Newsletter 3: Medical Information

This newsletter details the medical support and healthcare services available to students at St Antony’s. It is extremely important that you read the information provided below carefully.

You are very strongly advised to register with the College’s NHS provider, The Summertown Health Centre for the duration of your time at St Antony’s. Once registered, you will be able to access healthcare and screening (as appropriate) very quickly and effectively, both in College and at the Centre. The College doctor and nurse are ideally placed to help with the management of any ongoing conditions during your time here. The College doctor and nurse also have extensive experience of providing the appropriate certification required by the University in the event of any circumstances that might affect your study. The final point might seem remote at this stage, but it is vital to understand that the Proctors (who are responsible for the running of University examinations) will only allow examiners to consider medical evidence when submitted in an approved format and the College doctor and nurse are best placed to provide that information on your behalf.

Unless you are coming to St Antony’s from a different Oxford college, and therefore have an existing relationship with a medical practice with links to the University, we would very strongly encourage you to register with The Summertown Health Centre. If you are a student from the UK, please be reassured that it is standard and sensible practice for students to register with medical centres at college and then to visit home GPs (as required) as a temporary patient during vacations.

The Registry Team will check the status of your medical registration when you come to the College Office to enrol and, if you choose to register with a medical practice other than The Summertown Health Centre, you will be required to provide full contact details.

Overview of medical services in the UK

The National Health Service (NHS) is the UK’s state health service, and provides a full range of medical treatment. All St Antony’s students doing a course of six months or longer should be entitled to see medical professionals through the NHS, either because you are an EU national or because you have paid the immigration health surcharge when you applied for your UK student visa. Whilst it is free to see a nurse or doctor, please be advised that there is an NHS charge towards the cost of prescriptions and dental services, and that these are not covered by the immigration health surcharge.

Private medical providers are also in operation offering a range of paid-for services, though usually not for emergencies. The College nurse can provide some further information, if required.

The UK Council for International Student Affairs offers a good summary of health and healthcare options in the UK, which might be particularly helpful if you have not previously spent time in the UK.
Health care in College

The College has an agreement with nearby NHS provider Summertown Health Centre to provide medical services for our students. Please see the ‘College Nurse and Doctor’ section of the College website for details.

A doctor from Summertown Health Centre and a College nurse, who works in conjunction with the Health Centre, visit the College regularly during term time. At other times, you can also make appointments to see a doctor or nurse at the Health Centre, which is a 15 minute walk from St Antony’s.

How to register to access NHS health care

Registration is by means of this online form, which should be completed as soon as possible and certainly before you arrive in Oxford. It would be extremely helpful to both the College and Health Centre if you could please ensure that you have registered before the end of September so that there is time for your registration to be processed prior to your arrival. Further details about the form are available on the letter, which is attached to the email accompanying this newsletter.

If you register online before the end of September, you will not be required to attend a medical registration session during Welcome Week, but it is imperative that students with ongoing conditions and those that require vaccinations see the College nurse during the week. Precise details of sessions, which are provisionally planned for Wednesday 4 October, will be available shortly, together with arrangements for making an appointment.

Immunisation

Please read the University’s guidance regarding the vaccinations you should have before arriving in Oxford. In addition, the College Nurse recommends that you are up to date with Diptheria, Tetanus and Polio vaccinations before arriving.

Students from some countries will furthermore be required to receive tuberculosis screening before starting their course; those concerned should have been made aware of the requirement as part of the visa application process, but relevant countries are listed here for information.

It is extremely important that you arrange to receive vaccinations early enough to allow sufficient time to acquire immunity before you arrive in Oxford.

Medicines and treatments not available through the NHS

Please note that a small number of medicines and treatments are not available through the NHS service. Commonly requested but unavailable medications include desensitising injections for the treatment of allergy, triphasic contraceptive pills, NuvaRing contraception, Bupropion for the treatment of depression, and stimulants for the treatment of conditions
including adult onset ADHD. Please bring adequate supplies with you. The College Doctor or Nurse would also be happy to suggest alternative treatments.

Dental treatment

Dental treatment is available through the NHS but you have to make a contribution towards the cost of treatment. St Antony’s students usually register with Studental based at Oxford Brookes University or Temple Street Dental Practice between the Cowley and Iffley Roads. Both are NHS practices. Registration is undertaken (and appointments are booked) directly with the dentist, either online or in person. The College nurse will be happy to provide you with further details as appropriate.

Disability, long-term health conditions and specific learning difficulties

Your College Offer Pack contained details of how to contact the University’s Disability Advisory Service and we strongly encourage you to get in touch as early as possible if you have (or think you might have) a disability. If you are unsure about whether a condition would be eligible for support, please check here. In addition, please understand that the College’s medical professionals have many years of experience of helping students manage with a wide range of conditions and that you can be assured that your medical information will be treated in confidence. It will be very helpful if you could make the College doctor or nurse aware of any conditions at an early stage so that they can support you most effectively.

Welfare support

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. The College has a strong support network of people you can turn to and you will also have access to the wide range of services and support provided for all University of Oxford students. New students will receive a newsletter dedicated to Welfare support at St Antony’s later in the summer.

What shall I do now?

You should register online with The Summertown Health Centre as soon as your offer is unconditional.

If you would like to be put in touch with the College nurse to discuss any ongoing medical conditions or to check whether your current medication is available in the UK, please contact the Registry Team in the first instance.

If you have (or think you might have) a disability, please contact the Disability Advisory Service at the earliest opportunity.