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# Welcome to Northern Ireland Council Areas

We hope you enjoy your stay and find this guide useful.

This guide has been prepared to help make your stay more enjoyable.

We would like to thank the following organisations for their input in putting the original version of this document together.

- Central Services Agency
- Investing for Health
- Health Action Zone

# How to access Health Services

## In an Emergency call 999

**Interpreting services** – it is your right to have an interpreter present. Ask a member of staff to organise this.

**Medical Card** – Your medical card is an essential document, it entitles you to get a whole range of Health Services. You do not have to pay for your medical card.

To apply contact:-

Central Services Agency

2 Franklin Street

BELFAST

BT2 8DQ

Tel no: 028 90324431

Web site: <http://www centralservicesagency.net/>

**General Practitioner (GP)** – Your GP or Family Doctor is responsible for looking after your health needs. By visiting the GP you can access a number of other health services such as, maternity care, mental health and medicines etc. You will need your medical card to register with a GP and can make an appointment by telephone or by visiting the practice.

Your nearest health centres are:-

Web site: <http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/GP/LocationSearch/4>

## How to access Health Services

**Out of Hours Services** – To get services when your GP is closed contact

Organisation	Area/Town(s)	Phone number
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	North and West Belfast	028 9074 4447
	South and East Belfast	028 9079 6220
South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust	North Down and Ards	028 9182 2344
	Lisburn and Downpatrick	028 9260 2204
Dalriada Urgent Care	Antrim, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Cookstown, Carrickfergus, Coleraine, Larne, Magherafelt, Moyle and Newtownabbey council areas	028 2566 3500
Southern Health and Social Care Trust	Armagh and Dungannon, Craigavon & Banbridge, Newry & Mourne	028 3839 9201
Western Urgent Care	Enniskillen, Omagh, Strabane, Derry/Londonderry, Limavady	028 7186 5195

**Hospitals** – Hospitals stay open 24 hours a day and provide a wide range of services including Accident and Emergency and Maternity Services.

Web site: <http://www.hscni.net/index.php?link=hospitals>

**Dentist** – In order to have a dental treatment you first need to register with a dentist, to do this you will need your medical card.

Web site: <http://nhsdentistlocator.co.uk/>

## How to access Health Services

**Pharmacists/Chemists** – Pharmacists (sometimes called Chemists) are experts in medicines and how they work. They play a key role in providing quality healthcare to patients. They dispense your prescriptions, provide a range of services related to specific health issues and can offer advice on healthy living and minor ailments. Working in the community, primary care and hospitals, pharmacists use their clinical expertise together with their practical knowledge to ensure the safe supply and use of medicines by patients and members of the public.

The services that may be available from your Pharmacy are:

- Emergency Contraception
- Truss Fittings
- Incontinence Supplies
- Stoma
- Needle Exchange
- Pregnancy Testing
- Oxygen

They dispense your prescriptions, provide a range of services related to specific health related issues and can advise on minor ailments.

Minor ailments include:

- Bugs and viruses
- Minor injuries
- Tummy troubles
- Women's health
- Skin conditions
- Allergies
- Aches and pains

# How to access Health Services

## Children's problems

### What charges are there for medicines?

There are a range of medicines available from your pharmacy which can be bought directly. These are usually for minor conditions.

To treat major diseases, medicines need to be prescribed (usually by a doctor). There is a flat rate charge for each medicine prescribed called a prescription charge. The prescription charge in England is currently £7.85 (w.e.f. 01<sup>st</sup> April 2014). In Northern Ireland prescriptions are currently FREE. Further information can be obtained at your pharmacy.

