

HC2 CERTIFICATES

Table of Contents

Introduction

Who will receive an HC2 Certificate?

Northern Ireland

Wales

When HC2 Certificates are issued

Issuing an initial HC2 Certificate

Issuing a Renewal HC2 Certificate

Issuing a Replacement HC2 Certificate

Generating an HC2 Certificate

Document Control

Introduction

This instruction covers when and how to issue HC2 certificates to eligible supported asylum seekers.

The HC2 certificate is issued by the UK Border Agency (UKBA) on behalf of the Department of Health and allows asylum supported applicants and their dependants to receive free prescription medication and help with other health costs. The HC2 is valid for 6 months.

The HC2 entitles the applicant to:

- Free NHS prescriptions
- Free NHS dental treatment
- Free NHS wigs and fabric supports
- Free NHS eye sight tests
- Vouchers towards the cost of spectacles and
- Refunds of necessary travel costs to and from hospital for NHS treatment under the care of a consultant.

[Back to contents](#)

Who will receive an HC2 Certificate?

HC2 certificates are only issued to asylum supported applicants and all their dependants should be included on the certificate in order for them to benefit. Officers must note that applicants on s4 support are not eligible to receive an HC2 Certificate and should be advised to apply to the Department of Health using an HC1 form.

The applicant's asylum support, Home Office and IFB reference numbers will be printed on the certificate along with their current address. The certificate will include a 'valid from' and 'valid to' date, calculated at 6 months – (minus) 1 day. For example where a HC2 is valid from 6th March it will expire on 5th September. The certificate has a 9 prefix number which the applicant should quote for reference.

It is necessary to establish whether an applicant requires an HC2. Previously issued HC2 certificate details are recorded on the Asylum Seekers Support System (ASYS).

Where there are no HC2 details recorded in the grid, the applicant's details have changed or the located HC2 has reached or passed its expiry date, a new HC2 should be issued to the applicant. For details on when to issue an HC2 certificate see when HC2 certificates are issued.

Northern Ireland

HC2 certificates may be issued to applicants receiving asylum support living in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland has its own, slightly different, version of the HC2 certificate. However, the GB version **is** valid in Northern Ireland, and the Northern Ireland version is valid in Great Britain.

Wales

Although prescription charges are free in Wales, an HC2 certificate should still be issued because an applicant living in Wales travelling away from home may be required to obtain a prescription in England.

When HC2 Certificates are issued

An applicant will require an HC2 certificate in the following instances:

- Initial issue
- Renewal
- Replacement issue

Issuing an initial HC2 Certificate

An HC2 can be issued when the applicant is in initial accommodation, pending assessment of the support application. Where an HC2 was not issued in initial accommodation the applicant should be issued one when their regular support is allocated. The certificate is valid for 6 months from the date of issue.

Details of the HC2 certificate will be outlined in the support package letter sent to the applicant by the Case Owner when the support is allocated or by the initial accommodation provider. The applicant is informed of who to contact where a renewal is required. The telephone number for the Telephone Enquiry Bureau (TEB) is outlined on the HC2.

For details on how to create an Initial issue HC2 see Generating an HC2 Certificate.

Issuing a Renewal HC2 Certificate

The HC2 will expire after 6 months. A renewal HC2 should be issued unless asylum support has been terminated. Renewal will also be appropriate when asylum support has been suspended and the applicant remains accommodated. If the applicant requests a new HC2 and is still in receipt of asylum support, he should be sent a new HC2. The new HC2 will run from the day after the previous certificate expired. For example, if the old certificate expires on 6th March the new certificate should be valid from 7th March. However where time has elapsed between the expired HC2 and a renewal, the new valid from date should be the date of issue. The date of issue can not be in the past.

If an applicant's support has been stopped because they breached the conditions of their support, a renewal must not be issued. Applicants should be advised to apply to the NHS Business Services Authority using an HC1 form.

Applicants on s4 support are not eligible to receive an HC2 Certificate and should be advised to apply to the NHS Business Services Authority using an HC1 form.

Where the applicant has returned an expired HC2, the certificate should be placed on file for reference.

For details on how to create a renewal HC2, see Generating an HC2 Certificate.

Issuing a Replacement HC2 Certificate

A replacement HC2 should be issued when the applicant has reported that their HC2 certificate has been lost. Where the applicant has reported that he has lost his HC2, the Case Owner will print a copy of their current HC2 from ASYS and generate the ASYS covering letter. The HC2 will have the details of the applicant from when the HC2 was originally issued. If there has been a change of circumstance such as the addition of a new dependant, a new HC2 will need to be generated to include the changes.

For details on how to create a replacement HC2 see [Generating an HC2 Certificate](#).

There is no need to issue a new HC2 where the applicant has added a dependant to their claim or moved to a new address, this includes applicants who have moved to a different Primary Care Trust (PCT) area. Providing ASYS reflects the applicant's current address and contains the details of their dependants, the existing HC2 is valid.

Generating an HC2 Certificate

Once it is established whether the applicant requires an initial, renewal or replacement HC2 Case Owners should produce the certificate and update ASYS.

The HC2 should be issued with a cover letter that is generated via the ASYS letters selection. The letter selection screen will automatically appear once an HC2 has been created and printed. Case Owners must tick the edit box in order to make any necessary changes.

Document Control

Change Record

Version	Authors	Date	Change Reference
1.0	MM	12/2/07	Formatting to website format and incorporating asylum support processes
2.0	BF	23/02/07	Amalgamation with Policy Bulletin 43
3.0	BF	10/10/07	Addition of s4 guidance. Clarification of when a renewal should be issued. Addition of guidance for applicants in Wales
4.0	CB	05/11/08	Re-branding