International Student Health and Wellbeing Fact Sheets

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The content within this document has been adapted and reproduced based on the South Australian International Student Health and Wellbeing Fact Sheets. The fact sheets were originally prepared by the South Australian Department for Health and Ageing in partnership with the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology as part of the Health in All Policies International Students Project, and have been adapted to the Western Australian context by the UWA Health Promotion Unit. The Fact Sheets have been reproduced with permission from the South Australian Department for Health and Ageing.
Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) is insurance to help you with the cost of medical and hospital care while you are in Australia. OSHC will also pay some costs for medicines and ambulance services.

**Why do I need OSHC?**
International students studying in Australia, and any dependents (e.g. husband/wife/partner and children under 18), must have OSHC while they remain on a student visa.

Hospital and other medical treatments in Australia can be very expensive for international students. This is because international students are not covered under the Australian Government’s ‘Medicare’ public health insurance system.

If you have an accident or get sick, the OSHC provider will pay some or all of your medical costs. This includes visits to a doctor, some hospital treatments, emergency ambulance travel, and some pharmaceutical items.

**Do I need ‘Extras Cover’?**
Generally, OSHC does not cover dental (teeth) or optical (eye) services, or other allied health services such as chiropractic or physiotherapy.

If you want to be covered for these treatments, you will need to buy additional insurance or ‘Extras Cover’, such as:
- Extra OSHC, offered by some OSHC providers;
- International travel insurance;
- General treatment cover with an Australian private health insurer.

If you already have a health issue in any of these areas, you should consider paying more for ‘Extras Cover’.

If you do not have ‘Extras Cover’ and, for example, you need to get new glasses or visit a dentist, you will have to pay the full fee. This can be very expensive.

For more information, speak to your OSHC provider or visit www.privatehealth.gov.au

**Waiting periods and exclusions**
It is important to know that OSHC providers often have waiting periods for some health treatments or treatments related to a pre-existing medical issue (an issue you already had before you bought OSHC insurance).

During this time you will not be covered for certain treatments, including pregnancy-related services (e.g. having a baby or an abortion). Sometimes, the waiting period is just 3 months, but for other services it can be up to 12 months.

Every insurance provider has different waiting periods and exclusions so check with your provider before you plan any medical procedures.

Procedures considered ‘not medically necessary’, such as non-essential plastic surgery, are usually not covered.
How do I make a claim?
There are 3 ways to make a claim:
1) Swipe your OSHC or private health care card at the doctor’s office or medical centre; OR
2) Visit your OSHC or private health care provider; OR
3) Go online and download a claim form.

If you have any questions about making a claim, speak in person to your OSHC provider or look for advice on their website.

What are my responsibilities?
As part of your visa conditions, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection requires you to maintain OSHC insurance cover for the whole time you are in Australia.

What if I go on holidays or visit my home country?
Some OSHC providers will temporarily stop your insurance when you leave Australia, and start it again when you return. If you are leaving Australia for a long time, some providers will also increase the length of your insurance cover.

If you stop your studies and leave Australia early, and are not planning to come back, you can apply for a refund for any remaining insurance fees. Speak to your provider if you plan to leave Australia either for a holiday or permanently and always notify them of your plans.

How much does it cost to visit a doctor or health care provider?
The Australian Government sets standard fees which are charged by doctors and health care providers. This is sometimes called a ‘scheduled’ fee.

When you book your appointment, always ask how much it will cost so you can put that money aside in your budget.

IMPORTANT: take your OSHC card to all appointments.

What is direct billing?
Direct billing (sometimes called ‘bulk billing’) is a process that saves you paperwork. Some OSHC providers have agreements with doctors to provide international students with a ‘direct billing’ service. This means your doctor will send the bill directly to your OSHC provider, and you will probably not have to pay anything, or put in a claim form.

If your doctor does not ‘direct bill’ to your OSHC provider, you will need to pay the full fee on the day of your appointment. You can then hand in a claim form to your OSHC provider, who will pay you back some or all of the fee.

Ask your OSHC provider (or check their website) to see which doctors they have agreements with.

What is a ‘gap’ fee?
Some doctors charge more than the Australian Government’s standard fee. This is sometimes called a ‘gap’ fee, or an ‘out-of-pocket expense’ or a ‘co-payment’. For example, if the standard fee is $37.50 and the doctor charges $50.00 for a consultation, the ‘gap’ is $12.50. You need to pay this fee at the time of your appointment – it is not covered by your OSHC provider.

The UWA Medical Centre does not charge international students a gap fee.

