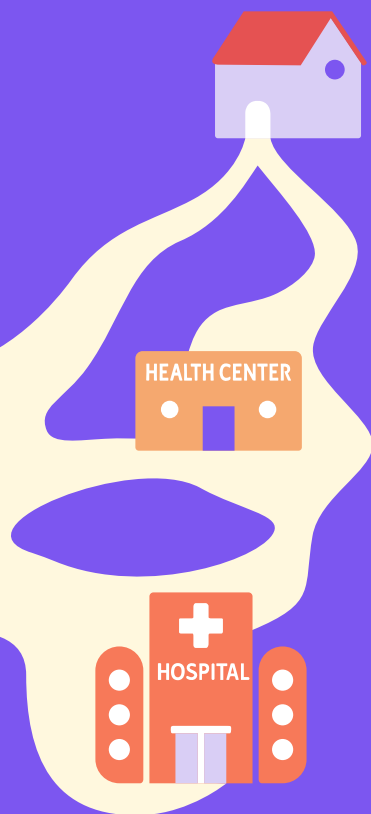


How to access Health Services in Portugal

Asha will guide you through key information



NIALP

INTERCULTURAL ASSOCIATION LISBOA
(AN IMMIGRANT ASSOCIATION)

Welcome

This guide was developed by NIALP – Nepalese Intercultural Association Lisbon as part of the “Healthy Beginnings | Dá Saúde e Faz Crescer!” project (2024–2025), with the support of the BIP-ZIP programme from the Municipality of Lisbon, in partnership with the Social Prescribing Project of primary healthcare services of the São José Lisbon Health Cluster (ULS São José).

The Healthy Beginnings project aims to bridge gaps in healthcare access for South Asian migrant families by promoting culturally adapted health services and health literacy amongst the communities. Throughout the project implementation, we listened to a large number of people of diverse origins, including those who visited our Nepalese registered nurse through our health counseling services, and those who participated in our health literacy sessions and activities. These interactions revealed that many migrants face significant challenges when accessing the healthcare system, particularly while still learning Portuguese or in the process of obtaining the necessary documentation.

This guide was created based on those contributions and to help reduce those barriers. We hope to promote equitable access to healthcare services and empower migrants to navigate the Portuguese healthcare system

with confidence. This guide is intended for non-European citizens living in Portugal, especially those from non-Portuguese-speaking countries.

In each section, you will find footnotes referencing Portuguese law, as well as the rules and procedures of the SNS with the corresponding links which you can consult for more detailed information. These references are valuable for understanding your rights and for accessing health services.

We would like to thank all those who contributed to this work particularly our partners from the Social Prescribing Project of primary healthcare services of the São José Lisbon Health Cluster (ULS São José), health professionals, community members, and partner organizations, especially GAT – Portuguese Activist Group on Treatments, for their valuable contribution.

Hi! I'm Asha. This is my husband Raj and our daughter Maya.

We're also new to Portugal and had many questions about healthcare. In this guide, I'll share what we learned to support your journey.



1 Useful contacts▶ Page 6—9

2 How does the Healthcare System work in Portugal?▶ Page 10—13

3 SNS number and healthcare costs▶ Page 14—17

4 What services are available in the Public Health System in Portugal?▶ Page 20—21

5 How do I get a Family Doctor?▶ Page 22

6 How do I schedule a medical or nursing appointment at USF / UCSP Health Centre?▶ Page 23

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11 Access to SNS for minors (Children under 18 years old)▶ Page 32

12 Where can I file a complaint if my rights are not respected?▶ Page 33



Useful contacts

and when to call

When you need interpretation support?



Telephone Translation Service



→ Call: +351 21 711 50 00

→ Email: stt@aima.gov.pt

8:00–20:00, Monday–Friday.

AIMA - Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum

AIMA offers a Telephone Translation Service to overcome language barriers and promote the integration of migrants by putting the parties in conversation via conference call.

This service is designed to provide immediate and/or scheduled translations in over 60 languages and dialects; however, it may occasionally fail to respond due to limited availability.

When you have a non-emergency health issue?



SNS 24 Health Telephone Line

→ Call: 808 24 24 24

Available 24/7 (free of charge)

Examples of non-emergency health issue:



MILD OR MODERATE PAIN



FEVER



BLOOD PRESSURE CHANGES



ITCHING



PERSISTENT COUGH



PERSISTENT CRYING (CHILD)



DIARRHEA



NAUSEA

When you face a serious or life-threatening situation?



European Union Emergency Number

→ Call: 112

Available 24/7 (free of charge)

Examples of a serious or life-threatening situation:



ACCIDENT WITH INJURIES



SUSPECTED STROKE



CHOKING



DIFFICULTY BREATHING



ALTERED STATE OF CONSCIOUSNESS



SEVERE BURNS / BURNS IN SENSITIVE AREAS



HEAVY OR UNCONTROLLABLE BLEEDING



CHEST PAIN

Useful contacts

• SNS 24 Health Telephone Line

Official telephone helpline service of the Portuguese National Health Service (SNS - Serviço Nacional de Saúde), available in both Portuguese and English, providing health-related information, advice, and referral to appropriate health services. If you have any health concerns, problems, or questions, you must call this number before going to a Health Centre or Hospital Emergency service - except for very serious or life-threatening situations (see Emergency contact in the next section).

