

Identification checking pilots - frequently asked questions for patients

	Question	Answer
1.	Why are some patients being asked to provide their identification?	<p>The Department of Health has introduced new requirements for the identification and treatment of overseas visitors that will become law in October 2017.</p> <p>Guy's and St Thomas' is one of 20 trusts that the Department of Health has asked to pilot a new process to identify whether patients are eligible for free NHS treatment. The pilot is testing the new approach to implementing these requirements.</p>
2.	Will I be asked to provide my identification?	<p>In the pilot initially we are only requesting identification from new patients in the Assisted Conception Unit at Guy's Hospital and the Diabetes Rapid Access Clinic at St Thomas' Hospital. Over time the pilot is likely to be extended to other service areas.</p> <p>Please note: maternity patients have had to provide two forms of identification since 2012 and this requirement will continue as normal.</p>
3.	When is the pilot taking place?	The pilot started on 1 August 2017 and will run for a minimum of three months.
4.	What identification is requested?	<p>We will be asking patients to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one document as proof of their identity, for example a driving licence or passport, and • one document as proof of address, for example a utility bill or bank statement. <p>A full list of acceptable ID documents is available in the Overseas patients section of our website: www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk</p>
5.	How will I be informed about the new ID requirements?	<p>If you are required to provide identification you will receive a flyer (link to doc) with your appointment letter. This will explain which identification documents to bring to your appointment.</p> <p>If you receive text message reminders about your appointment, these will also include details of the identification needed.</p>

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6.	When will my documents be checked?	Your identity documents will be checked by reception or administration staff when you attend your first appointment.
7.	Can I provide photocopies of the required documents?	Please provide original copies of identification documents where possible, but photocopies will be accepted.
8.	Will I be asked for other documents?	The Overseas Visitors Unit may ask also to see proof that you are entitled to remain in the UK - for example a valid visa or evidence of your right to remain or permanent residency in the UK. You can also provide evidence that you have paid the Immigration Health Surcharge although this will no longer apply to assisted conception services from 21 August 2017.
9.	What happens if I haven't brought my identification to my first appointment?	The first appointment will be carried out as normal but the required documents will have to be provided before any follow up appointments are booked.
10.	Who will decide whether I am eligible for free NHS treatment?	The Overseas Visitors Unit will make this decision in consultation with an appropriate clinician.
11.	If I am not eligible for free NHS treatment will I still be treated?	<p>If a clinician determines that the treatment required is 'immediately necessary or urgent' you will be treated. Treatment in the Accident and Emergency Department and Maternity meets this requirement and will be provided.</p> <p>If you are not eligible for free NHS treatment you will be charged for your care (although no charge applies for treatment in the Accident and Emergency Department). Non-urgent treatment will not be provided if you do not pay in full, in advance.</p> <p>Note that special conditions apply to the NHS funding of assisted conception services and these decisions are made separately from, but in parallel with, decisions about entitlement to free NHS treatment.</p>

12.	If I am resident in the European Economic Area will I still be treated?	<p>You will be treated provided that your treatment became necessary during your visit to the UK. You should provide details of your valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) and your overseas address.</p> <p>Patients referred by another EEA member country should provide a completed E112 or S2 form before treatment is given. If you provide this information you will not be charged directly but your treatment costs will be recovered from your government.</p>
13.	Who determines the cost of treatment?	<p>The Overseas Visitors Unit will estimate the cost of treatment based on the anticipated activities and diagnostic tests required and will present you with an invoice.</p> <p>Any over-charge or under-charge will be rectified once the treatment is complete. Charges are based on NHS standard charges and will be the same at every hospital for the same treatment.</p>
14.	What happens if an invoice is not paid?	<p>We always follow up non-payment of invoices and may use debt collection agencies or court action to recover monies owed for treatment provided.</p> <p>We advise the Home Office of any debts greater than £500 which have been outstanding for more than two months. Patients who have outstanding debts will not be able to re-enter the UK until the debt has been paid in full.</p>
15.	If I have a British passport am I automatically entitled to free NHS care?	<p>No. If you are not ordinarily resident in the UK, you will have to pay for your hospital treatment, even if you have a British passport or have paid National Insurance contributions and taxes in the UK in the past unless an exemption applies (e.g. you have an S1 form issued by the Department for Work and Pensions).</p>
16.	Where can I find more information about entitlement to NHS care?	<p>Further information is available here: www.nhs.uk/visitingengland</p> <p>Alternatively please email the Overseas Visitors team at Guy's and St Thomas': ovu@gstt.nhs.uk</p>
17.	Will you share my personal non-clinical information with other organisations?	<p>We reserve the right to provide non-clinical information about you to external agencies for the purpose of confirming your entitlement to free NHS treatment or to recover debts owed to the Trust for treatment provided. This might include authorised credit reference agencies or authorised debt collection agencies. We will only provide the minimum necessary information to fulfil our statutory obligations.</p>