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Which insurance companies offer OSHC?
OSHc is offered by 5 Australian registered health insurance companies:

OSHC Allianz Global Assistance
A dedicated Allianz Global Assistance representative is available each weekday at Student Central, Consult Room 5. 11:00am-4:00pm (Monday to Friday). www.allianzassistancehealth.com.au

Australian Health Management
www.ahmoshc.com

BUPA Australia
www.overseasstudenthealth.com

Medibank Private

NIB OSHC

Need more information?
Private Health Insurance Ombudsman
The Private Health Insurance Ombudsman (PHIO) protects the interests of people covered by private health insurance. PHIO can provide independent complaints handling, education and advice to students. www.phio.org.au
Telephone: 1800 640 695 (free call)

Department of Immigration and Border Protection
Information from the Australian Government about studying in Australia, including visa and health cover requirements. www.immi.gov.au/students
Doctors and Hospitals
Fact Sheet 2: International Student Health and Wellbeing

When do I need to see a doctor?
If you feel sick, with a bad cold or flu for example, or you need a general health check-up, you should see a doctor known as a General Practitioner (GP). In Australia, a GP is a doctor who works in an office or health clinic in the community and only sometimes in a hospital.

Privacy and confidentiality
In Australia, when you make an appointment with the receptionist at a medical centre you do not need to tell the receptionist why you are seeing the doctor. The only time you will have to disclose personal information is in the office with the nurse or doctor during your appointment.

Your doctor will be qualified and will treat your case with confidentiality. They will not tell anyone what your appointment is about - not your lecturers, immigration, people back in your home country or even your family members.

The only people that will know about your health are the people you tell.

Where can I find a doctor?
GPs work in private doctor’s offices or in medical centres. At both places, the service you get from doctors are the same. In most cases, you can request a male or female doctor when you make an appointment.

University Medical Centre
There is a Medical Centre located on campus that provides convenient, confidential and complete medical care for students and staff of UWA. GP services at the Centre are directly billed to your insurance provider with no additional cost to UWA international students.

How do I make an appointment?
You can make a medical appointment by telephone or online:
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2118 or www.uwa.edu.au/medical-centre

Appointments are available with male or female doctors. Standard appointments are for 10 minutes. If you have more than one problem or a complex problem you should ask for a long appointment or be prepared to come back for another visit.

Opening hours
During Semester:
Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5.00pm
Holiday Periods:
Monday – Friday 9:00am – 5.00pm

IMPORTANT: bring your OSHC or other health insurance card with you to your appointment.

Where is the Medical Centre?
See above for a list of major public hospitals in Perth.

**For immediate emergency medical or safety help:**
Telephone: 000 (free call) or If on campus, telephone: 6488 2222 and ask for an ambulance

When the ambulance officers arrive they will provide immediate medical help and might transport you to hospital.

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**Western Suburbs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital</td>
<td>Hospital Avenue, Nedlands</td>
<td>(+61 8) 9346 3333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princess Margaret Hospital for Children</td>
<td>Roberts Road, Subiaco</td>
<td>(+61 8) 9340 8222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women</td>
<td>374 Bagot Road, Subiaco</td>
<td>(+61 8) 9340 2222</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Perth CBD**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Royal Perth Hospital</td>
<td>Wellington Street, Perth</td>
<td>(+61 8) 9224 2244</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**North/ North Eastern Suburbs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swan District Hospital</td>
<td>Eveline Road, Middle Swan</td>
<td>(+61 8) 9347 5244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joondalup Health Campus</td>
<td>Shenton Avenue, Joondalup</td>
<td>(+61 8) 9400 9030</td>
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</table>

**Southern Suburbs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospital Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fremantle Hospital</td>
<td>Alma Street, Fremantle</td>
<td>(+61 8) 9431 3333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Stanley Hospital</td>
<td>102–118 Murdoch Drive, Murdoch</td>
<td>1800 659 475</td>
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**How do I pay for a doctor?**
The UWA Medical Centre provides GP services at no additional cost to students. Some GP services will charge a ‘gap’ fee.

See Fact Sheet 1: Overseas Student Health Cover for more information.

**Where can I find a doctor on weekends or outside of opening hours?**
When the UWA Medical Centre is closed there are a range of other medical services you can access.

**National Health Services Directory**
An online directory of health services in your local area. You can find a list of hospitals, GPs or pharmacies open when you need it anywhere in Australia. www.nhsd.com.au

**Dial-A-Doctor Home Visit Service**
After hours medical service. Doctors come and see patients at home. Open every day of the year. Cost is direct-billed to your health insurer.

*Opening Hours:*
Monday – Friday: 5:00pm – 8.00am
Saturdays: after 11:00am
Sundays & Public Holidays: 24hours
**Telephone:** 1300 030 030

**When should I go to a hospital?**
Go to hospital if you have a medical emergency or if you have been referred by a doctor.

A medical emergency is a situation where your life or health is in serious and immediate danger, for example: loss or damage to teeth, eye or ear trauma, drug overdose, broken bones, poisoning or a severe asthma attack.
My teeth hurt. What should I do?
In Australia, a dentist is a type of doctor that specialises in the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of diseases and conditions in your mouth, and teeth.

