

Progetto cofinanziato da



Istituto Nazionale  
per lo studio e la cura  
delle popolazioni migranti e per il contrasto  
della malattia della tubercolosi



National Institute for Health  
Migration and Health



MINISTERO  
DELL'INTERNO

Fondo Europeo per l'Integrazione dei Cittadini dei Paesi Terzi

# LA SALUTE VIENE DA te

Informazione pre-partenza ai cittadini  
dei Paesi Terzi sulle modalità d'accesso  
al Servizio Sanitario Nazionale



## HEALTH COMES TO YOU

## A GUIDE TO THE ITALIAN NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

### for non-EU citizens

# CONTENTS

<b>Glossary</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>General information</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Mandatory registration with the National Health Service (SSN)</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Voluntary registration with the National Health Service (SSN)</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>How to register</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Exemptions from payment of the ‘ticket’</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Services of the SSN (National Health Service)</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<i>Family doctor and paediatrician</i> .....	10
<i>After-hours healthcare</i> .....	10
<i>Family Planning Clinic</i> .....	11
<i>Vaccinations</i> .....	12
<i>Medicines</i> .....	12
<i>Specialist Visits, Laboratory and other Specialist Medical Tests</i> .....	12
<i>Admission to hospital</i> .....	13
<i>Emergency Telephone Number (Ambulance) - 118</i> .....	14
<i>Hospital Emergency Departments</i> .....	14

## GLOSSARY

**SSN** - Servizio Sanitario Nazionale (National Health Service) is the national network of health services offered to people who are registered, these services may be free or may require payment of a fee, which is called a 'ticket'.

**ASL** - Azienda Sanitaria Locale (Local Health Authority) is the authority that manages health services at the local level. Please inquire at the Local Health Authority (ASL) office of your place of residence (as shown on your residence permit) for information on registration and local services.

**Ticket:** the fee that citizens pay for some public health services. It corresponds to a part of the overall cost of the service. You pay for the ticket by presenting a doctor's prescription at the counter of the clinic or the hospital where you have the doctor's visit or examination.

## GENERAL INFORMATION



Italian law recognizes health as a fundamental right of every person. In fact every person present in Italy is entitled to a form healthcare and treatment.

**It is important to know that, if you stay in Italy for a period greater than three months, you must have health insurance, and this insurance can be provided by registering with the National Health Service or Servizio Sanitario Nazionale (SSN).**

Depending on the reason for your stay in Italy, registering with the National Health Service (SSN) may be either mandatory (for free) or voluntary (as an alternative to a private health insurance policy, with payment of an annual fee).

On the other hand, if you stay in Italy for a period less than three months (tourist, visitors or business visa etc.) or if you enter Italy with a visa for medical treatment you cannot register with the National Health Service (SSN), (neither mandatory nor voluntary). Upon payment of the full cost of the service, however, you may access all medical services of the National Health Service (SSN).

**Attention:** Students and those entering to work as an au pair may apply for voluntary registration even if staying in Italy for a period of less than three months.



If, entering Italy for the first time, you request a residence permit for a period exceeding one year, you will need to sign an integration agreement with the Italian State. The agreement, which is managed by the immigration office, lasts two years and it works with a system of credits. By registering with the National Health Service (SSN) and choosing a family doctor you will be eligible for 4 credit points.



The information contained in this brochure is generally valid throughout the Italian territory. However, since Italy is divided into 20 Regions, it is the Regional Authorities that regulate the protection of health. For some specific areas, it may be that what applies in one Region may not apply in another. For this reason, in 2012 the "Guidelines for the correct application of legislation on health care to the foreign population in the Italian Regions and Autonomous Provinces" Agreement was signed. This is not a new law but an agreement which seeks to overcome regional differences in access to healthcare for the foreign population.

## MANDATORY REGISTRATION WITH THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (SSN)

Only certain groups of people are entitled to mandatory registration with the National Health Service (SSN). The main reasons for stay that entitle to mandatory registration are:

- self-employed work (without an employer), employment (working for a company/employer) and seasonal work
- residence permit for awaiting employment and registration with the job centres/unemployment office (a public authority that manages job vacancies and applications)
- people awaiting their working position to be regularised
- family reunification and family reasons (excluding parents aged over 65 years who entered Italy after 5th November 2008)
- request for international protection and political asylum
- minors regardless of the whether they possess a residence permit (with some regional differences)
- medical treatment for pregnant women and for the six months following the birth of the child
- carrying out a regular work activity, regardless of the type of residence permit issued

Registration is mandatory and free and grants the same rights and obligations as Italian citizens both in terms of services you can access and for the fee ("ticket") that must be paid for access to the health services.