# Housing

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is Northern Ireland's regional Housing Authority. If you have queries on housing, you can contact your local Housing Executive office:

Web site: <http://www.nihe.gov.uk/>

Or [http://sockbook.referata.com/wiki/Northern\\_Ireland\\_Housing\\_Executive -  
\\_Belfast Homeless Advice Centre](http://sockbook.referata.com/wiki/Northern_Ireland_Housing_Executive_-_Belfast_Homeless_Advice_Centre)

## What should I do if I feel I am homeless?

If you have no home or are in danger of losing your home you should go to your local **Housing Executive District Office** or the **Homeless Advice Centre** and the Housing Executive will assess your needs. The level of help the Housing Executive can give you depends on whether you are eligible and your particular circumstances. The help may range from advice and assistance, to providing temporary accommodation to permanent accommodation.

**Emergency Arrangements:** if you become homeless, or are at risk of becoming homeless when Housing Executive offices are closed or during holiday periods, a telephone referral service is available at the number listed below.

Regional contact: 028 95049999

[http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/services/contact\\_us\\_home/out\\_of\\_hours.htm](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/services/contact_us_home/out_of_hours.htm)

## Education

Attendance at Primary School is compulsory for all children in the year when they reach their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday between the 2<sup>nd</sup> July one year and 1<sup>st</sup> July the following year.

### Library Services

It is free to join the library and once you are a member, you can borrow books and use the computers in all libraries in NI with no charge.

You can find out where your local library is and more about what they have to offer at –

<http://www.librariesni.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx>

Becoming a library member is free, you just need to complete a membership form and bring some identification with your name and local address to one of the local libraries.

Then you can:

- Use computers
- Access a wide range of books
- Read the local newspapers
- Find out information

## Pre-School Education

**Free Pre-School Places** are available in:

- Nursery Schools
- Primary Schools with a nursery class
- Voluntary and private playgroups that have pre-school places funded by all Education and Library Boards Pre-school Advisory Groups (PEAG).
- Private day nurseries that have pre-school places funded by PEAG.

A child is entitled to ONE free place in a school, playgroup or day nursery.

Many voluntary, private playgroups and private day nurseries may also have fee-paying places available to pre-school children.

### **Age Qualification**

The target group is children who are aged three before 2<sup>nd</sup> July of the year they start Nursery school.

If there are still places available younger children may be admitted to nursery schools or classes.

### **Applying for a Place**

There is an advice booklet and application form for parents. They can be obtained from a pre-school provider or from any of the Education and Library Boards.

Up to date advice and applications are available and processed each year between December and January.

[http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/7-special\\_educational\\_needs\\_pg/7-special\\_needs-a\\_guide\\_for\\_parents\\_pg/7-special\\_educational\\_needs\\_-\\_a\\_guide\\_for\\_parents-contents\\_pg/7-special\\_educational\\_needs\\_a\\_guide\\_for\\_parents-addresses\\_of\\_elbs\\_pg.htm](http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/7-special_educational_needs_pg/7-special_needs-a_guide_for_parents_pg/7-special_educational_needs_-_a_guide_for_parents-contents_pg/7-special_educational_needs_a_guide_for_parents-addresses_of_elbs_pg.htm)

### **Surestart**

Surestart projects are about giving children a better start in life so they will achieve well at school and grow up to be happy. A range of family services including a Community Playgroup, Community Crèche, speech and language programmes for children and parenting support programmes are available at Surestart. You can find out more by contacting them on: <http://www.childcarepartnerships-ni.org> or <http://www.familysupportni.net>

## Employment and Training

### **Do you want to find a job?**

Staff in Job Centres throughout Northern Ireland can give you information, advice and support to help you get work. Web site: <http://www.jobcentreonline.com>

### **Job Searching:**

We will give you guidance on completing application forms, creating CV's and preparing for interviews.

### **Education and Training:**

If you need some qualifications, training or work experience, there are a wide variety of courses and programmes available. We can identify the best option for you.

### **Disability Advisory Service:**

If you have a disability or your health significantly affects the kind of work you can do, the Disablement Employment Adviser based in this office can provide specialist employment help.

### **Careers and Guidance Services:**

You may benefit by receiving information, advice and guidance from a Career's Adviser, based in this office.