Dental treatment is covered under 'Extras Cover' through private health insurance. You can purchase additional 'Extras Cover' on top of your basic OSHC insurance to cover added services like the dentist that can be very expensive in Australia. If you have cover for dental services, make sure you read your policy and know exactly which dental procedures you are covered for.

A dental service is available on the UWA campus (see list on the back of this fact sheet). To find a list of other dentists in your area visit: www.dental.wa.gov.au

IMPORTANT: If one of your teeth has fallen out or you are in serious pain, you should go to a hospital emergency department for help.

Where can I get medication?
In Australia, medications might be dispensed differently from your home country.

Normally you will not receive medication from your doctor. However, if a doctor decides you need medication, they will write you a prescription which lists your details, your doctor’s details and the name and quantity of the medication you should receive. You must take this prescription to a pharmacy (also known as a drugstore or chemist), and the qualified pharmacist will provide you with the medication.

You should never take prescription medication that belongs to someone else or has not been approved by a doctor for you. This can put your health at risk. For more information, speak to your local pharmacist.

An on campus pharmacy is located in the Guild Village Courtyard, next to the Co-op Bookshop. It is staffed by a qualified pharmacist.

How can the pharmacist help me?
Pharmacists are trained health care professionals and can give you advice on what medication is right for you. Pharmacists can also help you with general health care information or advice on a variety of health issues.

Over-the-counter medications
For things like the flu, a sick stomach, cold or headache, you can buy ‘over-the-counter’ medication for pain relief or fever. ‘Over-the-counter’ means you do not need a prescription from a doctor. You can get this medication from a pharmacy and some supermarkets.

Alternative medicines
You can also get medication from complementary health practitioners such as Chinese health practitioners, naturopaths and herbalists. You should always tell a doctor what medications you have been given by these practitioners because some medications can seriously interfere with prescription medicines.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allied Health Service</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Services on UWA Campus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychology (emotional wellbeing)</td>
<td>A psychologist offers help for a wide range of mental health issues such as</td>
<td>UWA Counselling and Psychological Services</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>anxiety, depression or stress.</td>
<td>This is a free service for UWA students</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>First Floor, Social Sciences Building (South Wing)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Monday-Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2423</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(See Fact sheet 4: Emotional Wellbeing for more information)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Optometry/Optical (sight/eyes)</td>
<td>An optometrist prescribes and fits lenses/glasses to improve vision, and</td>
<td>Eyecare Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>treats various eye diseases.</td>
<td>UWA Guild Village Courtyard, Shop G.01</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Monday-Thursday, 8:30am – 4:30pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Friday, 8:30am – 3:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 1491</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physiotherapy (muscle pain/</td>
<td>A physiotherapist treats musculoskeletal injuries such as sports injuries,</td>
<td>On The Go Physio</td>
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<tr>
<td>musculoskeletal injuries)</td>
<td>back pain, sprains and strains.</td>
<td>UWA Medical Centre, 2nd Floor, Guild Village (South Wing)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2118</td>
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<tr>
<td>Podiatry (feet)</td>
<td>A podiatrist treats foot conditions such as ingrown toenails.</td>
<td>UWA Podiatry Clinic</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Corner of Park Avenue and Crawley Avenue, Crawley</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 4:00pm (longer hours on Mondays)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 4522</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pharmacy (dispensing medication)</td>
<td>A pharmacist prepares and dispenses medicines and advises on appropriate use</td>
<td>Campus Pharmacy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>of medication.</td>
<td>UWA Guild Village Courtyard, Shop G.11</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Monday-Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry (teeth)</td>
<td>A dentist specialises in the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of</td>
<td>The Oral Health Centre of WA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>diseases and conditions of the oral cavity, particularly teeth.</td>
<td>17 Monash Avenue, Nedlands</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Opening hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 5:00pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Telephone: (+61 8) 9346 4400</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Matilda Bay Dentist</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UWA Guild Village, 1st Floor, Shop 1.25</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Monday-Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 1215</td>
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**Purchasing medication over the internet**

Medications can be obtained over the internet. However, often the safety of these products is not known. It is always safer to get medications from a chemist or pharmacy in Western Australia.

**Can I claim money back for prescription medicines?**

You may be able to claim for part of the cost of prescription medicines. Part of the cost is set by the Australian Government under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS), and you can’t claim that amount. However, sometimes medication may cost more than the set fee, and you can claim the additional amount.

Check what the current government fee is by contacting your OSHC provider and ask if there are limits to how much you can be paid back – limits usually apply.

Medicines purchased without a prescription, such as headache tablets, can not be claimed.

