

On 1 September 2012, a new healthcare law entered into effect in Spain. It introduced a series of changes that may affect largely foreigners. Up to now, to be attended for free by the health system a foreigner was only required to be registered with the city council; with the new law, however, this might no longer be the case.

This factsheet is intended to provide guidance on how to use the health system. Do not forget that these recommendations are general and that application of the new law is different in each Autonomous Community. You should therefore find out what to do in your own specific case.

### Legal residence

If you are legally resident in Spain, you are entitled to receive healthcare under the same conditions as any other Spanish-born citizen. The new regulations therefore involve no changes for you as far as healthcare is concerned.

Remember that healthcare includes the provision of both medical services and pharmaceuticals. Patients must pay for some drugs although if you have HIV, antiretroviral drugs (those that act against the virus) are provided at hospital pharmacies and you need not pay for them.

### Irregular status

If you are not legally resident in Spain, however, the new law envisages that your health card will not be renewed. This will mean that you are only entitled to emergency healthcare, maternity care and childcare.

Emergencies only include treatment of serious illnesses and accidents, and medical care will only last until you are discharged. To receive this care you must go to the health centre or hospital, although if you feel very unwell and cannot go in person, you may be treated at home instead. Remember that the emergency helpline numbers are 061 and 112.

As mentioned above, there are two exceptions in which you can receive medical care even if your residence status is irregular. If you are a woman and pregnant, you are entitled to pregnancy, birth and postnatal care. Additionally, if you are a minor (under 18 years old), you are entitled to healthcare under the same conditions as Spanish citizens.

### HIV/AIDS infection

If you have HIV and are receiving medical care for the infection, you should continue to receive it, as some Autonomous Communities have guaranteed that people with HIV will continue to receive treatment and care for their illness, although some requisites will be established in some cases (registration with the city council, special card, proof of insufficient resources, etc.).

However, if your residence status is irregular and you have not been treated for HIV before, depending on the place

you live you may encounter problems. Some Autonomous Communities have stated that they will continue to treat all persons whose residence status is irregular, while other Communities have not yet determined what medical care mechanisms will be established. You are nonetheless still advised to register with the city council in order to streamline access to the healthcare system. Ask at your primary healthcare centre (CAP) or call the telephone helpline to find out the situation of the Autonomous Community in which you live.

### Resources

Telephone numbers of interest:

Spain:

112 / 900 166 565

Andalusia:	900 850 100
Aragón:	902 555 321
Cantabria:	942 202 770
Castilla y León:	947 232 303 947 210 700 (Burgos Acoge)
Castilla-La Mancha:	900 25 25 25
Catalonia:	061 (CatSalut respon) 902 111 444
Autonomous Community of Madrid:	915 867 227
Autonomous Community of Valencia:	963 866 6 00
Extremadura:	924 382 511 / 924 80 59 56
Galicia:	981 569 540
Balearic Islands:	971 175 600
Canary Islands:	922 474 392 (Tenerife) 928 118 841 (Gran Canaria)
La Rioja:	941 298 333
Navarra:	948 211 521 (SOS Racismo)
Basque Country:	944 031 500
Principality of Asturias:	985 279 1 00
Ceuta:	956 622 348 (CETI)
Melilla:	952 696 259 (CETI)