### **Information Leaflets:**

Leaflets are available and written in Chinese, Czech, Polish, Portuguese, Lithuanian, Russian, and Slovakian. These can be accessed from our website [www.delni.gov.uk](http://www.delni.gov.uk)

### **Translation Service:**

You can access a translation service through contacting:  
<http://www.belfasttrust.hscni.net/hospitals/InterpretingServices.htm>

# Social Security Agency

## **National Insurance (NI) Number Processing Centre**

The Social Security Agency provides a National Insurance allocation service on behalf of the Inland Revenue.

If you work in the United Kingdom, you must pay National Insurance contributions.

You can apply for a National Insurance Number (NINO) at our National Insurance Processing centre:

### **Services Provided by the Agency**

- Process applications for National Insurance numbers
- Carry out “Evidence of identity” interviews
- Arrange interpreters if required
- Allocate National Insurance Numbers

### **Accessing Our Services**

- Telephone the National Insurance Number Processing Centre
- Use the Free phone at any local Jobs and Benefits Office

Information Point Freephone number on; 0345 600 0643 or

Web-site: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number>

## Northern Ireland Councils

The reform of local government will see the reduction of 26 councils to 11. The process will be completed by April 2015.

The new councils will be stronger, more efficient and will deliver more effective services. They will be citizen focused, responding to the needs, aspirations and concerns of their communities. In partnership with others, they will guide the future development of their areas.

The councils are responsible for the delivery of a number of functions. Below are listed the different departments and the responsibilities that each of these roles fulfil

**The Chief Executive's Department** - This department is responsible for implementing Council policies and decisions, the management of the workforce and the delivery of services to the community. The Chief Executive has a strategic responsibility for Economic Development, Corporate Policy and Planning, PR, Human Resources, Business Administration and the District Policing Partnership.

**Technical Services** – Bin collection, skip hire, street cleansing and litter picking, grounds maintenance – play areas and burial grounds, licensing of dogs and entertainment amusement permits and street trading.

**Culture Arts and Leisure** – The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure embraces a broad development role for the delivery of high quality services in response to community needs. These include: Access to the countryside, Arts development, Community development, Community Safety, Recreation and Leisure Facilities, Museum Services, Sports development, Community relations and Tourism.

**Building Control** – Responsible for assessing proposed construction work to ensure it meets building regulations, and also work on site as it progresses at certain stages.

**Environmental health** – Responsible for enforcement of the council's statutory duties with regard to food safety, health and safety at work, pollution control, consumer protection and public health.

## Policing/Victim Support

### **Police Service of Northern Ireland**

In each police area there is a **Minority Liaison Officer** who will provide a follow up service to any complaint you have made or any incident you may have been involved in. They will explain police powers and procedures to you, and can help you to access other police services. They will ensure that your complaint is being satisfactorily investigated and that you are kept informed of any developments. The service is completely confidential.

Each police station in Northern Ireland has access to the National Interpreter Service by means of dedicated dual handset telephones. Your language will not be a barrier. If you want to contact the police, the number is 0845 6008000 or web site: [www.psni.police.uk](http://www.psni.police.uk)

### **Victim Support**

Victim Support is an organisation, which helps people who are affected by crime. They provide free and confidential support to help you deal with your experience, whether or not you report the crime.

Web site: [www.victimsupportni.co.uk](http://www.victimsupportni.co.uk)

Victim Support

74 Ann St,

Belfast,

County Antrim

BT1 4EH

Tel no: 028 9024 4039

### **Women's Aid**

This is an agency which aims to stop violence against women and children throughout Northern Ireland. If you require support in relation to Domestic Violence please contact:

Tel no: 0808 2000247

Web-site: <http://www.womensaid.org.uk>

## **Driver Vehicle and Licensing (Northern Ireland)**

### **Driving in Northern Ireland (NI) As a New Resident**

All drivers must comply with British minimum age requirements. Generally, these are 17 years for cars and motorcycles, 18 years for medium sized vehicles and 21 years for large lorries and buses. This information is contained on the back page of the DL1 application form.

