



Wellington Healthcare

CHOOSING A FAMILY DOCTOR (GP)



New Zealand has a public healthcare system, where many health services are free or subsidised. However, you do have to pay for services such as seeing a family doctor (GP) or dentist.

To be eligible for public healthcare, you need to be a New Zealand citizen, a New Zealand resident, the holder of a two-year work permit or a refugee. Non-residents may have to pay for some hospital services, but you will not be refused emergency care if you cannot pay.

YOUR FAMILY DOCTOR (ALSO KNOWN AS A 'GENERAL PRACTITIONER' OR GP) WILL PROBABLY BE YOUR FIRST CONTACT WITH THE HEALTH SYSTEM.

Once you decide where you are going to live you can register with a GP. You are not obliged to register with the GP closest to where you live – you may wish to register with a GP near where you work, for example. It is free to register with any GP of your choice. You must pay a charge for each visit, but you may be eligible for government subsidies. A friend or support person can accompany you during most medical examinations.

Most doctors in the Wellington region are members of a Primary Health Organisation (PHO). Filling in an enrolment form at the medical clinic that your doctor belongs to will automatically entitle you to the full range of subsidies available through the PHO.

- To find a local GP in Wellington, visit the website of the **Capital and Coast District Health Board** at www.ccdhb.org.nz/planning/primary_care/gp_contact
- Alternatively visit the **New Zealand Medical Council** website at www.mcnz.org.nz or phone 0800 286 601 for a full list of registered GPs.

► SPECIALISTS

GPs will sometimes refer you to a medical specialist for treatment, and you will need this referral from your GP to get an appointment with a specialist. The usual cost of a visit to a GP is around \$50.

If you wish to access a specialist through the public health system, it is free but you may go on a waiting list. The wait may be several months or more. If you wish to access specialist advice quickly, you (or your medical insurer if you have private health insurance) will be required to pay all fees.

► PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE

Some New Zealanders choose to pay for private health insurance. Although it can be expensive, private health insurance enables you to access specialist treatment without a waiting list.

- To find a list of health insurance providers visit the **Yellow Pages** website at www.yellowpages.co.nz and type 'health insurance' as a key word
- The **Consumer** website has useful information about type of health insurance and reliable companies. Visit www.consumer.org.nz

COMMUNITY SERVICES CARD

If you are a permanent resident with a medium or low income, you could be eligible for a Community Services Card. A Community Services Card can help you and your family with the cost of healthcare. You'll pay less for doctor's fees and prescriptions – simply by showing your card.

Work and Income New Zealand administer the Community Services Card. Check with them to see if you are qualified for the card. Visit www.workandincome.govt.nz or phone 0800 999 999.

ACCIDENT COMPENSATION CORPORATION

If you have an injury either at work or at home, the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) provides personal injury cover to New Zealand citizens, residents and temporary visitors to New Zealand. For more information about ACC personal injury cover, free phone 0800 101 996 or visit www.acc.co.nz – interpreters are available.



SETTLEMENT SUPPORT
NEW ZEALAND

Wellington City Council
101 Wakefield Street, Wellington
Ph 803 8330
settlementsupport@wcc.govt.nz
www.movetowellington.govt.nz



AFTER-HOURS AND EMERGENCY HEALTHCARE

If you need urgent medical attention outside your doctors' normal weekday hours (8am–6pm), you should go to the Wellington Accident and Urgent Medical Centre for after-hours care. For accidents and serious illness you should go to the Accident and Emergency clinic at a public hospital. Wellington Hospital has a 24-hour emergency department.

- **Wellington Accident and Urgent Medical Centre:** Phone 384 4944
- **Wellington Hospital Accident and Emergency Department:** Phone 385 5999

▶ WELLINGTON HOSPITALS

Wellington offers a good choice of public and private hospital facilities.

There are three public hospitals in Wellington, managed by Capital and Coast District Health Board.

- **Wellington Hospital** in Newtown, phone 385 5999
- **Kenepuru Community Hospital** in Porirua, phone 237 0179
- **Kapiti Health Centre** in Paraparaumu, phone 298 6032

For more information about public hospitals and services, visit www.ccdhb.org.nz

Four private hospitals in Wellington provide non-urgent and elective treatments. The public health service's focus is on urgent and essential treatments. Attending a private hospital can be expensive if you don't have private health insurance.



- **Boulcott Hospital:** www.boulcotthospital.co.nz or phone 569 7555
- **Bowen Hospital:** www.bowen.co.nz or phone 479 2069
- **Southern Cross Hospital:** www.southerncrosshospitals.co.nz or phone 389 0000
- **Wakefield Hospital:** www.wakefield.co.nz or phone 0800 925 334

▶ AMBULANCE SERVICE

Wellington has a free emergency ambulance service. It is also free to call the emergency phone numbers:

- **Emergency Ambulance** – phone 111 to call an ambulance in an emergency
- **Non-emergency Ambulance** – phone 0800 426 285 for non-emergency ambulance service. There is a call-out charge of \$109 excluding GST for the use of the non-emergency ambulance.

WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Many health services for children are free. Most medicines for children under six years of age are also free. Mothers of babies born in New Zealand are eligible for free, essential antenatal and postnatal services.

The National Immunisation Schedule is the series of vaccines that are offered free to babies, children, adolescents and adults. For more information visit the Ministry of Health website at www.moh.govt.nz or phone 496 2000.

Other useful contacts regarding women and children's health in Wellington include:

- **Healthline:** visit www.moh.govt.nz/healthline or free phone 0800 611 116. Healthline is a free, 24 hour a day, telephone health advice service. It now also includes the Well Child advice service.
- **Plunket:** visit www.plunket.org.nz or free phone 0800 933 922. This is a free service that helps families with children under five years.

DENTAL HEALTHCARE

In New Zealand dental healthcare is not funded through the public health system although basic dental care for children is free from birth until the end of year 13 (end of secondary school).

Most people register and pay for dental care services with private practice dentists found listed in the yellow pages of the telephone directory.

Wellington Hospitals also run a dental department for emergency dental treatment.

Some other useful information about dental care can be found from the following organisations:

- **Dental Council Of New Zealand:** www.dentalcouncil.org.nz
- **New Zealand Dental Association:** www.nzda.org
- **Dental Protection New Zealand:** www.dentalprotection.org



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