

ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES FOR FOREIGNERS

In what does health assistance consist?

Registration with National Health Services allows you to: choose a doctor from the list of those who operate in the commune of residence to contact in for health problems. The doctor can visit patients and prescribe the required treatment, medication, etc.), request additional visits with specialists, request lab tests, and request hospitalization.

How can you obtain health assistance?

IF FROM AN EC COUNTRY (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, Czech Republic Slovakia, Irish Republic (EIRE), Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Hungary), **from the European Economic Territory** (Iceland, Liechtenstein **and** Norway) **and from Switzerland**, a TEAM card (HEALTH INSURANCE) is required, issued by the country of origin (or equivalent document for the European States for which, even if transitorily, it has not yet been introduced).

With the European Card or replacement, you can directly access all health structures (i.e. general practitioner, consultories, emergency services) and obtain medical care required during your temporary stay (ex. for tourism).

If you do not have a TEAM card or replacement, the AUSL (National Health Services) may request it by right of office from the foreign State. Without a TEAM or other document, the EC citizen is entirely responsible for payment of fees related to the assistance received. A reimbursement can then be requested through the relevant Institution once back in the EC country of appurtenance.

If an EC citizen remains on national territory for a period longer than three months, the EC citizen can register for free with National Health Services (SSN) in the following cases:

1. subordinate or autonomous worker in the State;
2. family member, who is not an EC citizen, of a subordinate or autonomous worker in the State;
3. family member of an Italian citizen;
4. holder of a residence permit for permanent stay matured after at least 5 years of residence in Italy;
5. unemployed and registered with unemployment services or registered for a professional training course;
6. holder of one of the following EC forms: E106, E109(or E37), E120, E121 (or E33)

WHICH FAMILY MEMBERS OF AN EC CITIZEN CAN BE REGISTERED WITH NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES (SSN)?:

- spouses;
- sons/daughters of the EC citizen who are younger than 21 and spouse, and dependent sons/daughters older than 21;
- Parents who are dependents of the EC citizen and parents who are dependents of the spouse;

EC citizens who are present on the national territory and do not have health coverage, since they cannot be registered with National Health Services (SSN) and are not assisted by their States of origin (without the right to a TEAM), are ensured health assistance that is urgent and cannot be deferred. This includes health assistance relevant to safeguarding the health of minors and pregnancy.

IF NOT FROM AN EC COUNTRY:

A) WITH A RESIDENCE PERMIT issued for subordinate employment, autonomous seasonal employment, family matters, political asylum, humanitarian asylum, request for asylum, awaiting adoption or foster care, acquiring citizenship, **OR IF YOU ARE EMPLOYED** and registered with the Employment Offices (also with a residence permit for other purposes), you can register with National Health Services by presenting the residence permit to the USL (Local Health Unit) – SAUB Office of the District of residence.

Those registered with National Health Services (SSN) will be issued a free HEALTH SERVICES CARD for the entire duration of the residence permit.

IF YOU HAVE A RESIDENCE PERMIT ISSUED FOR “MEDICAL TREATMENT” AND ARE PREGNANT OR HAVE GIVEN BIRTH LESS THAN 6 MONTHS AGO:

The residence permit for “**MEDICAL TREATMENT**” issued to **pregnant women or issued in the six months after childbirth**, allows for registration with National Health Services and for issuance of a health services card for the validity of the residence permit, after having presented a certificate issued by an AUSL Consultory, which documents the pregnancy or birth of the baby.

B) WITH A RESIDENCE PERMIT valid more than three months, without falling under the requisites of point A), and without medical insurance for illness injury, etc., a health services card can be obtained paying an annual fee, established as follows:

- €387.34 Euro for foreign citizens with dependent family members (including the category of students with dependent family members);
- €149.77 for foreigners residing for study purposes without dependent family members;
- €219.49 Euro for foreigners employed as au-pairs.

The card is valid from when it is issued until December 31st of the same year. Foreigners can voluntarily register with SSN (National Health Services) paying an annual fee if, for example, they have a residence permit issued for elective residence, religious purposes, students, and those employed as au-pairs. Only for students and au-pairs can the residence permit be issued for a period of less than three months.

Voluntary registration with SSN (National Health Services) is valid for a solar year (January – December), cannot be fractioned, nor can it have a back-dated starting date, and is not allowed for foreign citizens with a **residence permit for health reasons, tourism, or business.**

C) WITHOUT A RESIDENCE PERMIT, since **IRREGULARLY PRESENT** on national territory, yet requiring medical assistance, an **STP CARD** is issued by public health services.