It is not mandatory to have an SNS number to access this service: if that is your case, simply ignore the automatic message requesting it, because your call will still be placed in the queue and eventually answered by a health professional.

Pregnancy

SNS 24 telephone line offers a dedicated phone service for pregnant women needing health assessment, advice, and referral to gynaecology/obstetrics Emergency care. If you are pregnant, always call this number before going to the Emergency.

Mental Health

Psychological counseling service available through SNS 24 telephone line and delivered by clinical psychologists: <https://www.SNS24.gov.pt/pt/sobre-nos/>



Please note that waiting times can be long.

• European Union Emergency Number

The 112 telephone service is the contact used in all European Union countries for Emergency related services, such as law enforcement, firefighter department or ambulance service. In the event of serious or life threatening situations, you should

contact 112 and your call will be transferred to the adequate service provider: INEM - Instituto Nacional de Emergências Médicas. If possible, try to have a Portuguese speaker with you, in case the health professional does not speak English.

and what they do

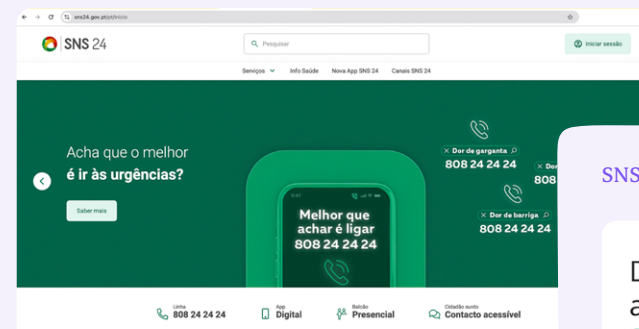


• SNS 24 Portal and SNS APP

You can find information and register in the SNS Portal or Mobile App as long as you have an SNS number. Through these platforms, you can access doctors' prescriptions and other relevant information, such as your

scheduled appointments, and status of hospital referrals. If you are enrolled at a Health Centre that offers this service, you can also schedule appointments, even if you don't have a Family Doctor.

SNS 24 online Portal:



A sua saúde mais digital

Na App SNS 24 pode aceder a um vasto conjunto de informações e serviços digitais de saúde.

• Aplicações • Serviços • Documentos

- ✓ Receitas e exames
- ✓ Testes e exames
- ✓ Documentos e certificados
- ✓ Monitorização de saúde
- ✓ Multilíngues

SNS 24 App:

Descubra a nova app SNS 24



www.sns24.gov.pt

How does the Healthcare System work in Portugal?

In Portugal, the right to health protection is recognized as a fundamental right by the Portuguese Constitution and healthcare is provided through both public and private systems.

The public healthcare system is universal (available to everyone), comprehensive (covering a wide range of services), and mostly free of charge. The few existing user fees are exempted for people in vulnerable situations and under specific criteria. **Healthcare services cannot refuse to provide you with care on the grounds of nationality, lack of financial means, lack of a residence permit, or other similar reasons.** In addition to the user fees mentioned, foreign residents in Portugal may not always have free access

to healthcare. This depends on your situation in the country and the documents you have.

The National Health Service (Serviço Nacional de Saúde – SNS) is the public network of institutions and services that provide healthcare services in Portugal. It includes public Hospitals and Health Centers, but also some private clinics and independent professionals, subject to contractual agreements or official certifications with the public system.

• Local Health Units (Unidade Local de Saúde)

The country is divided into Local Health Units (ULS - Unidade Local de Saúde) that cover specific geographic areas and include local Health Centres and Hospitals that work together as one system. There are nine ULS in the Lisbon Metropolitan Region:

- 📍 ULS São José
- 📍 ULS Santa Maria
- 📍 ULS Lisboa Ocidental
- 📍 ULS Amadora/Sintra
- 📍 ULS Loures/Odivelas
- 📍 ULS Estuário do Tejo (Vila Franca de Xira),
- 📍 ULS Almada e Seixal,
- 📍 ULS Arco Ribeirinho (Barreiro e Montijo),
- 📍 ULS Arrábida (Setúbal)

• Primary healthcare

Primary healthcare in Portugal is provided in Health Centres (Centros de Saúde), which can be either Family Health Units (Unidades de Saúde Familiares – USF), or Personalized Healthcare Units (Unidades de Cuidados de Saúde Personalizados – UCSP). The main difference between them is that in USF most people have a Family Doctor assigned, while in UCSP it is common to be seen by the doctor on-call.

The National Health Service (SNS) aims to ensure that every person has access to a Family Doctor (general practitioner), who is responsible for monitoring their health over time within the public healthcare system. However, in some areas, due to limited availability of doctors, not all users are currently assigned one.