Registration is extended to dependent family members who hold a residence permit.



If I have a residence permit that entitles me to mandatory registration, what documents will I have to produce to the Local Health Authority (ASL) office?

For most types of residence permits (work, family reasons, etc.) the documents required by the Local Health Authority (ASL) for mandatory registration are:

- Residence permit or receipt of application for/renewal of a residence permit
- Identification document
- Your tax code identification number (Codice Fiscale)
- Documents attesting residence or a declaration of abode



When I have applied for my first residence permit which entitles me to mandatory registration, will I be able to register with the National Health Service (SSN) whilst I am waiting for my documents to be issued?

Yes, you will need to take required documents as well as those attesting the application for your residence permit (for example, the receipt issued by the Immigration Office) to the Local Health Authority (ASL) office.



My residence permit does not entitle me to mandatory registration but, if I work legally in Italy, can I register with the National Health Service (SSN)?

Yes, any person who has a legal work contract has the right to mandatory registration. As well as all necessary documents, you must take all documents that prove your work/employment status (contract, VAT number etc.).

## VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION WITH THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (SSN)

If you are not entitled to mandatory registration but will be staying on a regular basis for more than three months, you will need to take out a private insurance policy against the risk of illness and injury (which often involves the payment of benefits and the subsequent refund) or, upon payment of a fee, you may apply for voluntary registration with the National Health Service (SSN). The main categories of persons who are entitled to voluntary registration are:

- students and persons working as *au pairs* (even for a period of less than three months)
- parents aged over 65 years of age for family reunification (who entered Italy after 5th November 2008)
- in general, other people who are excluded from mandatory registration but who hold a Residence permit which runs for a period greater than three months.

People given employment as *au pairs* are young people who stay with a family. They receive room and board in exchange for carrying out households chores.

To obtain voluntary registration you must pay an annual fee of €387.34. Once registered, you will have the same rights and duties as an Italian citizen or foreigners with mandatory registration.



This type of registration also extends to dependent family members.



Students and those working as *au pairs* pay a reduced fee (€149.77 for students and €219.49 for *au pairs*). In order to extend registration to dependent family members, students and *au pairs* must pay the full fee (€347.34).

Regardless of the date of registration and the expiration of the permit, voluntary registration will remain valid until 31st December of the year in which it was effected.



Which documents do I need to take with me to the Local Health Authority (ASL) office for voluntary registration with the National Health Service (SSN)?

The documents required are:

- Residence permit or receipt for the application or renewal of said permit
- A form of identification
- Your tax code identification number (Codice Fiscale)
- Documents attesting residence or a declaration of abode
- Your receipt for payment of the annual fee. For information on how to pay, ask at the Local Health Authority (ASL) office



I will enter Italy on a student visa. Will I be entitled to Healthcare?

Yes, you can request voluntary registration with the SSN even if the duration of your stay will be less than three months. You must go to the Local Health Authority (ASL) office with the following documents:

- Residence permit or receipt for the application or renewal of said permit, or a declaration for a stay inferior to three months.
- A form of identification
- Your tax code identification number (Codice Fiscale)
- Documents attesting residence or a declaration of actual residence
- Your receipt for the payment of the annual fee (€149.77 for individual or €387.34 for those with dependent family members)

Remember that if you work legally in Italy or if you are a dependent family member of someone who has the right to mandatory registration with the National Health Service (SSN), you also have the right to free registration.



If I apply for voluntary registration in March this year, will my registration be valid until March next year? No. Voluntary registration expires on 31st December of the current year.

## HOW TO REGISTER



Once you have entered Italy, if you are entitled to mandatory or voluntary registration with the National Health Service (SSN), you will need to follow these steps:



1 go to the Local Health Authority (ASL) office and present the required documents



2 choose a family doctor and/or paediatrician (for minors under the age of 14) from the list given by the Local Health Authority (ASL)



3 when you register you will be given a paper card which you will need to keep



4 following registration, you will receive a health card: this is the document required to access the services of the National Health Service (SSN)



5 your registration with the National Health Service (SSN) will have the same expiry date as your residence permit: to renew it you will need to present documents attesting to the renewal (or request thereof) of your residence permit to the Local Health Authority (ASL) office.

## EXEMPTIONS FROM PAYMENT OF THE 'TICKET'



To gain access to specialist services, you are required to pay a 'ticket', which must be paid prior to a doctor's visit at the administration desk of the hospital or clinic where the visit will take place.

