

# What does the NHS do?

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To recognise the range and complexity of health services available under the NHS
- To understand how to access NHS services



## RESOURCES

- Copies of Resources 1–5
- Enlarged version of Resource 4 (Activity 3 Support)
- Audio equipment [🔊6-9](#)
- Copies of audio scripts 7–9
- Internet access (optional)

## RELATED THEMES

Who works in the NHS? (pages 4–14)

### HEALTH SKILLS

The NHS in the UK is charged with the promotion and protection of the nation's health. To fulfil this responsibility, the NHS offers a wide range of services, through primary care (family doctors, practice nurses and allied professionals) and secondary care (outpatients, hospitals and allied professionals). The NHS also provides a lot of information about health and health services by telephone (NHS Direct) and on the Internet (NHS Direct website).

This theme helps learners appreciate the range of services available to them and enables them to explore their entitlements and how to access services.

#### Related health information

[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)  
[www.adviceguide.org.uk/index/family\\_parent/health.htm](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/index/family_parent/health.htm)  
[www.uk/england/dentists/dentalcharges.cmsx](http://www.uk/england/dentists/dentalcharges.cmsx)

### SKILLS FOR LIFE

In order to understand the services available to them on the NHS and how to access them, learners need to be able to:

- refer to written information about available NHS services
- listen and respond to advice from friends and colleagues
- find key information about a required health service.

#### Core curriculum

Activities in this theme will contribute to learning in the following curriculum areas:

- recognise and understand relevant specialist key words (**E**Rw/E3.1a)
- listen for and identify relevant information (**E**Lr/E3.3b)
- scan texts to locate information (**E**Rt/E3.7a).

- Discuss what learners understand by the abbreviation NHS and what they know about the service.
- Display key points from their suggestions.
- In small groups, ask learners to suggest a few reasons why a typical family might need health care based on their own experience. Ask them to focus on different age groups.
- Display the findings in columns under the following headings, ensuring understanding of new vocabulary: 'first contact', 'on-going treatment' and 'prevention'.
- Add further whole group suggestions to provide examples in all columns.
- Discuss which of the services listed might be available on the NHS and highlight them.
- Discuss any similarities and differences between the NHS in the UK and health provision in other countries learners have known.

*What experience do you, your family or friends have of using the NHS?*

*How easy was it to obtain the service?*

*Did you have to wait for an appointment?*

### ACTIVITY 1 6

#### Check a list of NHS services to see what is available

- Divide learners into small groups.
- Hand out Resource 1. Explain to learners they will hear the people in the pictures talking.
- Play the statements, pausing after each one so that learners can match it to the written words on the page.
- Ask learners to discuss the meaning of unfamiliar words using the glossary to help them if necessary.
- Ask learners to suggest what each person should do to address their problem.
- Discuss the meaning of 'primary' and 'secondary' care and whether the problems require primary care services, and whether they involve treatment or prevention.
- Discuss with learners how they can find out about NHS services. Ask for suggestions, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau website, the NHS Direct phone helpline (0845 4647) and website.
- Hand out Resource 2. Ask learners to choose which of the NHS services each person on Resource 1 might need to access. There may be more than one for some. Some services do not apply. Review the results as a whole group.
- Discuss the meanings of the remaining services on Resource 2, using the pictures to help.
- Ask learners to pick out which services you can access directly, and which require a visit to the GP first.

*What do you understand by 'primary care'?*

*How can you find out what services are available on the NHS?*

*Which services can you get immediately? Which might you have to wait for?*

### Support

- Focus on statements A, C, E and H first.
- Ensure understanding of the key words: 'cough', 'glasses', 'teeth', 'fallen'.
- Read each statement aloud and ask learners to find it on the page.
- Talk about the meanings and take suggestions on what health service learners would need for each.
- Introduce other key vocabulary before referring to Resource 2 and matching the four examples.
- Progress to the whole main task.

### ESOL

- Learners need to be able to pronounce words for the NHS services correctly. Support them by providing models of how each service is pronounced which learners can then repeat. For longer words say the word slowly, emphasising the part of the word that is stressed (said more strongly): 'contraception', 'counselling'.
- Encourage the use of bilingual dictionaries to establish vocabulary if available and provided learners can read in their own language.