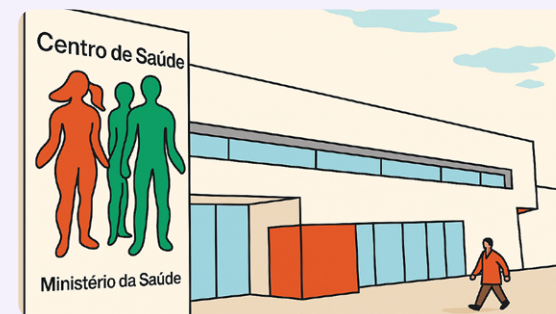


You can see the list of Health Units in every ULS through the following link: <https://bicsp.min-saude.pt/pt/biufs/3/937/30038/Pages/default.aspx>



To find out your designated Health Centre call SNS 24 line (808 24 24 24) and provide your official address.

Visual representation of a Health Centre:



HEALTH CENTER



• Each ULS has preferential Hospitals

Each ULS has preferential Hospitals which patients can be referred to in that specific geographical area.



If you need to go to the Hospital Emergency services you always need to call the SNS 24 telephone line or be referred by a health professional at the Health Centre.

Upon arrival, you will go through a triage process where a health professional will assess your health situation.

• Emergency services

In Portugal, the Emergency services use the Manchester Triage System, where each colour corresponds to a clinical priority level and maximum waiting time, ensuring that patients are seen according to the severity of their condition.

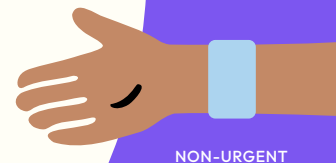
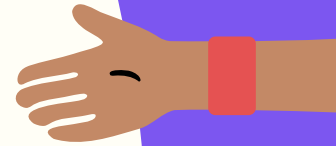
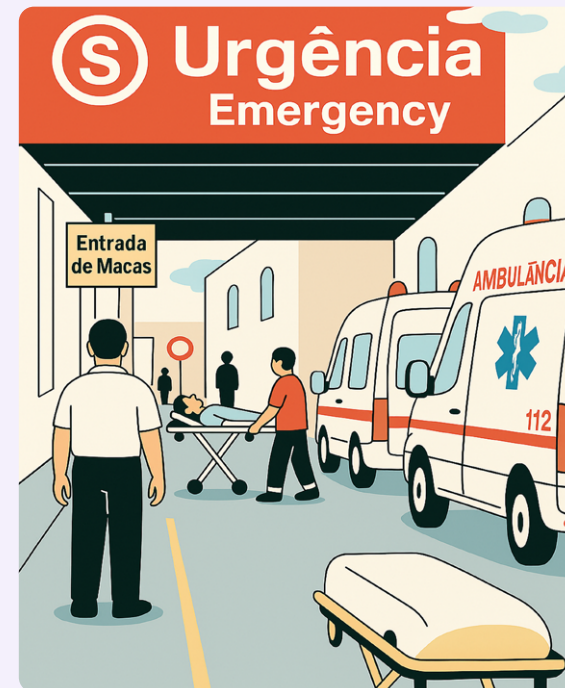
Manchester Triage System

COLOUR	PRIORITY LEVEL	MAXIMUM WAITING TIME	MEANING
Red	Emergency	0 minutes	Immediate life-threatening condition; patient must be seen at once.
Orange	Very urgent	10 minutes	Serious condition, potentially life-threatening.
Yellow	Urgent	60 minutes	Stable, but condition could worsen without timely care.
Green	Standard / Less urgent	120 minutes	Non-urgent situation; medical attention needed but not critical.
Blue	Non-urgent	240 minutes	Minor issues; no risk of deterioration.

• Private Healthcare System

In addition to the National Health Service (SNS), individuals can subscribe to private health insurance through legally registered insurance companies. These insurance plans provide access to private healthcare services at contracted (reduced) rates, typically covering consultations, diagnostic tests, and treatments in private clinics and Hospitals that have agreements with the insurer. Coverage and costs vary depending on the plan, so it's important to compare options before choosing.

Visual representation of an Emergency service:



In the Emergency Department, you'll get a wristband. Its colour shows how urgent your situation is.

SNS number and healthcare costs

To have access to healthcare services in Portugal you need an SNS number that will be used to identify you. This number is definitive, regardless of whether you are in a regular or irregular situation (with or without a valid residence permit): what changes is your obligation, or not, to pay fees.

• Where can you ask for this SNS number?

The SNS number can be obtained at different Health Centres (USF / UCSP). You should preferably register with the USF / UCSP of the borough where you live. Depending on the health center, this can be face to face or through email by sending all required information and documents.

Family Health Units (USFs) have a limited number of patients they can register. If this limit has been reached, registration at another Health Unit – possibly a UCSP – will be recommended. A staff member at the Health Unit should indicate where you can register. For more information, [please see Section 2: How does the Healthcare System work in Portugal?](#)

In ULS São José Cluster this is currently done through email:
ulssjosecssp.inscricoes@ulssjose.min-saude.pt



• Which documents do you need to have regular and full access to healthcare services²?