In some cases, however, you may be granted the right to free access to health services without paying the 'ticket' (exemption). The exemption from payment of the 'ticket' may be given if you fall under one of the following categories:

- minors under the age of six or adults aged over 65 if the annual declared household income for the previous year is not more than €36,151.98;
- non-contributory pensioners with dependent family members;
- unemployed or low-income pensioners aged over 60 (and dependent family members) if the total household income in the previous year does not exceed €8,263.31 (single) or € 11,362.05 (with dependent spouse). The maximum income for an exemption increases by € 516.46 for each dependent child.

In addition, the exemption can be granted if you suffer from a chronic or rare condition that is recognized by the Local Health Authority (ASL), or if you have been granted disability status.

If you think that you fall within this category, contact your Local Health Authority (ASL) office.

Some services offered by the SSN (National Health Service) are free to those registered:

- first tier health services for which no appointment or referral is necessary, such as the visits to your family doctor, the paediatrician, family planning clinics, services for drug addiction and mental illness;
- urgent treatment provided at the Emergency Department of a hospital;
- some specialist care provided prior to conceiving or during pregnancy;
- specialist care related to voluntary termination of pregnancy;
- services for the early detection of certain cancers: a mammogram every two years for women aged between 45 and 69 years; PAP Test every three years for women aged between 25 and 65 years; colonoscopy every five years for every person over 45 years of age;
- the provision services carried out under collective prevention campaigns;
- provision of services related to blood, organ and tissue donation;
- HIV Testing;
- services for detainees/prison inmates.

## SERVICES OF THE SSN (NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE)

Upon registration with the National Health Service (SSN), either mandatory or voluntary, you will be able to access the following services (either free or upon payment of a 'ticket').



### Family doctor and paediatrician

Family doctor and paediatrician of choice are the gateway to all National Health Service (SSN) services and offer the following services free of charge:

- medical visits at a clinic
- prescription of medications, referral to specialist and/ or laboratory analysis via issue of required referral/prescription.
- Request for hospitalization
- Certificate for absence from or return to school
- Certificate for participation in non-competitive sports activities at school
- Medical certificates for employees
- Home medical visit for patients who, for medical reasons, are unable visit their doctor's clinic

You may change your family doctor or paediatrician at any time.



### After-hours healthcare

This is a free 'after hours' service which is available at night (usually from 8.00 pm to 8.00 am), on Sundays and public holidays, the day preceding a public holiday, when your family doctor or paediatrician is not available and when the medical problem means that you cannot wait for your doctor's surgery to open.

Access to the service is via telephone. A doctor will respond to your call and will do one of the following:

- give you advice over the phone
- carry out, where possible, a home visit or a visit at the clinic
- prescribe a treatment/drug
- issue a doctor's certificate when necessary or recommend hospitalisation

### ATTENTION

The telephone number for the after-hours service changes from city to city. Please contact the Local Health Authority (ASL) office in your area for contact information.



### Family Planning Clinic

The clinic offers free medical, psychological and social services for women, children, adolescents, couples and families. You can contact the clinic for gynaecological exams, cancer prevention, sexual health, pregnancy, postpartum care, breastfeeding, termination of pregnancy, fertility/infertility, counselling on childbirth anonymity. The service also handles paediatric vaccines and provides psychological and social support to families, teenagers, women and children in need.

You can access the Family Planning Clinic free of charge and without a medical prescription. The services of the clinics are free, except for some specialist services for which you are expected to pay a fee ('ticket').

### Voluntary termination of pregnancy (IVG)

Italian law provides for the possibility to voluntarily terminate a pregnancy up to the ninetieth day. If you decide you want to voluntarily terminate a pregnancy, you should contact the clinic where, after evaluating all other options, the gynaecologist will issue the necessary certificate. You will then be referred to the relevant hospital ward where the termination will be carried out.



### Maternity care

All women in Italy are entitled to maternity care. If you think you are pregnant you can consult your family doctor or the nearest family planning clinic. You can access a specific program that offers assistance throughout your pregnancy and during the initial months after the birth of your child. Services available include:

1. care during pregnancy: obstetric visits, ultrasound, foetal monitoring and checks, childbirth preparation classes and legal advice for working mothers;
2. birth assistance: assistance during labour and delivery, education and support for breastfeeding and initial care of a new-born;
3. assistance after childbirth: in particular post-partum visits/check-ups.