**IMPORTANT: You must keep your receipt for prescription medication to make a claim with your OSHC provider.**

**What are allied health services?**

Allied health services include treatments like psychology and physiotherapy which are carried out in Australia by trained health care professionals.

You can make an appointment to see an allied health professional without having a referral from a doctor, but a doctor may also recommend you see an allied health provider if needed.

Above is a list of some allied health services, and how they can help you. Remember that OSHC does not normally cover allied health services. If you want to be covered for these treatments you will need to buy additional private health insurance or ‘Extras Cover’, such as:

- Extra OSHC supplied by some OSHC providers,
- International travel insurance, or
- General treatment cover with any Australian private health insurer.

For more information on ‘Extras Cover’, see Fact Sheet 1: Overseas Student Health Cover.
What is emotional health?
Emotional health is about feeling content and happy. Your time in Australia will be affected by many things:
• how you cope with a different culture and language;
• how safe and welcome you feel;
• and how much fun you have.

It’s important to be aware of factors that lead to poor emotional health. These include:
• depression (feelings of great sadness);
• anxiety (feelings of fear and worry);
• stress (feeling like you have too much to cope with);
• homesickness (missing home, family and friends);
• social isolation (spending too much time alone);
• and loneliness (having no friends).

What is stress?
Stress usually means you are feeling tense and anxious. This could include worrying about your studies, exams, work, family, relationships or homesickness. Most people get stressed from time to time, but too much stress can lead to physical and emotional health problems and might affect your studies.

Adjusting to living in a new country
Moving to a new place can be very stressful. Changes to your normal day-to-day things like signs, foods, weather, customs, culture and norms that may make you feel unsettled and anxious.

Studying at UWA and living in a new Australian culture may impact your health and the way you relate to others while you adjust.

There are things you can do to help adjust yourself to living in a new country:
• Get involved in social activities;
• Make Australian friends;
• Access support at UWA;
• Exercise regularly to manage stress;
• Get involved in the community through volunteering;
• Keep in contact with family and friends back at home;
• Be patient - adjustment takes time!

Depression and anxiety
We all feel sad from time to time, but some of us have these feelings more often, more strongly or for a longer period of time. If you are feeling depressed, you might find it hard to cope with normal tasks each day. In some cases you might not want to see your friends, you might start missing classes, or you may not feel like doing activities you normally enjoy.

Some people also feel anxious and fearful. This could be due to worries about exam results, money or work pressures or you may be feeling severe homesickness.

If you feel any of these things, it is important to ask for help as soon as possible. Remember, depression is a serious illness, but it can be treated.

You can get help by talking to a doctor, counsellor or psychologist. They will not tell anyone what you talk about with them - not your lecturer, immigration, family or others at home.

I’m worried about a friend or relative’s emotional wellbeing - how can I help?
The best thing you can do is listen to the person’s worries and encourage them to seek help from a doctor or one of the services listed on this fact sheet.

By listening and being understanding you will be helping them and showing that you care about their wellbeing.
How can I improve or maintain my emotional wellbeing?

- **Be active**: exercise makes you feel good, sleep better and will help your emotional health;
- **Connect**: spend time with other people or talk to people you trust about how you’re feeling;
- **Give**: donate your time to others through volunteering or support;
- **Keep learning**: try something new like a sport or musical instrument;
- **Take notice**: pay attention to the way you’re feeling and get help if you are not feeling good;
- **Eat a healthy diet**: try and have 2 serves of fruit and 5 serves of vegetables every day;
- **Limit use of alcohol and other drugs**: these can make your mental health worse in the long term.

For more information, see Fact Sheet 5: General Health and Wellbeing.

Free and confidential telephone or online services available 24 hours a day

**Suicide Callback Service**
If you are feeling suicidal or you are worried about someone else who is suicidal. Qualified counsellors can also provide long-term support over the phone.
Telephone: 1300 659 467
www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au

**Lifeline**
Call to talk to someone about how you are feeling or if there is something worrying you.
Telephone: 13 11 14
www.lifeline.org.au

**BeyondBlue**
Provide information and help for people who have depression, anxiety and other emotional problems. If you need a translator, BeyondBlue will arrange this for you.
Telephone: 1300 224 636
www.beyondblue.org.au

Who can I speak to at UWA for more help?