## ACTIVITY 2 7-9

### Find out how to access NHS services

- Give out Resource 3 and ensure understanding of the services. Encourage learners to tell the group what they know about these services.
- In small groups, invite learners to discuss the questions about the three services. Encourage them to keep a note of their answers, preferably in pencil.
- Play the three conversations, pausing after each one to discuss any differences between learners' notes and the information given by the speakers. Discuss any information learners were surprised about or didn't know before.
- Replay the conversations one by one, this time pausing for learners to correct and add to their notes.
- When learners have finished, supply copies of the audio scripts for them to check their answers.

*Are all NHS services free?*

*Which services may involve a charge?*

*Are all services available to everyone?*

### Support

- Work through the discussion as a whole group, taking one service at a time.
- Play one conversation at a time.
- Focus on key expressions and replay, asking learners to pick out key words and expressions such as 'Will I have to pay?' 'No. The service is free.'

### ESOL

- The audio clips are full of useful vocabulary. Encourage learners to work with the audio scripts, underlining expressions that are unfamiliar (e.g. 'I can't afford a cab'; 'people on low income get help').
- Discuss their meaning with the learners, giving examples to show how the words are used in speech.

### ACTIVITY 3

#### Understand complex information about dental treatment available on the NHS

- Hand out Resource 4 and ask learners to use the heading to predict what it is about.
- Discuss learners' experiences of dental treatment. Display key words and expressions such as 'fillings' and 'check-up'.
- Discuss the local situation, and whether it is easy to find a dentist who will accept NHS patients. Alert learners to changes in what is available and the growing number of dentists who only provide private dentistry.
- Give learners time to read the leaflet.
- Encourage them to underline unfamiliar words and expressions and discuss them in small groups, using the glossary to help.
- Clarify meanings of expressions such as 'Income Support'.
- Give out Resource 5 and ask learners to circle the yes / no answers.
- Review results.

#### Support

- Display an enlarged version of the leaflet to allow learners to focus on particular words and expressions.
- Introduce new key words through discussion. For example, 'cosmetic' can be introduced if you ask learners to talk about why some dental treatment is free and some not.
- Ask learners questions about the leaflet, such as 'Do all dentists offer treatment on the NHS?' 'What can you do to find an NHS dentist?'
- Invite volunteers to point out key words or expressions that answer your questions.
- Go through the scenarios on Resource 5 one by one. Invite learners to highlight the text that answers each yes / no box.
- When learners are confident, ask them to complete their own individual answers.

#### ESOL

- Encourage use of bilingual dictionaries (where available) and discussion with native English speakers to establish the meaning of vocabulary.
- Learners may need additional explanation to understand UK institutions and state benefits (e.g. 'Pension Credit', 'Job Seekers' Allowance'). There may not be equivalents in their countries, or the provision of benefits may be very different. A good starting point is to draw on learners' knowledge of what happens in their countries so that you can highlight where things are similar and different.

*When would you expect to visit a dentist?*

*Do all dentists accept NHS patients?*

*How can you find an NHS dentist?*

#### TIP

Learners may find dental charges confusing and therefore be put off going. Talk about average costs for check-ups and fillings.

#### Action

- Allow time for reflection on what they have learnt about the NHS and what they still need to know.
- Suggest they explore websites such as NHS Direct and the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) if possible.
- Encourage learners to find out about a service they are interested in or which their own family needs. (Examples might be alternative medicine or women's clinics.) This can be done in pairs or individually.

*Which further NHS services would you like more information about?*

- Ask learners to suggest how they can get the information. For example, the local Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), the Internet, Citizens Advice Bureau, the local health centre or library, as well as friends and family.
- Encourage them to draw up questions they want answered and to prepare a table like the one on Resource 5.
- Allow a set time for the research.
- Encourage learners to report back to the group on the information and how they found it.

