

How to access healthcare in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent

A guide for everyone who
live and work here



Healthcare in England is provided for free by the National Health Service (NHS).

If you live and work in England, you can access healthcare provided by the NHS. This is a lot easier once you are registered with a GP (doctor). You do not need proof of address, immigration status, identity papers or an NHS number to register with a GP.

Find your nearest GP practice (also called a GP surgery) and register online at www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery. If the one you choose cannot take any new patients, you can find another one close to you.





If you live in England and need healthcare, these services are available for free:

- Advice and treatment from a GP (doctor)
- Advice through NHS 111
- Urgent and emergency services from Accident and Emergency (A&E), a walk-in centre or minor injuries unit
- Diagnosis and treatment of some infectious and sexually transmitted diseases
- COVID-19 tests, diagnosis, treatment and vaccination
- Family planning (contraception)
- Treatment for a physical or mental condition caused by torture, female genital mutilation, domestic violence or sexual violence.

National Insurance number

NHS services are funded by a special tax called National Insurance. Your contribution (the amount you pay) depends on your employment status and how much you earn. You will need a National Insurance (NI) number to be able to work in England. To find out how to apply and what evidence you will need to provide, visit www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number.

Which health services are available to me?



NHS 111 – when you don't know what to do

If you have an urgent medical problem but you are not sure what to do, visit www.111.nhs.uk or call **111**. It is a free service, available 24 hours a day. You will need to answer a few questions about what is wrong, so that they can tell you what to do. You can ask for a translator if you need one.



Pharmacies – for medicines and advice

Pharmacists can help with non-serious health concerns. They offer expert advice and sell medicines for non-serious illnesses like coughs, colds, sore throats, tummy trouble, aches and pains, earache and rashes. Pharmacists can answer your questions about any medications you are taking, including when and how to take them.

Many pharmacies are open in the evenings and at weekends. You can walk into any pharmacy for advice or medication. Most have small rooms so you can talk in private.

Find your nearest pharmacy at www.nhs.uk/service-search/pharmacy/find-a-pharmacy. Supermarkets also sell many medicines and first-aid supplies.



GP practice – for treatment and to access other services

GP practices (also called GP surgeries) are usually the first place to go if you have a health problem. They can treat many conditions and give health advice. They can also refer you to other NHS health services. See the box at the start of this booklet for how to register with a GP practice.



Vaccinations and immunisations

In England, children and adults can get a number of vaccinations for free. It is important to vaccinate to protect both yourself and those around you who may have a weaker immune system. If you are not sure if you are vaccinated, talk to your GP practice as they will be able to advise on what it is best to do.

There are a number of vaccinations to have across your life – from birth to more than 70 years old. Find out more at: www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them.





COVID-19 vaccination

Everyone is still at risk of catching COVID-19, but getting the vaccine can reduce the chances of becoming seriously ill. In England, anyone above the age of five can get vaccinated for free, and anyone above the age of 16 can have a third 'booster' dose.

See all the options (appointments or walk-in clinics) for getting vaccinated in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent at staffsstokeys.org.uk/your-health-and-care/covid-19.

If you are visiting England for a short time, you can still get a COVID-19 vaccine for free. This will be easier if you are registered with a GP practice (www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-surgery), and means you can prove your vaccination through the NHS COVID Pass.





Stay safe from COVID-19

There are a few easy things you can do every day to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect those at highest risk from infections that affect the breathing.



Get vaccinated (staffsstoikeics.org.uk/your-health-and-care/covid-19)



Let fresh air in if you are meeting others indoors



Wash your hands and surfaces around you



Cover your coughs and sneezes



Wear a face mask in crowded indoor spaces.





Screening

The NHS has a number of screening tests which could highlight more serious conditions like cancer or diseases like tuberculosis (TB) and hepatitis.

If you are registered with a GP, you will get a letter inviting you to any screening that you might need to have. If you are not registered with a GP and are worried about a health condition that is not getting better, call **NHS 111** for advice.



Dentists – for your teeth and mouth

NHS dentists provide any treatment you need to keep your mouth, teeth and gums healthy. You should not wait for problems to appear – regular check-ups will make you less likely to need urgent treatment.

Find a dentist at www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist. If you need urgent dental treatment, call **NHS 111** or the Staffordshire Dental Advice Line on **0300 123 0981**.



Opticians – for your eyes

The NHS recommends you have your eyes tested every two years. You may be able to get your eyes tested for free, and get help to pay for glasses if you need them.

Find an optician at: www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-an-optician. Check if you are entitled to free health care at: www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-entitlements-migrant-health-guide.



Urgent care and advice

Sometimes you need urgent medical care for cuts, burns, sprains and small fractures (broken bones), or urgent medical advice, but it is not a life-threatening emergency. Walk-in centres or minor injuries units are open every day, and you do not need an appointment.

Local walk-in centre:

Haywood Hospital,
Stoke-on-Trent ST6 7AG
(7am to 9.30pm
every day)

Local minor injuries units:

- Leek Moorlands Community Hospital ST13 5BQ (9am to 5pm every day)
- Samuel Johnson Community Hospital, Lichfield WS13 6EF (8am to 9pm every day)
- Sir Robert Peel Community Hospital, Tamworth B78 3NG (8am to 9pm every day)





Emergency services

Call **999** if someone is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk. You will be told what to do or where to go next. An ambulance may be sent to provide treatment or to take them to Accident and Emergency (A&E). You do not need an appointment.

Find out more at www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care-services/when-to-call-999.

Local A&E departments:

- Royal Stoke University Hospital ST4 6QG (24 hours a day)
- County Hospital, Stafford ST16 3SA (8am to 10pm every day – adults only)
- Queen's Hospital, Burton DE13 0RB (24 hours a day)



Mental health support

If you feel unable to cope, are worried about your own mental health or someone you care for, the NHS can help:

- North Staffordshire urgent mental health helpline **0800 0 328 728 option 1** (Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire Moorlands)
- South Staffordshire urgent mental health helpline **0808 196 3002** (Stafford, Stone, Rugeley, Cannock, South Staffs, Lichfield, Burton, Uttoxeter, Tamworth)
- Contact **NHS 111** if you need urgent care but it's not life-threatening
- Ask for an urgent GP appointment if you need advice or treatment.

Emergency mental health

If you are worried about your mental health or someone else, call **999** for an ambulance or go straight to A&E. If you are thinking about hurting yourself, talk to someone at the Samaritans by calling **116 123**. It is a free service, available 24 hours a day.

This information is available in Bulgarian, Romanian and Russian.