**IMPORTANT:** for immediate emergency medical or safety help telephone 000 or 6488 2222 if you are on campus

**UWA Medical Centre**
Contact to arrange a confidential appointment with a doctor or nurse. Skilled and qualified mental health team available. Costs are direct-billed to your health insurer.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2118
www.uwa.edu.au/medical-centre

**UWA Counselling and Psychological Services**
Contact to arrange a free and confidential appointment with a qualified Counsellor. Daily triage sessions available.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2423
www.counselling.uwa.edu.au

**Robin Winkler Clinic**
Offer psychological treatment for a range of issues such as depression, anxiety, gambling, sleeping problems, eating disorders or alcohol and other drug use. There is a cost for services provided.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2644
www.psychology.uwa.edu.au

**UniAccess**
Provide free services and support to students who have a disability or medical condition that may affect their study.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2423
www.uniaccess.uwa.edu.au

**International Student Support**
Provide support and assistance for a range of international student issues including: support with academic issues, taking leave, grievances and appeals.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2428
www.international.uwa.edu.au

**Guild Student Assist**
Support all students with academic, financial or welfare issues and representation. This service is free, confidential and provided by the UWA Student Guild, a student led organisation.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2295
Email: hello@guild.uwa.edu.au
www.uwastudentguild.com/support

**International Student Service (ISS)**
A department of the Student Guild that represent international students at UWA. They run social events and advocate for international student wellbeing. All full fee paying international students are automatically made ISS members.
Email: iss@guild.uwa.edu.au
www.uwastudentguild/departments

**Language And Cultural Exchange**
Language and Cultural Exchange (LACE) is a friendship program open to all postgraduate students. They run free social events, giving local and international students a chance to make lasting friendships.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2404
www.lace.uwa.edu.au

**Suicide Callback Service**
If you are feeling suicidal or you are worried about someone else who is suicidal. Qualified counsellors can also provide long-term support over the phone.
Telephone: 1300 659 467
www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au

**Lifeline**
Call to talk to someone about how you are feeling or if there is something worrying you.
Telephone: 13 11 14
www.lifeline.org.au

**BeyondBlue**
Provide information and help for people who have depression, anxiety and other emotional problems. If you need a translator, BeyondBlue will arrange this for you.
Telephone: 1300 224 636
www.beyondblue.org.au

**International Student Support**
Provide support and assistance for a range of international student issues including: support with academic issues, taking leave, grievances and appeals.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2428
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**Guild Student Assist**
Support all students with academic, financial or welfare issues and representation. This service is free, confidential and provided by the UWA Student Guild, a student led organisation.
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For more information, see Fact Sheet 5: General Health and Wellbeing.

Free and confidential telephone or online services available 24 hours a day

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For more information, see Fact Sheet 5: General Health and Wellbeing.
The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating lists the foods we need to eat every day to be healthy. There are 5 basic food groups:

- Bread, cereals, rice, pasta and noodles;
- Vegetables;
- Fruit;
- Milk, yoghurt, cheese;
- Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts and legumes.

There are also “extra” foods that are not included in the 5 food groups. These include biscuits, cakes, desserts, pastries, soft drink and high-fat foods like pies, sausage rolls, potato chips and takeaway meals. These should only be eaten occasionally and in small amounts. Too much salt, sugar and unhealthy fats and oils are not good for your health.

Where can I buy Halal food?
UWA Student Guild cafes provide a range of Halal food and microwave facilities on campus. Ask the Guild Cafe staff to show you where.

What is health and wellbeing?
Health and wellbeing is about feeling well and being happy with life. It includes your physical wellbeing (body), emotional wellbeing (feelings) and spiritual wellbeing (religion, faith, spirituality). General wellbeing is effected by your lifestyle, what you eat and drink, as well as how much you study, work, sleep, exercise and socialise with others.

How do I know if my health is at risk?
To stay healthy, you need to make healthy choices every day. That means thinking about things that can affect your health, including:
- Being inactive;
- Unhealthy eating;
- Not getting enough sleep;
- Sun exposure and beach safety;
- Drinking alcohol or taking recreational drugs (legal /illegal); or
- Smoking.

Being physically active

Why should I be active?
Being active and exercising every day can lead to a longer and healthier life. It will also strengthen your bones and muscles, improve mood and sleep, relieve stress and lower your risk of heart disease, diabetes and some cancers.

Being active also helps you to pay attention and focus, which will benefit your studies.

How can I get active?
You should try to exercise for at least 60 minutes every day. You can break this time up into 15 minute or 30 minute intervals to fit into your daily routine.

Walking is a good way to maintain your emotional wellbeing and fitness. There are plenty of great places to walk in Perth, including around the Crawley campus, along the Swan River, local parks and ovals, Kings Park and our beautiful Western Australian beaches. Most are just 20 minutes or less from central Perth.

Healthy eating

Why should I eat a healthy diet?
To maintain a healthy weight and reduce the chance of developing serious health problems, it is important to eat a balanced diet.

The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating lists the foods we need to eat every day to be healthy.

There are 5 basic food groups:
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Getting enough sleep

Why is sleep important?
Rest and regular sleep routines are essential for developing good study habits. A good night’s sleep can help you to be productive, mentally sharp, mentally balanced and full of energy all day long.

If you are having trouble sleeping, ask your doctor or counsellor for advice.