THE HEALTH SERVICES CARD

This document certifies registration with SSN (National Health Services) and allows to obtain medical assistance and to access the services offered.

To obtain a health services card, one must present a valid residence permit to the USL – SAUB Office of the commune of residence.

Further documents that might be necessary will be self-certified or presented to the specific counter, as also required for Italian citizens.

Registration with SSN (National Health Services) guarantees equal treatment and the same rights and obligations as Italian citizens, as far as the health assistance offered is concerned.

Such as is required for Italian citizens, foreigners with a health services card must also pay a “ticket” if necessary.

Registration with National Health Services allows for a **GENERAL PRACTITIONER** to be chosen. This choice can be made through the office, which issues health services cards by consulting the list of doctors available. Children from 0 to 14 years of age have the right to a pediatrician free-of-charge. Special lists are also available for pediatricians. The name of the doctor is indicated on the health services card. The general practitioner can be changed, revoked, or replaced at any time.

The general practitioner and pediatrician guarantee the following services free-of-charge:

- clinic and home visits,
- medication prescriptions,
- blood test requests,
- x-ray requests,
- hospitalization requests,
- certification of illness for dependent employees and for re-admittance to school for children..

The general practitioner can also be visited for advice and recommendations for safeguarding one's health by preventing the onslaught of illnesses. The office hours of the general practitioner and pediatrician are listed on the bulletin boards of the clinics.

STP CARD (Temporarily Present Foreigner)

For foreigners without a residence permit who are not in order with norms regulating entry and residence in Italy, health assistance is guaranteed through the issuance of an STP card (Temporarily Present Foreigner).

The STP card ensures the following services:

- urgent and essential clinical and hospital treatments, even continuative, for illness and injury;
- preventive medicine programs;
- protection during pregnancy and maternity;
- protection of the health of minors;
- mandatory immunizations;
- international interventions for preventive treatment;
- preventive treatment, diagnosis and care of infectious diseases;
- cure and rehabilitation of the various stages of drug addiction.

The STP card is issued by the USL (Local Health Unit) and Hospitals in points of primary access (Emergency Services, Consultories, SAUB offices, etc.).

The STP card is valid for 6 months throughout the entire Italian territory and can be renewed if the foreigner continues to remain in the country. A copy can be issued if necessary.

A foreign citizen not yet legalized must pay for health services, according to the fees determined by the Region, unless in economic difficulty and a written statement is issued in relation to the relevant indigent conditions. An foreign citizen in indigent conditions must, however, pay a “ticket” if required.

HEALTH STRUCTURES CANNOT CONTACT POLICE AUTHORITIES REGARDING THE PRESENCE OF AN ILLEGAL FOREIGNER/ALIEN, UNLESS A STATEMENT IS REQUIRED (in the same cases as those for Italian citizens).

PARTICULAR CASES:

FOREIGNERS WITH A RESIDENCE PERMIT FOR TOURISM

A citizen with a residence permit for tourism must stipulate an insurance policy, which includes expenses for services/hospitalization. Without an insurance policy, hospitalizations or clinical services must be paid according to the current fees in force.

FOREIGNERS SEEKING TREATMENT IN ITALY:

Those who must be treated in Italy must have a specific residence permit for “medical treatment”. To obtain this entry visa, the following documents must be presented to the Italian Embassy or the territorially authorized Consulate in the Country of origin:

- a statement indicating the structure chosen, whether public, private, or operating within National Health Services, where the type of treatment and approximate period of the treatment is indicated;
- a deposit of a sum as security equal to 30% of the entire presumed cost of the services requested must be given to the same structure;
- documents which prove the availability of sufficient resources for payment of the remaining health expenses due, along with expenses for room, board outside of the health structure, and repatriation for oneself and any accompanying party.
- health certification which proves the relevant pathology. Any certification issued abroad must be accompanied by an translation in Italian.

NON-EC MINORS RESIDING BRIEFLY AS GUESTS OF VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATIONS

Within the framework of initiatives promoted by the Emilia Romagna Region (i.e.: accommodation of children from Chernobyl or Saharawi), through volunteer organizations, every year in our province foreign children arrive for stays. These children are registered with National Health Services through the USL – SAUB Office of the commune of residence and are issued, along with their accompanying parties (one for each 15 children), a health services card for the period of validity of the residence permit with the name of the pediatrician or general practitioner chosen.

Official sites to visit: Ministero della Salute - Assistenza sanitaria ai cittadini extracomunitari (Ministry of Health – Health assistance for non-EC citizens)
www.governo.it/GovernoInforma/Dossier/stranieri_sanita/stranieri_ue.html