages, in 60 to 90 seconds. If you are non-English speaking or if your English is not very good, you will still be able to communicate easily with your doctor or nurse. If you prefer, you can use "Language Line" to inform your doctor or nurse that you would prefer the presence of a "face to face" interpreter, if possible, for future appointments.

Do you have difficulty in understanding the English language?

If you have a problem reading or understanding the English language, this document is available in a language of your choice. Please ask an English speaking friend or relative to phone, write or email Corporate Communications.

The details are:

Corporate Communications,
Ashgrove House,
Aberdeen Royal Infirmary,
Aberdeen AB25 2ZA

Telephone: (01224) 551116 or 552245

Email: Grampian@nhs.net

Do you have a visual impairment?

This document is also available in large print, as a CD and in other formats, upon request.

Ask for publication:

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