Sun exposure and beach safety

How do I protect myself from the Australian sun?
The Australian summer can be extreme with long periods of very high temperatures. During the summer months it is important to drink lots of fluids, particularly water, and keep your skin protected from the sun. Sunburn can affect your health but extreme sunburn can require medical treatment.

Australia has some of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. In summer (December - February), the sun can damage your skin within 15 minutes. In summer, you should stay out of the sun between 10:00am and 3:00pm because this is when the most damage can be done to your skin.

When you are in the sun, especially in summer, you should:
• Wear a shirt;
• Put on sunscreen (SPF 30 or more);
• Wear a wide-brimmed hat;
• Wear sunglasses; and
• Sit in the shade where possible.

A little bit of sunshine on your skin each day is important to stop Vitamin D deficiency. If you generally wear a veil or long clothes it is good to take some time (about 15 minutes) in the morning to get some sun exposure. Vitamin D deficiency is more common in people who wear long garments all year round.

How do I stay safe at the beach?
The beach is a great place to relax and stay cool in summer but the sea can have unpredictable and hidden dangers so it is important to know how to be safe.

When you are at the beach, it is important to:
• Always swim between the yellow and red flags where lifeguards are watching;
• Read safety signs;
• Swim with a friend and never alone;
• Avoid swimming near rips or currents;
• Ask lifeguards for advice where it is best to swim;
• Stay out of the water if you have been drinking alcohol; and
• Be sun smart by wearing sun protection at all times.

Alcohol
Alcohol is a drug that can affect the way your body functions and make you more likely to take risks that you usually wouldn’t.

In Australia, drinking alcohol is commonly accepted and legal for those over 18 years. However, people who drink too much alcohol can put their health at risk and affect their relationships with others.

What do I need to think about if I plan to drink alcohol?
There are ways you can limit the health and safety risks when drinking alcohol.

Some tips are:
• Set a limit of the number of drinks you will have and stick to it;
• Eat before or while you are drinking;
• Drink water and non-alcoholic drinks in between your alcoholic drinks;
• Don’t mix alcohol with other drugs;
• Keep an eye on your drink - don’t leave your glass unattended;
• Plan how you will get home safely before you go out whether it is by taxi, public transport or with a friend who has not been drinking; and
• Always stay with your friends when you are drinking and don’t leave anyone on their own.

Recreational drugs
Recreational drugs can be legal (such as alcohol, caffeine, tobacco) or illegal (such as cannabis/weed, amphetamines, ecstasy, cocaine or heroin). These drugs can change the way your body functions and how you think, feel and behave.

What are some of the risks?
There is no safe way to use illegal recreational drugs because you can never be sure what you are taking or how it will affect you.

All drugs have the potential to cause harm. As drug use increases, the potential harm to your health also increases. This may affect your university experience in the long term.

If you are caught with illegal recreational drugs, you may be charged with an offence and have to go to court. Any drug-related offences might also impact your student visa.

If you think that your alcohol or other drug use is affecting your physical or mental health, you should get help. There are many support services available at UWA to help you, these are listed later in this fact sheet.

Tobacco
It is well-accepted fact that smoking is bad for your health and can cause a range of problems including emphysema, high blood pressure, heart disease and lung cancer.

UWA is ‘smoke free’- what does this mean?
The UWA campus is smoke free. You are not allowed to smoke in, or around, all of the University’s buildings, properties and workplaces, including open spaces.

Quitting cigarettes at any time, even if you have smoked for years, will help your health. There are several
services offered at UWA to help you quit smoking, these are listed on the back of this fact sheet.

**Keeping safe in vehicles**
Alcohol and other drugs can impair your ability to drive safely. In Australia, it is illegal to drive with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.05mg or more or if you have taken illegal drugs. If you are on your ‘L’ (learner permit) or ‘P’ (probation permit) plates, the legal BAC limit is zero (0).

It is also illegal to drink alcohol while you are driving. If you are stopped by the police you may be breath tested. If you are found to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, you may be charged with an offence and have to go to court. Any offences might also impact your student visa.

While you are studying in Western Australia (WA), you can only drive vehicles that you are already authorised to drive using your overseas licence. If your overseas licence expires while you are in WA, you will have to apply for a WA licence if you wish to continue driving.

If your overseas licence is not in English, you must carry an international driving permit or an approved English translation of your licence when you drive.

**How can I stay safe while driving?**
To reduce the risk of harm to yourself and others while in a vehicle:
- Do not drink alcohol or take recreational drugs before or while you’re driving;
- Always wear your seatbelt;
- Keep your driver’s license (and English translation if needed) on you at all times while driving;
- Obey speed limits and road rules;
- Remove any valuables from your car in case of theft.

