

A Healthcare services

Healthcare services: frequently asked questions

- ▶ How do I **register with** a GP?
- ▶ How do I get a **referral** to a specialist?
- ▶ Can I request a **second opinion**?
- ▶ Are medical records strictly **confidential**?
- ▶ What if I suspect medical **negligence**?
- ▶ How do I **access out of hours** care in my area?
- ▶ Can I get **cosmetic surgery free of charge**?
- ▶ How can I **get hold of** data about **clinical trials**?
- ▶ Is **complementary medicine** freely available?

Glossary

register (at/for/with sth)	put your name on an official list (enrol = register to join a course, school, etc.).
referral	the act of sending sb to get professional help (be referred to sb).
second opinion	advice from another person (i.e. not the original doctor).
confidential	meant to be kept secret (strictly confidential). confidentiality N (protect patient/client confidentiality).
negligence	fml failure to give proper care or attention. negligent ADJ.
access sth	fml reach, enter, or use sth (gain/have access to sth).
out of hours	when a surgery, office, etc. is closed.
cosmetic surgery	medical treatment intended to improve sb's appearance (surgical repair after accidents, burns, etc. is called plastic surgery).
free of charge	If sth is free of charge it costs you nothing.
get hold of sth	find or obtain sth (get hold of sb = find or contact sb).
clinical trial	a piece or period of research on the effectiveness or safety of drugs or treatment.
complementary medicine	treatments that are not part of traditional Western medicine, e.g. acupuncture.

1 Make six phrases from the box.

protect someone's get hold clinical enrol strictly cosmetic
on a course surgery of something confidential confidentiality trial

2 Complete the text.

When you move to a new area, you need to (1) _____ with a doctor. With most surgeries, if you need out of (2) _____ care and your doctor is not available, there will be an answerphone message, and you will be (3) _____ to another doctor. If you have a serious problem which involves seeing a specialist, you can get a (4) _____ by asking your GP to write to the hospital. If you aren't happy with the specialist's diagnosis, ask for a second (5) _____. You can gain (6) _____ to your medical records at your GP's surgery. All health care is free of (7) _____.

even plastic (8) _____ if it is for medical reasons, and some surgeries also make use of complementary (9) _____. If you are unhappy with your treatment and suspect medical (10) _____, you should speak to the medical staff first before taking any further action.

3 ABOUT YOU Answer the questions at the top of the page about your health service.

B In hospital: patients' experiences 🎧

The nursing staff immediately **put me at my ease** and I was **kept informed** at all times.

Sister Ann's ward was **spotless**, and everything was done with **meticulous** care. **Nothing was too much trouble**.

I had **keyhole surgery** on my knee; apart from a **mix-up** over my notes, the treatment was **second to none**.

I know staff were **rushed off their feet**, but no one **took any notice of** my calls for help.

I was **admitted** to the ward, seen by a **junior** doctor, then nothing happened for two days!

spotlight A stay in hospital

If you need medical care, you may be **admitted to hospital** (= taken there and treated). After treatment, you are **discharged** (= given permission to leave). Then you may go home to **convalesce** (= spend time recovering). **convalescence** N. **SYN recuperate. recuperation** N.

Glossary

put sb at (their) ease	make sb feel relaxed and not nervous.
keep sb informed	continue to give sb information about sth.
spotless	perfectly clean (also spotlessly clean). SYN immaculate.
meticulous	paying careful attention to every detail. SYN fastidious.
nothing is too much trouble	= sb is always ready to help.
keyhole surgery	a medical operation in which only a very small cut is made in the body.
mix-up	INF a situation full of confusion due to a mistake. SYN muddle.
second to none	If a treatment is second to none , it is the best.
rushed off your feet	extremely busy, with too many things to do.
take (no) notice of sb/sth	pay (no) attention to sth/sb.
junior	having a low rank in an organization or profession. OPP senior.

4 Is the meaning the same or different? Write S or D.

1 There was a bit of a mix-up.	There was a bit of a muddle.	
2 The doctor ignored me.	The doctor took no notice of me.	
3 The treatment was second to none.	The treatment was inferior.	
4 She convalesced at home.	She recuperated at home.	
5 Nothing was too much trouble.	The care was too much trouble.	
6 The rooms were spotless.	The rooms were immaculate.	
7 When were you discharged?	When were you admitted?	
8 Did they put you at your ease?	Did they make it look easy?	
9 She's meticulous about cleaning.	She's fastidious about cleaning.	

5 Complete the sentences with a suitable word.

ABOUT YOUR COUNTRY

- In hospital, patients are always _____ informed about their treatment. _____
- Keyhole _____ is increasingly common these days. _____
- Staff in hospitals are _____ off their feet all the time. _____
- There are more senior doctors than _____ doctors. _____
- All the wards in our local hospital are _____ clean. _____
- Recuperation (or _____) always takes place at home. _____

6 ABOUT YOUR COUNTRY Are the statements in Exercise 5 true about your country? Write your answers or ask another student.