## Vaccinations

The health of your child is important and vaccines are the most effective means of preventing infectious diseases and complications arising therefrom. In Italy, some vaccinations are compulsory (diphtheria, tetanus, polio, hepatitis B), while others are optional but recommended. You should contact your paediatrician for information and guidance. The vaccinations are carried out at the family planning or Local Health Authority (ASL) clinic.

If your child has already begun their vaccination program in your native country, the program can be continued in Italy at your local Family Planning Clinic. It is important to take vaccination records/certificates with you when you visit.



## Medicines

Any medicine prescribed by your family doctor or paediatrician is supplied by a pharmacy/chemist's.

Some medicines considered "life-saving" are free of charge, or require payment of a fee ("ticket") determined by individual regions; other drugs, however, must be entirely paid. In pharmacies/chemist's you will also find a wide range of over-the-counter medicines which do not require a prescription and you are able to purchase.

In every area there is always a pharmacy open at night and on public holidays: this service works on a roster system and every pharmacy will have a list of this roster on display.

## Specialist Visits, Laboratory and other Specialist Medical Tests

To book a specialist or outpatient appointment you must present the referral issued by your family doctor/paediatrician and your healthcare card at the administration office of the hospital or clinic where your appointment will take place. Alternatively, you can contact the administration office by phone (via a dedicated Reservations number known as a CUP in Italy), communicating verbally the details of the referral and your healthcare card.

For each specialist visit you must pay the fee ("ticket"), except in special cases where you may have an exemption.

## Remember! Keep your appointment!

*In the event that you are unable to attend your appointment it is important that you give at least 48 hours notice of cancellation.*

COGNOME E NOME DELL'ASSISTITO (O INIZIALI OVE PRESCRITTO DALLA LEGGE)

INDIRIZZO (OVE PRESCRITTO DALLA LEGGE)

**SERVIZIO SANITARIO NAZIONALE**  
REGIONE

CODICE FISCALE

NON ESENTE CODICE ESENZIONE REDDITO FIRMA AUTOCERTIFICANTE SIGLA PROVINCIA CODICE ASL

(Barre se non utilizzate)

NOTA CUF

NOTA CUF

PRIORITÀ DELLA PRESTAZIONE

NUMERO CONFEZIONI / PRESTAZIONI TIPO DI RICETTA DATA

CODICE NUMERO CODICE NUMERO CODICE NUMERO

CODICE NUMERO CODICE NUMERO CODICE NUMERO

CODICE NUMERO CODICE NUMERO CODICE NUMERO

CODICE NUMERO CODICE NUMERO CODICE NUMERO

NUMERO PROGRESSIVO

IMPORTI

TICKET

VALER PER CHIAM ALTRO

PRESCRIZIONE

STAMPA PC

A 1 2 3 4 5 6 B 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1



### Admission to hospital

Your family doctor, a specialist or, in situations of medical emergency, the emergency room doctor may request that you be admitted to hospital.

Admission is free, therefore you will not be required to make any form of payment (monetary or otherwise) to hospital staff.

Medical staff will inform you about all risks associated with surgery, anaesthesia and other procedures and possible alternatives to treatment. Before surgery, you will be asked to sign a written informed consent.



### Emergency Telephone Number (Ambulance) - 118

The emergency number 118 is a free public service for emergency health care available 24 hours a day 7 days a week throughout the country. The telephone number 118 is to be dialled only in emergency situations that require immediate medical aid. The operators that respond to 118 calls, depending on the severity, may send an ambulance that will transport the patient to the most appropriate medical facility. The services offered by the Ambulance Service do not replace those offered by the family doctor or a continuous care service.

When calling the 118 number you will need to remember:

- respond calmly, in Italian to questions the operator asks you and do not hang up until the operator says you can.
- give your telephone number to the operator
- explain the nature of the emergency and give the address where emergency responders are required.



### Hospital Emergency Departments

In case of a medical emergency (accident, injury, danger to life) you can go to the emergency room of the nearest hospital to receive first aid. You can access the emergency room independently (i.e. go there yourself) or through the 118/Ambulance service (in which case you will be transported by ambulance).

Emergency room visits are not carried out on a first-come/first-served basis, but depending on the severity of the symptoms as assessed by hospital staff. At the Triage registration desk, health care professionals assign a color-coded priority to ensure immediate assistance to people in danger.

You should go to the emergency room only for emergencies that cannot be treated. For all other important but non-urgent needs, you should contact your family doctor to obtain a referral for a specialist consultation.

Remember that if you go to the emergency room for non-urgent medical attention, you will be assigned a Code - White. This means that you will be visited after patients in more serious conditions and, in many cases, you will have to pay a fee ('ticket').