**Need more information?**
These external services offer more information on health and wellbeing.

**Study Perth**
The official government website for studying in Western Australia. Provides information on studying, living and working in Perth.
www.studypert.com.au

**Clubs Online**
An online list of sporting or interest clubs to join in your local area.
www.clubsonline.dsr.wa.gov.au

**Department of Transport**
The official government website for vehicles and transport in Western Australia. Find more information on vehicle registration, driver’s licences and pay bills and fines online.
www.transport.wa.gov.au

**HealthDirect Australia**
A free 24-hour telephone health advice line staffed by registered nurses.
Telephone: 1800 022 222
www.healthdirect.org.au

**Live Lighter**
A resource for information on how to eat well, be physically active and maintain a healthy weight.
www.livelighter.com.au

**Quit Now**
Information and support to quit smoking.
www.quitnow.gov.au

**SunSmart**
Information on preventing and treating sunburn and skin cancer.
www.sunsmart.com.au

**Surf Life Saving Western Australia**
Information on beaches, beach safety and surf clubs.
www.surflifesavingwa.com.au

**Trails Western Australia**
For information on walking trails in the Perth hills and across Western Australia.
www.trailswa.com.au
Getting involved and active

UWA Student Guild
An on-campus student service made up of elected student representatives and support staff. They provide assistance for students such as free food, tax help, representation and social events. There are also over 100 Guild-affiliated clubs and societies that run activities for students covering everything from religious and spiritual events to disco dancing and medieval culture.

Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2295
Email: hello@guild.uwa.edu.au
www.uwastudentguild.com

Getting connected

International Student Support
Provide support and assistance for a range of international student issues including: support with academic issues, taking leave, grievances and appeals.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2428
www.international.uwa.edu.au

UniAccess
Provide free services and support to students who want to disclose a disability or condition and request assistance.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2423
www.uniaccess.uwa.edu.au

UniMentor
A university-wide program that aims to help you to adjust to university life by pairing you with a later year student studying a similar course as you, who can answer your questions.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 3028
www.unimentor.uwa.edu.au

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www.lace.uwa.edu.au

Who can I speak to at UWA for more help?
There are many groups and services here on campus to help you to get the most out of your UWA study experience.

General health & wellbeing

UWA Medical Centre
Provide health check-ups and medical assistance from a team of doctors and nurses at no additional cost to students. Doctors can also provide information on therapies such as Nicotine Replacement Therapy for those trying to stop smoking.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2118
www.uwa.edu.au/medical-centre

UWA Alcohol and Other Drug Counselling Service
A free and confidential counselling service for UWA students and staff. You can seek treatment for your own use or if you are concerned about use by a family member or friend.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2118

UWA Counselling and Psychological Services
Contact to arrange a free and confidential appointment with a qualified Counsellor. Daily triage sessions available.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2423
www.counselling.uwa.edu.au

Robin Winkler Clinic
Offer psychological treatment for a range of issues such as depression, anxiety, gambling, sleeping problems or eating disorders. There is also a Smoking Cessation Group for those trying to quit smoking. There is a cost for services.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2644
Email: clinic-psy@uwa.edu.au
www.psychology.uwa.edu.au

UWA Health Promotion Unit
Provide education and training for students on the topics of mental health, sexual health and alcohol and other drugs. Students can also get involved as health peer educators through the Fit for Study Program.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 3173
Email: healthpromotion@uwa.edu.au
www.fitforstudy.uwa.edu.au

UWA Sport and Recreation
Offer a variety of social and competitive sports, martial arts, aquatics and group fitness classes. There is also a fully equipped fitness centre on campus with discounted student memberships.
Telephone: (+61 8) 6488 2286
www.sport.uwa.edu.au

The University of Western Australia
M319, Perth WA 6009 Australia
Tel: +61 8 6488 3173
Email: healthpromotion@uwa.edu.au
fitforstudy.uwa.edu.au
CRICOS Provider Code: 00126G
UniPrint 00000
What is sexual health?
Sexual health involves the physical aspects of sexual relationships, pregnancy and prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). It is also about how to build healthy relationships.

Are things different in Australia?
Yes, they may be different for students from some countries. In Australia, sex education is taught in secondary schools. This includes information about sex, but also about how to develop healthy, respectful relationships.

Many couples marry in Australia, but it is also acceptable for people to have sex before marriage or to live together without being married. Many types of relationships, including same-sex relationships, are legal in Australia and it is against the law to treat anyone unfairly because of their choice of partner.

Sometimes students form connections with others of the same sex which is not unusual in Australia. This can be a challenging time of change for some people.

What is safe sex?
Sex is meant to be an enjoyable experience for all people. Being safe with sex means caring for both your own health and enjoyment, and the health and enjoyment of your partner.

Practising safe sex is important for a healthy sex life to reduce the risk of unplanned pregnancy and getting or passing on sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV.