The Health Centre will ask you for the following information:

- ✓ ID document / Passport.
- ✓ Residence Permit (including residency permits expired since 22 February 2020³).
- ✓ Portuguese Tax Identification (NIF - Número de Identificação fiscal).
- ✓ Address: the following documents are accepted as proof of address: residence permit; rental contract; loan-for-use agreement (“contrato de comodato”); utility bill (water, electricity, or gas). Please note that it is important to always keep your address up-to-date on your residence permit. If the address on your residence permit does not match your current address, you need to request an address change to AIMA⁴.
- ✓ A portuguese contact phone number and/or email address is recommended.
- Please note that the Social Security Identification Number (NISS - Número de Identificação da Segurança Social) is not mandatory for an updated registration.

In case you have all these documents, you will be considered to have an “updated enrollment” in the SNS system or “registo atualizado”, meaning that you have all the necessary data. This provides you with regular access to all healthcare services under the same conditions as a Portuguese citizen.

• What if you are missing documents on this list?

If you are missing one or more documents on this list you can still request an SNS number at a UCSP health center, preferably in your local borough. This process can be done either in person or online, depending on the specific health center. However, your registration in the SNS system is valid for only 180 days (provisional registration - “em curso”), after which your enrollment will be discontinued. In this case, you cannot be enrolled at a health center, therefore you only have access to “same day” appointments (“consulta do dia”) at a UCSP,

available for acute illness situations only (through referral from the SNS24 phone line). Access to other scheduled appointments might be limited depending on the availability of health professionals. In such cases, despite having an SNS number and access to healthcare services, you are responsible for paying the full costs of the provided services (except in the situations stated below). This will also be the case after the 180 days period when your registration will be considered incomplete.

Once you receive your residence permit, inform your health center, so they can update your records and grant you full access to healthcare services. Your SNS number remains unchanged.

• What if you can't afford the costs of healthcare?

The impossibility of paying immediately does not prevent you from receiving health care, and access cannot be denied. In this case, the bill will be sent to your address and can be paid later. If you are in a vulnerable situation and you can't afford to pay the total amount of the health services provided to you, contact the social services of the health center or hospital.

• Other situations

Other situations: for citizens who benefit from bilateral agreements (Angola, Cape Verde, Guiné Bissau, S. Tomé e Príncipe, Mozambique, Andorra, Brazil, Morocco, Quebec, Tunisia) or for refugees and asylum seekers, the access to the healthcare system is under special conditions, namely through proof of refugee or asylum status or proof of bilateral agreement, which will not be covered in this guide.

• For minor (children under 18 years of age)

Please see [Section 11](#) of this guide (page 32).

• Exceptional situations

There are specific health conditions, considered “urgent and vital healthcare”, under which you have the right to free healthcare, even with an “ongoing” or “incomplete” registration in the SNS⁶:

- ✓ Transmissible diseases that pose a threat to public health, such as an epidemiological outbreak, and communicable disease control, for example HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis and Tuberculosis;
- ✓ Minors (children under 18)⁷;
- ✓ Vaccination (for everyone);
- ✓ Urgent and vital care;
- ✓ People in a Family Reunification process, where a family member is contributing to Portuguese Social Security System;
- ✓ Individuals experiencing social exclusion or verified economic hardship.

² Despacho n.º 14830/2024, de 16 de dezembro https://diariodarepublica.pt/dr/detalhe/despacho/14830-2024-900163820?utm_source=chatgpt.com

³ Decreto-Lei n.º 85-B/2025 <https://aima.gov.pt/pt/documentos-e-vistos-validos-e-aceites-ate-30-de-junho-de-2025-valid-and-accepted-documents-and-visas-until-30-june-2025>

⁴ Regulamento RNU 2025 versão de 07/04/2025

⁵ Regulamento RNU 2025 versão de 07/04/2025

⁶ Circular Informativa n.º 12/DQS/DMD, de 7 de maio de 2009 <https://www.dgs.pt/directrizes-da-dgs/orientacoes-e-circulares-informativas/circular-informativa-n-12dqsmd-de-07052009-pdf.aspx>

⁷ Decreto-Lei n.º 67/2004, de 25 de Março

⁸ Regulamento RNU 2025 versão de 07/04/2025



To sum up

All required documents

Access to Healthcare
as a Portuguese Citizen

*Due to recent legal changes, it is possible that even in the “exceptional situations” that allow you to benefit from free access to healthcare, you may still be asked to present proof of residence (“Atestado de Residência”) from your local borough (“Junta de Freguesia”) proving that you have been in the country for at least 90 days. If you do not

have the requested document and the health entity insists you need to pay, kindly present the [official information issued by ERS \(the Regulatory Health Authority – Public Official Entity in Portugal\)](#) included in [Portuguese in this guide page 34](#). You can also file a complaint. [See Section 12: Where can i file a complaint if my rights are not respected?](#)

Missing any required document

Exceptional Situations

Transmissible diseases in outbreaks and communicable disease control

Maternal, child, and reproductive health

Children <18

Vaccination

Urgent and vital care

Family Reunification process if one member pays social security

Verified economic hardship and social exclusion

FREE ACCESS TO
Healthcare
Services provided

Acute illness

You cannot be enrolled at the health center but will have access to “same day appointment” at the health center (UCSP) by calling the SNS 24 phone line.

