

Imperial College Union's Stance on Withdrawal of Postgraduate Health Care Facilities

A paper by the Deputy President (Welfare) Becky Lane

Background

Students may register with the Imperial College Health Centre if they live within a list of 20 postcodes as set out by the health centre. However, historically the Health Centre has agreed to let any Imperial College student 'Join' which means despite the fact they are not registered, they can use all services during opening hours (no provision of out-of-hours care). This service can be provided because College also gives money to the Health Centre and therefore capitations received from the NHS due to registrations are not the only source of income. From the 1st March, the Health Centre decided not to see Postgraduate students living outside of the registration area due to a lack of funding.

Current Situation

The Health Centre continues to let Undergraduate students and Postgraduate students from the Royal College of Music (who do not live in the registration area) access full services by joining and staff members have access to some emergency services. Therefore it is just Imperial College Postgraduate Students living outside of the registration area who are affected by this change. Below is the message displayed on the Health Centre website:

'Please note that from the 1st March 2013, postgraduate students living outside the Health Centre's registration area will no longer be able to use the Health Centre or any of its services.'

Unfortunately there is no NHS funding for such students and in the past the funding came from Imperial College.

However this year there is a shortfall in this funding, which the College has advised us it is unable to make up.

Therefore, for the foreseeable future, all postgraduate students who are not eligible to register at the Health

Centre under the NHS are advised to register with GPs local to their accommodation and will have to access all their

health care needs from them.'

This information was communicated to Postgrads by placing it on the internet, handing out slips when Postgraduates no longer able to use the service tried to use the Health Centre and written in a Graduate School email. When the Union informed all Postgraduate students via email, over 200 responses were received, the vast majority expressing anger and dissatisfaction with the situation.

After speaking to the Dean of Students, it was clarified that the Health Centre did not have a decrease in funding from the previous year; in fact there was a small increase. The reduced funds are actually due to a decrease in the amount of students choosing to register with the Health Centre. I have been informed that College are hoping that the Health Centre will reverse the decision soon.

Beliefs

Council
30th April 2012











Imperial College and Imperial College Union are unhappy with the decision to remove all services offered by the Health Centre for Postgraduates living outside of the registration area.

The welfare implications of Postgraduate students have not been fully considered when making this decision.

Resolves

1. To work with College staff to lobby the Health Centre to change their policy on seeing Postgraduates outside the registration area.
2. To examine the current memorandum of understanding between Imperial College and the Health Centre to consider lobbying for further change.

Appendix

Do you live in our extended catchment (Postcode) area?	N 1, 5, 6, 7	NW 1, 3, 5, 8	WC 1, 2
	SW 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10	W 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14	
			
Which of the following best describes you?			
Undergraduate Student of Imperial College or the Royal College of Music			
Postgraduate Student of the Royal College of Music			
Post Graduate Student of Imperial College **Please bring proof of address**		Unfortunately you will not be able to use the services of the Health Centre	
Staff of Imperial College or the Royal College of Music			
Long term partner of a student or member of staff of Imperial College or the Royal College of Music		Unfortunately you will not be able to use the services of the Health Centre	
Other e.g. All children Local residents i.e. those not affiliated with Imperial College or the Royal College of Music	You may be able to register with us. Please contact a member of the reception team to discuss whether you are eligible to do so.		