



Wellington health care

NEW ZEALAND PUBLIC HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



Many health services in New Zealand are free or subsidised. To be eligible for public health care, you need to be a New Zealand citizen, a New Zealand resident, the holder of a two-year work visa 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.

However, you do have to pay for services such as seeing a family doctor (GP) or dentist.

CHOOSING A FAMILY DOCTOR (GP)

Family doctors are known as a 'GP' (general practitioner). GPs are your first point of contact with the New Zealand health system, so it is important to find one as soon as you can after arriving in Wellington.

You can find a GP on the Compass Primary Health Care Network website, compassnetwork.org.nz/general_practices/. Here, you can find GPs in any part of the city and register with them. You can also change your GP at any time.

Registering with a doctor (GP) is free and easy to do. The doctor's receptionist will generally get you to fill out a form with your name and contact details – remember to bring along your passport and visa.

Doctors will usually see you on the day that you make an appointment, and you can also bring a friend or support person to most medical examinations if you like.

Many services are carried out by the practice nurse, but if you need a prescription for medicine, you will need to see a doctor.

You need to pay for each visit – costs vary from area to area. There are also additional charges for home visits and emergency appointments.

Most doctors in the Wellington area are members of a Primary Health Organisation (PHO), and this means a wide range of subsidies are

available to their patients. Once you complete an enrolment form at the medical clinic, you are eligible for these subsidies.

► SPECIALISTS

Your GP may refer you to a medical specialist for further examination by sending a letter to the specialist. The cost of a visit to a specialist varies.

If you pay for this visit yourself, or your medical insurer (see below) pays, you will get reasonably prompt access.

You can be referred to a specialist through the public health system. This is free but you may go on a waiting list and wait for several months.

► PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE

Some New Zealanders choose to pay for private health insurance.

While 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 yellowpages.co.nz and type 'health insurance'.
- The Consumer website has useful information about health insurance and reliable companies at 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 which can help you and your family obtain lower cost health care.

To find out whether you qualify for this care, contact Work and Income New Zealand, the government agency that administers it, online at workandincome.govt.nz or phone free on 0800 999 999.

ACCIDENT COMPENSATION CORPORATION

If you are a New Zealand citizen, resident or temporary visitor, and have had an accident and are injured at work or at home, the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) will probably provide personal injury cover. For more information about ACC personal injury cover, phone free on 0800 101 996 or visit acc.co.nz

Interpreters are available through Language Line.



SETTLEMENT SUPPORT
NEW ZEALAND

Wellington City Council
101 Wakefield Street, Wellington
Phone 803 8330
settlementsupport@wcc.govt.nz
live.wellingtonnz.com



AFTER-HOURS AND EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE

If you need urgent medical attention outside your doctor's normal working hours (8am–6pm), after-hours medical care is available at the Wellington Accident and Urgent Medical Centre every day from 8am to 11pm. There is a charge for this service. No appointment is needed. If you have an accident or 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**, 17 Adelaide Road, Newtown – phone 384 4944 or go to wamc.co.nz
- **Wellington Hospital Emergency Department**, Riddiford Street, Newtown – phone 385 5999
- **Healthline**, a free 24-hour telephone health advice service that is staffed by registered nurses. Interpreters are available through Language Line between 9am–6pm Monday to Friday and 9am–2pm Saturday. Visit healthline.govt.nz or free phone 0800 611 116.

▶ WELLINGTON HOSPITALS

Wellington has a range of public and private hospital facilities. The public health service's focus is on urgent and essential treatments. 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 ccdhb.org.nz



Four private hospitals in Wellington provide non-urgent and elective treatments. Note that attending a private hospital can be expensive if you don't have private health insurance.

- **Boulcott Hospital** – boulcotthospital.co.nz or phone 569 7555
- **Bowen Hospital** – bowen.co.nz or phone 479 2069
- **Southern Cross Hospital** – southerncrosshospitals.co.nz or phone 910 2160
- **Wakefield Hospital** – wakefield.co.nz or phone 0800 925 334

▶ AMBULANCE SERVICE

Wellington has a free emergency ambulance service. You can call an ambulance in an emergency on these free emergency phone numbers:

- **emergency ambulance** – phone 111
- **non-emergency ambulance** – phone 0800 426 285. There is a call-out charge for using the patient transfer service and you may need to be referred by your GP.

WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Many children's health services are free, and 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. As well, the National Immunisation Schedule provides a series of vaccines free to babies, children, adolescents and adults.

For more information visit the Ministry of Health website moh.govt.nz or phone 496 2000.

Another useful contact for women and children's health in Wellington is:

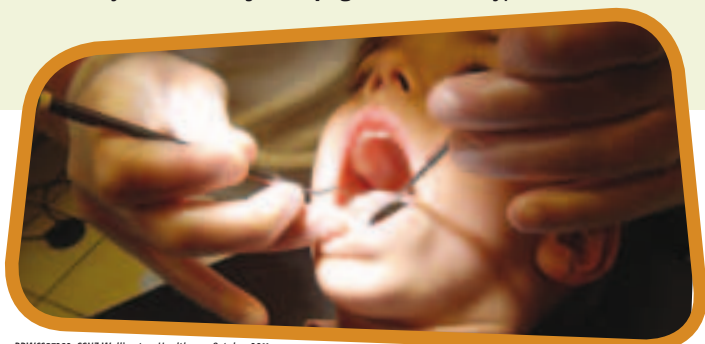
- **Plunket** a free 24-hour phone helpline, where Plunket nurses can give you advice and information on parenting issues and children's health and wellbeing. Plunket also provides home and clinic visits and organises car seat checks (these are mandatory by law) and rental schemes, parent groups, toy libraries and play groups. More information is available at plunket.org.nz or you can phone 0800 933 922 for free, any time.

DENTAL HEALTH CARE

Basic dental care for children is free from birth until the end of Year 13 (generally the end of secondary school). After that you must pay for dental care. Most people register and pay for private practice dental care services which you can find listed in the Yellow Pages telephone directory or online at yellowpages.co.nz and type 'dentists'.

You can also find a dentist online from the 'Locate a Practitioner' section of the Dental Council of New Zealand website, dentalcouncil.org.nz Wellington Hospital has a dental department for emergency dental treatment.

More information is available on the New Zealand Dental Association website, healthysmiles.org.nz



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