Hospital Care / Emergency Situations

PAY FULL COST OF THE
Healthcare Services provided

What services are available in the Public Health System in Portugal?

Primary healthcare services

(Health Centre = Centro de Saúde)

- Health surveillance
- Prevention
- Medical appointments
- Social work appointment



Hospital Care

(Only if referred by the health professionals at the Health Centre or through the SNS 24 telephone line*)

- Hospital Emergency
- Hospitalization
- Specialty Appointments
- Complementary diagnostic and therapeutic exams



* It is mandatory that you call SNS 24 (808 24 24 24) before you go to any public Health Centre or Hospital.

To see which conditions are considered urgent and requiring emergency services, [please consult Section 1 - useful contacts of this guide.](#)

• Planned appointments (scheduled in advance)

These planned appointments include:

- Infant and children's Health (0–18 years old);
- Maternal Health;
- Family Planning;
- Adult Health;
- Home visits (for very specific cases of people who, for health reasons, are unable to physically go to the Health Centre);
- Vaccinations;
- Nursing care procedures (dressings, injectables, other therapeutic procedures).

• Unplanned appointment

Open/Same day consultation (“Consulta do Dia”: applicable for patients referred by the SNS24 phone line who present acute illness* and need to be evaluated on the same day. These consultations are limited and subject to doctors' availability.

*acute illness: typically refers to a rapid-onset, short-duration health condition that often demands immediate care.

• Other services

Access to specialties such as psychology, nutrition, and dental hygiene is available at some health centers. Since a doctor's referral is necessary, ask your provider if your health center offers these services. Please note that waiting times can be quite long.

• Remote appointment (“não presencial”)

Available only in some Health Centres or through the SNS 24 telephone line.

You can confirm in the SNS mobile app or at your health center if this service is available for you. If it is, you can schedule an appointment via the SNS24 phone line or mobile app.

The SNS24 telephone line may also offer teleconsultations when your health condition does not require you to visit a health professional in-person. This is a medical appointment conducted via video call, scheduled after patient triage through the phone line.

Remote appointments can be requested for various purposes, including:

- Requesting a copy of the Individual Health Booklet / Vaccination Booklet (Boletim Individual de Saúde / Boletim de Vacinas);
- Regular medication requests;
- Delivery of test results or clinical reports to be evaluated by the doctor.

• Treatments (nursing)

How do I get a Family Doctor?

As mentioned previously, the Portuguese health system (SNS) intends for every family to have a “Family Doctor” – a general practitioner, but due to a current shortage of Family Doctors, this is not yet the case for all residents.

If you have a complete registration in the SNS system, you are automatically on the waiting list for a family doctor. This can take months to years, and there are specific criteria that determine the priority.

However, if you have a family member with a family doctor at another health center near your address, you can usually request to join their file, subject to the center's approval.

Keep in mind that . . .



Not having a Family Doctor at the Family Health Unit (USF) does not mean you will not have access to healthcare. You should register at the Personalised Healthcare Unit (UCSP) in your area of residence, and you will be seen by on-call doctors.



When you don't have residence permit or all the documents necessary for complete enrolment with the SNS system – [please see Section 3](#) – you are not eligible for a Family Doctor.



How do I schedule a medical or nursing appointment at USF / UCSP Health Centre?

• **If you are already enrolled in a Health Centre, there are different ways you can schedule an appointment. Contact your health center to learn the specific procedure, as it may vary:**

- By phone: call the Health Centre directly.
- Via the SNS 24 telephone line: call 808 24 24 24.
- In person at the Health Centre: appointments can be scheduled by the patient, a relative or a friend and require an identification document.
- By Email: send an email to your health centre's email address.
- Through the MySNS App.
- Through the SNS24 website: <https://www.sns24.gov.pt/pt/login/utente> you can log in using your SNS number and phone number linked to your registration, or with “Chave Móvel Digital” (the digital authentication system to access public online services, requested at a “Espaço Cidadão”).



Always call the SNS 24 telephone line before going to your health centre or SAC, so you can be directed to the closest available service.

Health Centre opening hours

For most cases health centers only work during weekdays and working days. However, some specific units are also open during the weekends and holidays (“feriados”) to serve individuals with an

acute illness and who are referred by the SNS 24 helpline. These units are called SAC - Complementary Health Services (“Serviço de Atendimento Complementar”).

Family Planning

All patients, regardless of their current registration with the SNS system (ongoing or incomplete) have free access to family planning health services (see section 3 for more information).

• Family Planning healthcare includes:

- Sexual and Reproductive Health including, termination of pregnancy which is legal in Portugal up until 10 weeks of pregnancy and is included in the “exceptional situations”;
- Information and provision of contraceptive methods, e.g., pill, Intrauterine Device (DIU - dispositivo intrauterino) intrauterine system (“SIU - sistema intrauterino”), implant, contraceptive patch, vaginal ring, emergency contraception, and condoms, all provided free of charge according to availability;
- Screenings to Cervical cancer, breast cancer and sexually transmitted infections;
- Preparation for responsible motherhood and fatherhood;
- Clinical follow-up.