# What does the NHS do?

## RESOURCE 1



**A** I've got a bad cough.

**B** I want to stop my baby getting mumps.

**C** I need to wear glasses.

**D** My mother has arthritis.

**E** I want my children to have healthy teeth.



**F** I'm married but I don't want to have a baby yet.

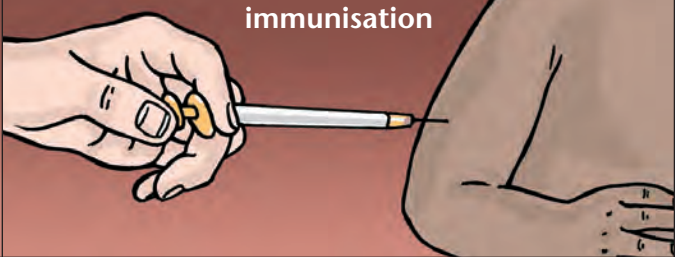







**G** My father is old and can hardly walk. He lives on his own.

**H** My neighbour has fallen down a ladder and can't move.

# What does the NHS do?

## RESOURCE 2




Here are some of the services available on the NHS.

<p>ambulances</p> 	<p>immunisation</p> 
<p>contraception</p> 	<p>maternity services</p> 
<p>counselling</p> 	<p>older people's services</p> 
<p>dentists</p> 	<p>optical services</p> 
<p>GPs</p> 	<p>prescriptions</p> 
<p>hospitals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>← Physiotherapy</li> <li>→ X-ray &amp; Outpatients</li> <li>↑ Main Entrance</li> <li>→ Minor Injuries Unit</li> </ul>	<p>screening for breast cancer</p> 

# What does the NHS do?

RESOURCE 3

7-9

Service	Who do you contact?	Who gets this service?	Do you have to pay?
<p>Travel to hospital for treatment</p> 			
<p>Optical services</p> 			
<p>Maternity services</p> 			



## How to find an NHS dentist

### Not all dentists offer treatment on the NHS.

To find an NHS dentist:

- Find a list of dentists in the local directory.
- Choose a dentist and phone to ask if they do NHS work.

or

- Phone NHS Direct.

or

- Look on the NHS Direct website.

### What treatment can I get on the NHS?

You can get treatment on the NHS to keep your teeth and gums **healthy**. You **cannot** normally get treatment on the NHS for **cosmetic work**.

Example:

- The NHS will pay for **fillings** to keep your teeth healthy.
- The NHS will pay for **white** fillings in your front teeth but not gold fillings.
- The NHS will pay for **grey** amalgam fillings in your back teeth.
- The NHS will **not** pay for **white or gold** fillings in your back teeth.

Adults in employment pay 80% of the costs for most NHS treatments up to a maximum of £360.

### Who can get free dental treatment on the NHS?

You can get free dental treatment if you are:

- under **18**
- under **19** and in full-time education
- **pregnant**
- **mother** to a **baby under one year old**
- on **Income Support, Job Seekers' Allowance** or **Pension Credit**
- under 25 or over 60 (in Wales only).

Also some people on **low income** can get help to pay for dental treatment.

# What does the NHS do?

## RESOURCE 5

	NHS?	Free?
1 A man aged 45 on Income Support wants a white filling in his back teeth.	yes / no	yes / no
2 A girl aged 16 has toothache.	yes / no	yes / no
3 A 36-year-old teacher needs a check-up.	yes / no	yes / no
4 A 25-year-old man with crooked teeth wants them to look straight.	yes / no	yes / no
5 A 32-year-old mother with a new baby wants treatment for bleeding gums.	yes / no	yes / no

# What does the NHS do?

## ACTIVITY 1 / Resources 1 and 2

Main services will be:

- A GPs; prescriptions (treatment)
- B immunisation (prevention)
- C optical services (treatment)
- D GPs; prescriptions; hospitals (treatment)
- E dentists (prevention)
- F contraception (prevention)
- G older people's services (treatment)
- H ambulances (treatment)

GPs may be included in all but C and E.