- available from most Post Offices
- Local Vehicle Licensing offices throughout Northern Ireland
- or by calling 0845 4024000
- Or by contact through web-site: <http://www.dvani.gov.uk/>
- Return it to Driver Licensing Division, DVANI, County Hall, Castlerock Road, Coleraine, BT51 3TB

### **How to Exchange Your Licence for a Northern Ireland Licence**

To exchange your licence for a full NI one, you should complete a DL1 application form which can be located:

- available from most Post Offices
- Local Vehicle Licensing offices throughout Northern Ireland
- or by calling 0845 4024000
- Or by contact through web-site: <http://www.dvani.gov.uk/>
- Return it to Driver Licensing Division, DVANI, County Hall, Castlerock Road, Coleraine, BT51 3TB with your licence and correct fee (see DL1 form for details)

### **TV licence**

Many people do not know that it is requirement by law to have a TV licence. Not having a TV licence is a criminal offence in NI, and potentially people could end up in prison.

Even if you are renting from a private landlord, and there is a TV in the property, the tenants are personally responsible for having the TV licence.

You can find out more details on <http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/> or by telephoning 0300 7906131

## Community Groups and Voluntary Organisations

There are a range of community and voluntary organisations in each area that can provide support. For further information on local community groups please contact:-

Web site: <http://www.communityni.org/>

Or: <http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/links/voluntary-organisations.htm>

### **For Details on Ethnic Minority Associations contact:**

Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM)

3rd Floor,

Ascot House,

24-31 Shaftesbury Square,

Belfast,

County Antrim BT2 7DB

Tel no: 028 9023 8645 or web-site: <http://nicem.org.uk/>

### **Faith Communities:**

Information on the range of faith communities throughout Northern Ireland is available from:

Web site: <http://niinterfaithforum.org/>

## Foreign Embassies

### **American Consulate General**

Phone: 028 9038 6100

Danesfort House

223 Stranmillis Rd

Belfast

BT9 5GR

Web-site: <http://belfast.usconsulate.gov/>

### **Chinese Embassy**

Phone: 020 7299 4049

49-51 Portland Place

London

W1B 1JL

Web-site: <http://www.chinese-embassy.org.uk/eng/>

### **Embassy of Czech Republic in United Kingdom** Phone: 020 7243 1115

26-30 Kensington Palace Gardens

London

W8 4QY

Web-site: <http://www.mzv.cz/london>

### **Embassy of Hungary in United Kingdom**

Phone: 020 7201 3440

35 Eaton Place

London SW1X 8BY

United Kingdom

Web-site: <http://hungary.embassy-london.com/>

## Foreign Embassies

### **High Commission of India in London**

Phone: 020 7836 8484

India House

Aldwych

London

WC2B 4NA

Web-site: <https://www.hcilondon.in/>

### **Malaysian High Commission**

Phone: 020 7235 8033

45 Belgrave Square

London

SW1X 8QT

Web-site: [http://www.kln.gov.my/web/gbr\\_london/home](http://www.kln.gov.my/web/gbr_london/home)