Fertility appointments and related treatments are only available for free to patients with updated and complete SNS registration and under 39 years of age. Beware that these appointments may have a long waiting time.

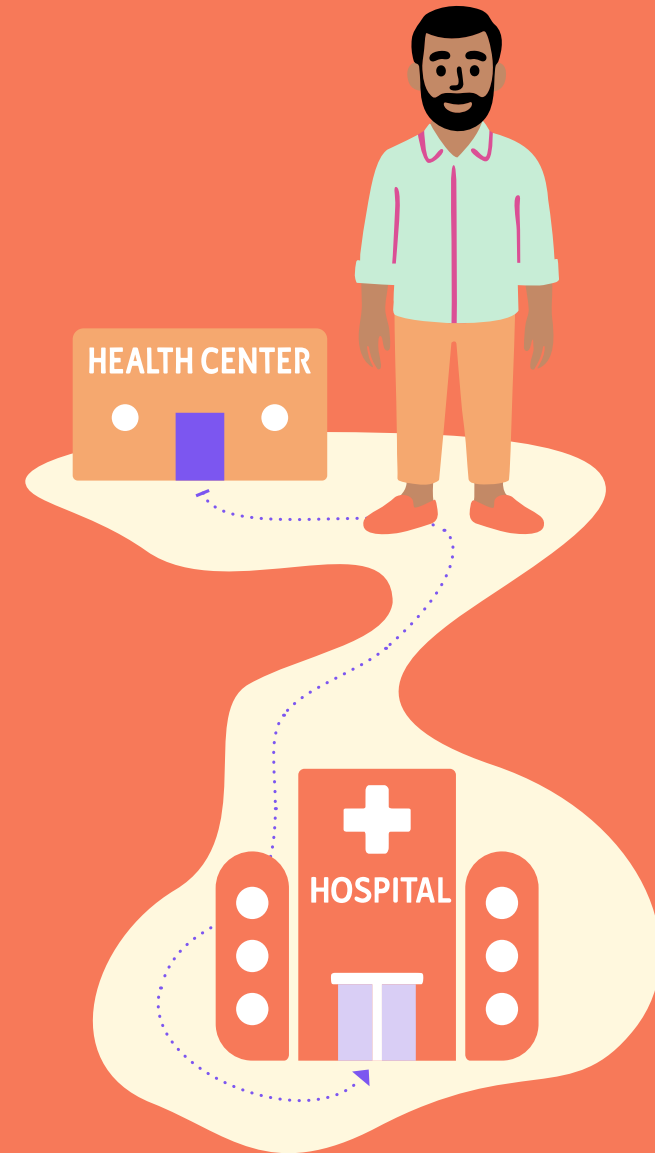
If you require a specialty appointment (for example, fertility), you need to be referred by a health center doctor.

When can I get a Hospital appointment?

If the USF/UCSP doctor deems it necessary, they will refer you to a Hospital / Specialist appointment. Confirm that your contact information (address, phone number and/or email) is updated at the front desk of your Health Unit, to ensure you receive information about your appointment's time, place, and date.



You can only go to the Hospital if you are referred by a doctor at the Health Centre or by the SNS 24 telephone line.



I went to my appointment and was given several test requests. What are they for? Where can I do my tests?

The doctor may request tests (blood, urine, x-ray, ultrasound or others) to complement the health assessment. These requests are given on paper, email or text message. When you schedule your exams and tests you will need to present this credential paper(s) or email with the attached document.

• Where can you do these exams and tests?

If the tests were requested by a doctor at the Health Centre (“Centro de Saúde”), these can be done at:

- Private laboratories and clinics that work in partnership with the SNS: you can request information about clinics / laboratories endorsed by SNS at your USF / UCSP health center, or you can also check the list online: <https://www.arslvt.min-saude.pt/convencoes/pesquisa-de-prestadores-convencionados/>
- Collection points of the reference Hospital, if that service is provided by the ULS Health Cluster of your area of residency.
- If the tests were requested during an appointment at the hospital, these are usually scheduled in the hospital’s collection points or imaging services. Always ask your doctor how to proceed.



In any case the health professional might refer you to a clinic or private laboratory that has SNS endorsement. You can request information about clinics / laboratories endorsed by SNS at your USF / UCSP.

• How much will it cost?

If you have an SNS number with an updated enrollment, the tests should be free of charge. However some specific exams are not covered by the SNS and may have a cost.



Ultrasounds during pregnancy

Ultrasounds during pregnancy are included in the previously mentioned “exceptional situations”, and are fully covered by the SNS. However, because there are often long waiting lists, it can be difficult to get a free appointment for pregnancy ultrasounds through the SNS. You should always try to book the free appointment first, and only consider paying for one if it is not possible to get an appointment within the dates recommended by your doctor. In a private clinic, the usual cost is around 70 euros for the first and third trimester ultrasounds, and about 120 euros for the second trimester ultrasound.



Where can I buy medicines?

Medicines are sold in pharmacies, and most require a medical prescription (“receita médica”). This prescription can be given to you on paper by a doctor, sent by SMS, email, or accessed through your personal profile on the SNS 24 website or app. Some basic medicines, usually for minor symptoms, can be bought without prescription.