## ACTIVITY 2 / Resource 3

Service	Who do you contact?	Who gets this service?	Do you have to pay?
Travel to hospital for treatment	the hospital	people who can't walk and can't get there any other way	no
Optical services	the optician	people who need an eye test or are worried about their vision	you may do depending on age and income; if you are under 16 an eye test is free, and there is help with the cost of glasses
Maternity services	your GP	pregnant women	no

## ACTIVITY 3 / Resource 5

	NHS?	Free?
1	no	no
2	yes	yes
3	yes	no
4	no	no
5	yes	yes

**AUDIO SCRIPTS**

## ACTIVITY 1



- A I've got a bad cough.
- B I want to stop my baby getting mumps.
- C I need to wear glasses.
- D My mother has arthritis.
- E I want my children to have healthy teeth.
- F I'm married but I don't want to have a baby yet.
- G My father is old and can hardly walk. He lives on his own.
- H My neighbour has fallen down a ladder and can't move.

## ACTIVITY 2



### Conversation 1

**Man:** My mum's got to go into hospital ... not to stay, just in the afternoon once a week.

**Friend:** Oh ... that's not so bad!

**Man:** But it *is* bad. You see ... I've got a problem. She can hardly walk. I can't take her to hospital because of my work. And I can't afford a cab.

**Friend:** Oh ... you should check with the hospital. They may be able to collect her and bring her home in an ambulance.

**Man:** Will they do that?

**Friend:** Sometimes, but you need to check with them to see if she will be eligible.

**Man:** Oh, that's good. Will I have to pay?

**Friend:** No. The service is free.



## Conversation 2

**Woman:** I think my daughter needs glasses. She's only 15, but she gets a headache when she watches TV. I don't know what to do. Should I go to my doctor?

**Friend:** No. Doctors don't deal with glasses. You need to go to an optician. There's one on the High Street. He's very good. I get my glasses from him.

**Woman:** Can I just walk in?

**Friend:** Yes ... just walk in and ask for an appointment. The optician will give your daughter an eye test.

**Woman:** Do I have to pay?

**Friend:** You can have a free eye test if your daughter is under 16 and you can get help with the cost of her glasses. The optician will explain the costs to you. Adults who are working pay. People on a low income get help.

**Woman:** And I don't need to tell my doctor?

**Friend:** No. You only go to your doctor if there's a medical problem. If your daughter just needs glasses, you go to the optician.



## Conversation 3

**Kim:** So you're pregnant. That's great news, Maria. When's the baby due?

**Maria:** Not for ages. I've only just found out I'm pregnant.

**Kim:** Have you been to your GP yet?

**Maria:** Yes, and she's arranged for me to see the midwife in two weeks.

# What does the NHS do?

## ANSWERS AND AUDIO SCRIPTS

**Kim:** Oh, that'll be your booking appointment.

**Maria:** Booking appointment?

**Kim:** Yeah, it's the first big check-up you have when you're pregnant. The midwife will ask you lots of questions about your health and lifestyle. She'll take your blood pressure, weigh you, and check your blood and urine. Oh, and she'll work out when the baby's due.

**Maria:** So I don't go to the hospital for check-ups?

**Kim:** No, if you have a normal pregnancy, you only need to go to the hospital for scans or special tests. You can get all your antenatal check-ups at the health centre.

**Maria:** Will I always see the same midwife?

**Kim:** I'm not sure. My daughter's just had her second baby and I know she did, but she lives in London. Here I think there's a team of midwives, so you'll probably see a lot of different faces. But you'll have some of your appointments with your GP too.

**Maria:** So it's not the same everywhere?

**Kim:** No, the way your care is organised does depend on where you live.

**Maria:** What about scans?

**Kim:** Well, I know my daughter had just two scans – one quite early on, at around 10 weeks, and then another at about 20 weeks to check that the baby was developing. You'll need to find out from your midwife or your GP what happens here.

**Maria:** And do you have to pay anything?

**Kim:** No, it's free – all part of the local maternity services. Another thing you might want to ask about is antenatal classes. They're classes to help you prepare for labour and birth. You don't have to go to them, but lots of women find them useful and a great way of meeting other mums-to-be.

**Maria:** Who organises the classes?

**Kim:** If they're NHS classes, they're run by local midwives and they're free. I know there's a class at the Greenway Hospital – that's not far from here – but there may also be one at your health centre. You need to find out from the midwife or your GP when you have your appointment. There are other classes, but ...