### **Consulate for the Netherlands**

Phone: 028 9077 9088

14-16 West Bank Rd

Belfast

BT3 9JL

Web-site: <http://www.embassypages.com/missions/embassy8446/>

### **Embassy of the Republic of Poland in London**

Phone: 020 729 13520

47 Portland Place

London

W1B 1JH

Web-site: <http://www.london.mfa.gov.pl/en/>

### **Embassy of Portugal in London**

Phone: 020 729 13770

3 Portland Place

London

W1N 3AA

Web-site: <http://www.secomunidades.pt/web/londres>

## Foreign Embassies

### **Embassy for the Russian Federation to the UK**

Phone: 020 7229 6412 or 020 7229 7281

6/7 Kensington Palace Gardens

London

W8 4QP

Web-site: <http://www.rusemb.org.uk/>

### **Embassy of Slovakia**

Phone: 020 7313 6470

25 Kensington Palace Gardens

London

W8 4QY

Web-site: <http://www.mzv.sk/londyn>

South African High Commission

Phone: 020 7451 7299

South Africa House

Trafalgar Square

London

WC2N 5DP

Web-site: <http://southafricahouseuk.com/>

### **Consulate of St. Vincent & the Grenadines**

Phone: 028 9187 4697

16-18 Glen Rd, Comber

Newtownards

County Down

BT23 5EL

Web-site: <http://www.svgconsulate.co.uk/>

## Foreign Embassies

**Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in London**

phone: 020 73 93 02 02

43 Belgrave Square

London

SW1X 8PA

Web-site: <http://london.emb.mfa.gov.tr/>

**Northern Ireland Honorary New Zealand Consulate** Tel: 028 9264 8098

118a Lisburn Rd

Glenavy

Crumlin

County Antrim

BT29 4NY

Web-site: <http://www.nzembassy.com/united-kingdom/nzers-overseas/living-in-ireland>

## Transport

Translink is Northern Ireland Regional organisation for public transport. It looks after all public buses and trains in Northern Ireland. You can access information on buses and trains, including timetables at the following website: <http://www.translink.co.uk/>

Or contact Translink on: +44 (0)28 90 66 66 30

### Airports in Northern Ireland

#### **Belfast International Airport**

Phone: 028 94 484848

Airport Road

Crumlin

BT29 4AB

Web-site: <http://www.belfastairport.com/>

#### **George Best Belfast City Airport**

Phone: 028 90939093

Sydenham by Pass road (A2)

Belfast

BT3 9JH

Web-site: <http://www.belfastcityairport.com/>

#### **City of Derry Airport**

Phone: 028 71 810784

Airport Road

Eglinton

BT47 3GY

Web-site: <http://www.cityofderryairport.com/>

#### **Enniskillen Airport**

Phone: 028 6632 9000

62 Killadeas Road

Trory

Enniskillen

Co. Fermanagh

BT94 2FH

### **Northern Ireland Railways (NIR)**

There are numerous trains available throughout Northern Ireland. Contact number: 028 9266 2294 for timetables and information or check web-site:

<http://www.translink.co.uk/Services/NI-Railways/>

# Finance

## **Post Office**

Head Office

Custom House Street

BELFAST

Phone: 0845 611 2970

Web-site: <http://www.postoffice.co.uk/>

## **Banks and building Societies**

See attached link for lists of current providers. Web-site: <http://www.4ni.co.uk/northern-ireland-directory.asp?level1=16>

## **Money Transfers**

There are a variety of money transfer services available today that allow you to easily send or transfer money between your own accounts, as well as to others like friends of family. Typically, money transfer services are able to transfer money anywhere in the country within 24-48 business hours. Money transfers typically cost either a set fee per transfer, or a very small percentage of the overall amount of money being transferred.

Sending money with the Western Union Money Transfer<sup>SM</sup> is a safe way to send money home. This is found in most travel agents in most towns. Using an Agent location, you can send as much money as you'd like, although certain security compliance requirements must be met depending on amount sent.

## **Emotional Support Services**

### **Citizens Advice Bureau**

Citizens Advice Bureau deal with all members of the general public (urban and rural) and specifically with the elderly and infirm, carers, lone parents, the disabled, young people, ethnic minorities and other vulnerable people and groups including those affected by domestic violence, injury and/or criminal damage.

It aims to ensure that individuals do not suffer through ignorance of their rights and responsibilities or of the services available or through an inability to express their needs effectively. They provide a free, impartial, confidential and independent service of information, guidance and support to all.

Regional office:  
Citizens Advice NI  
Regional Office  
46 Donegall Pass  
Belfast  
BT7 1BS  
Phone: 028 9023 6522  
Web-site: <http://www.citizensadvice.co.uk/>

### **Samaritans**

Samaritans provide free confidential and emotional support to anyone in the community who requires it. For further information contact:

Samaritans  
5 Wellesley Avenue  
Belfast  
BT9 6DG  
Phone: (028) 90664422  
Web-site: <http://www.samaritans.org/branches/belfast>