If you have an updated registration and your doctor prescribes you medication, in most cases the cost is partially covered by the SNS, and you will not pay the full amount.

If you don't have a complete registration in the SNS system, you may still receive medical prescriptions from the SNS, but you will have to pay the full price at the pharmacy.



Access to SNS for minors (Children under 18 years old)

In the case of non-Portuguese citizens, residence permit and NIF are not required for enrollment in the SNS system, until the child is 18 years of age. However, it is necessary to provide a proof of address from the local borough (“Junta de Freguesia”) stating that the minor has been living in Portugal for over 90 days, or a “Registration of Foreign Minor in an Irregular Situation” declaration from AIMA. Once the child turns 18 years old, they will have 90 days to present a NIF number at the health center.

The “Registration of Foreign Minor in an Irregular Situation” from AIMA can be requested by sending an email to: registo.menores@aima.gov.pt.



Please be aware that this registration does not mean that the minor or the parents have a residence permit or legal residency rights.

Where can I file a complaint if my rights are not respected?

Healthcare services cannot refuse to provide you with care on the grounds of nationality, lack of financial means, lack of a residence permit, or other similar reasons.

In case of refusal to access healthcare services and if you are entitled to access them in terms of the Portuguese law, you can file a complaint with the Health Centre / Hospital directly (complain book / livro de reclamações) or with the Health Regulatory Entity (ERS).

• For a complaint with ERS you can:

- File a complaint through the website: <https://www.ers.pt/pt/reclamar-diretamente-a-ers/>;
- Call Center ERS: 309 309 309 (9am - 5:40pm);
- Telephone: 222 092 350;
- Email: geral@ers.pt;
- In the Central Lisbon area (ULS São José) you can also email: gabinete.cidadao@chlc.min-saude.pt.

Acesso de cidadãos estrangeiros à prestação de cuidados de saúde no Serviço Nacional de Saúde

[« Voltar](#)



20.08.2025

Acesso de cidadãos estrangeiros à prestação de cuidados de saúde no Serviço Nacional de Saúde

Estas perguntas frequentes não dispensam a leitura atenta da legislação aplicável e visam essencialmente constituir um instrumento de informação, orientação e apoio.

Para saber mais sobre este tema, consulte a área direitos e deveres dos utentes » Direito à proteção da saúde » O Serviço Nacional de Saúde » A Universalidade.

- Um cidadão estrangeiro tem acesso a cuidados de saúde no Serviço Nacional de Saúde (SNS)?
- O que é o Registo Nacional de Utentes (RNU) e para que serve?
- Como pode um cidadão estrangeiro obter o Número Nacional de Utente (NNU)?
- Que tipos de registo no Registo Nacional de Utentes (RNU) existem?
- A situação legal do cidadão estrangeiro em Portugal tem impacto no tipo de registo que lhe é atribuído no Registo Nacional de Utentes (RNU)?
- Quais as diferenças entre as tipologias de registo no que respeita à responsabilidade financeira e à inscrição nos cuidados de saúde primários?

O registo no RNU não significa que o SNS irá assumir todos os encargos gerados com a prestação de cuidados de saúde. A responsabilidade financeira depende do tipo de registo no RNU.

Responsabilidade financeira sobre os encargos gerados com a prestação de cuidados:

Aos cidadãos estrangeiros com "registo atualizado" aplica-se a condição de responsabilidade financeira previsivelmente assumida pelo SNS, independentemente de benefício por qualquer subsistema público.

Aos cidadãos estrangeiros com "registo em curso" ou "registo incompleto" aplica-se a condição de encargo assumido pelo próprio cidadão ou por uma entidade terceira financeiramente responsável, com exceção dos cuidados de saúde especificamente previstos no n.º 7 da Circular Informativa n.º 12/DQS/DMD da Direção-Geral da Saúde (DGS), a saber: cuidados no âmbito da saúde materno-infantil e saúde reprodutiva, nomeadamente acesso a consultas de planeamento familiar, interrupção voluntária da gravidez, acompanhamento e vigilância da mulher durante a gravidez, parto e puerpério e cuidados de saúde prestados aos recém-nascidos; cuidados de saúde a menores que se encontram a residir em Portugal, nos termos definidos no Decreto-Lei n.º 67/2004, de 25 de março; vacinação, conforme o Programa Nacional de Vacinação em vigor; cidadãos estrangeiros em situação de reagrupamento familiar, quando alguém do seu agregado familiar efetua descontos para a Segurança Social devidamente comprovados; cidadãos em situação de exclusão social ou em situação de carência económica comprovada pelos Serviços da Segurança Social.

Para este conjunto de cuidados, os cidadãos estrangeiros acedem nos mesmos termos que a população em geral, encontrando-se sujeitos aos mesmos princípios e normas gerais aplicáveis em matéria de pagamento e de isenção de taxas moderadoras, nos termos consignados na legislação em vigor.

Inscrição nos cuidados de saúde primários:

A inscrição nos cuidados de saúde primários obriga a um registo atualizado no RNU e é efetuada num centro de saúde de uma unidade local de saúde.

[Cf. Despacho n.º 14830/2024, de 16 de dezembro, Despacho n.º 40/2025, de 2 de janeiro, Regulamento do Registo Nacional de Utentes, Regulamento do Registo Nacional de Utentes - Inscrição em Cuidados de Saúde Primários e Circular Informativa n.º 12/DQS/DMD da DGS]

- Se o cidadão estrangeiro não apresentar uma autorização de residência, o acesso a cuidados de saúde tem custos?
- O que acontece se o registo de um cidadão estrangeiro no RNU não estiver completo?
- Um cidadão estrangeiro menor de idade precisa de autorização de residência para se registar no RNU na tipologia de "registo atualizado"?
- O que deve um cidadão estrangeiro fazer se tiver dúvidas sobre o seu registo no RNU ou precisar de ajuda para atualizar os seus dados?
- O que fazer caso os direitos como cidadão estrangeiro, relativamente ao acesso à prestação de cuidados de saúde no SNS, não estiverem a ser respeitados?

Formulários

- Direitos e Deveres dos Utentes dos Serviços de Saúde
- Pedido de informação
- Reclamações online
- Resolução de conflitos
- Acesso a informação administrativa

Políticas institucionais

- Política de proteção de dados e de privacidade
- Política de gestão

Mapa do site

Canal de denúncias

COVID 19

Livro de Reclamações

Subscrever Newsletter

Nome

Email



Aceito os termos e condições patentes na Política de proteção de dados e privacidade da ERS.



Clique para mais informações

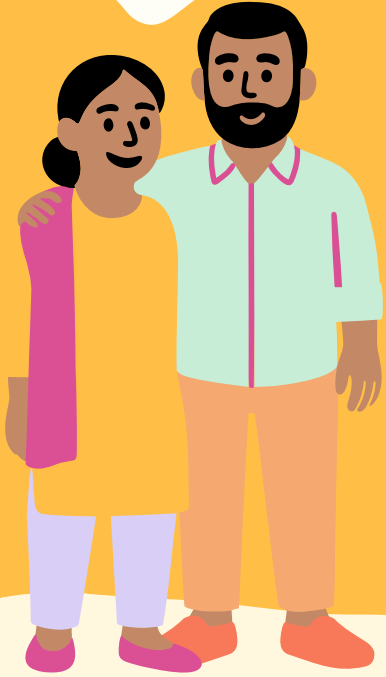
ERS nas redes sociais



Definições de cookies



We hope this journey we shared with you has helped you better understand how to access healthcare services in Portugal!



Sources consulted for this guide

Guidelines on Access to the SNS

aMigo
Promoção do Acesso de Utentes Migrantes
à ULS São José
<https://sites.google.com/view/amigo-ulsjose/>

GAT
Grupo de Ativistas em Tratamento
Project: KIT Migrante(2025)
<https://kitmigrante.pt/>

ERS
Entidade Reguladora da Saúde
www.ers.pt

IOM
International Organization for Migration
Project: Promover a Integração através da
Equidade em Saúde (2024)
<https://www.dgs.pt/em-destaque/promover-a-integracao-atraves-da-equidade-em-saude.aspx>

ACSS
Central Administration of the Health
System Guide for Foreign Citizens (2022)
https://www.acss.min-saude.pt/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Manual-Acolhimento_vf.pdf

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Legislation

Decreto-Lei n.º 85-B/2025, de 30 de junho
Despacho n.º 40/2025, de 2 de janeiro
Despacho n.º 14830/2024, de 16 de dezembro
Despacho n.º 1668/2023, de 2 de fevereiro
Lei n.º 95/2019, de 4 de setembro e Decreto-
Lei n.º 52/2022, de 4 de agosto
Lei n.º 95/2019, de 4 de setembro
Lei n.º 16/2007, de 17 de abril
Decreto-Lei n.º 67/2004, de 25 de março
Decreto-Lei n.º 135/99, de 22 de abril
de 1999
Despacho n.º 25360/2001 (2.ª série), de 12
de dezembro

Additional Documentation

Regulamento RNU 2025 versão
de 07/04/2025
Circular Informativa n.º 12/DQS/DMD,
de 7 de maio de 2009



www.nialp.pt

NIALP

INTERCULTURAL ASSOCIATION LISBOA
(AN IMMIGRANT ASSOCIATION)

NIALP is a non-profit association officially recognized by AIMA – the Agency for Integration, Migration and Asylum – as an immigrants’ association representing the Nepali community in Portugal. Founded in 2019 by leaders of the Nepali community in Portugal, we work to empower the South Asian community while promoting inclusion and dialogue within Portuguese society. We support access to healthcare, education, and social services, encourage cultural exchange, and offer community-based resources that foster belonging, participation, and shared development.

Youtube

[@nialpinterculturalassociat9623](https://www.youtube.com/@nialpinterculturalassociat9623)

TikTok

[@nialp_](https://www.tiktok.com/@nialp_)

Facebook

[nialp.portugal/](https://www.facebook.com/nialp.portugal/)

Instagram

[nialpportugal/](https://www.instagram.com/nialpportugal/)

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Saturdays: 10h-17h.