You can improve your safety when having sex by doing the following:
• Always using a condom if you are having sex and a dam (flat latex barrier) if you are having oral sex;
• Having regular STI tests if you are sexually active;
• Limiting your number of sexual partners;
• Seeking advice from a doctor if you are worried about your sexual health.

For a list of health and relationship services, see the back of this fact sheet.

How can I get ready for a respectful sexual relationship?
Starting a new relationship can be exciting and fun. Healthy relationships are based on respectful, caring and open communication. They can also be a great form of support, especially if you are living away from family and friends.

You should always practise ‘safe sex’, whether you are in a long-term relationship or if you are having casual sex. Either way, agreeing on safe sex with your partner is very important.

For a safe relationship, remember:
• Always be respectful to your partner;
• Always get consent from all partners before and during any sexual activity;
• Never assault, exploit or harm others;
• In Australia, it is the responsibility of men and women to practise safe sex.

You should not be pressured to have sex with someone unless you are ready - even if you are married. This is your right in Australia.
Post-exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) is a treatment that may prevent HIV infection and is available to anyone likely to have been exposed to HIV within the previous 72 hours (3 days). It is a combination of anti-HIV drugs that must be taken over a 4-week period.

Because the treatment must occur with 72 hours of being exposed to HIV, it is important that you get advice from a hospital as soon as possible. Waiting to make an appointment with a doctor may waste valuable time.

What if my partner and I both test negative to an STI?
If you test negative for an STI, you still need to protect yourself and your future sexual partners by continuing to practise safe sex.

What if I travel overseas?
Some STIs (such as HIV) are more common in other countries than in Australia. It is important to remember this and to continue safe sex practices while travelling overseas.

If you decide to go on a holiday or if you are going to visit family and friends in your home country, always travel with a supply of condoms so that you are easily able to continue safe sex.
**Contraception and pregnancy**

**How do I prevent pregnancy?**

If you are having sex regularly, or just sometimes, it is important that you use an effective form of contraception if you want to avoid getting pregnant. Contraception is another word for ‘birth control’. In Australia, both men and women are responsible for contraception, not just women.

In Australia, unmarried students as well as married students can visit their doctor to get contraception or advice. This is the culture in Australia as many people have sex before marriage.

The contraceptive pill and condoms are the most common ways for preventing unplanned pregnancy and STIs, but there are many other options that are more effective and longer lasting. Some kinds of longer lasting contraception are also partly covered by your OSHC insurance. Make an appointment with a doctor to discuss what is best for you.

For more information on different birth control options in Australia, visit our website at: [www.share.uwa.edu.au](http://www.share.uwa.edu.au)

**What is the Emergency Contraceptive Pill and how can it help me?**

The Emergency Contraceptive Pill (ECP) or ‘morning after pill’ contains a dose of the female hormone progestogen.

The ECP can help reduce the risk of pregnancy if you’ve had sex in the last 5 days and:

- You forgot to take your regular contraceptive pill
- The condom broke
- You’ve had unprotected sex

The ECP works by stopping or delaying release of the egg. It does not disrupt an established pregnancy - it is not an abortion pill. It is about 85% effective at preventing pregnancies. Effectiveness depends on the stage of your monthly cycle and how soon after unprotected sex the ECP is taken.

When you ask for the ECP, the health care provider will need to ask you a few questions about your health.

**IMPORTANT: You should not use the Emergency Contraceptive Pill as a regular form of contraception.**

**I think I might be pregnant – what should I do?**

Signs and symptoms of pregnancy include a missed or late period, sore breasts, feeling sick or tired and needing to pee frequently.

If you think you might be pregnant, you should do a pregnancy test. You can get a test at a doctor’s office or medical centre or you can buy a home pregnancy testing kit at a chemist or supermarket.

**I am pregnant – what should I do?**

If you are pregnant, you can discuss the following options with your GP:

- Have an abortion to end the pregnancy
- Continue with the pregnancy and become a parent
- Continue with the pregnancy and consider adoption for the baby

OSHC insurance usually includes a 12 month waiting period for any abortion, pregnancy or birth-related medical services. For more information contact your OSHC provider.

**What is sexual assault?**

Sexual assault is when you have been forced to participate in any unwanted sexual activity.

Sexual assault is a crime and is not acceptable behaviour in Australia. It doesn’t matter if you know the person who sexually assaulted you – this includes your boyfriend, girlfriend, family member or partner by marriage or commitment. It is still a crime.

If you have been raped or sexually abused or threatened, you should telephone the police on 131 444.

**IMPORTANT: if you are in a life-threatening situation, you should telephone 000 immediately.**
Telephone helplines are available if you prefer not to talk face-to-face:

BeyondBlue
If you need to talk to someone about your emotional health or relationships. Open 24 hours, every day. Also have a number of online fact sheets with information on mental health.
Telephone: 1300 22 4636
www.beyondblue.org.au

MensLine Australia
Provide online and telephone support, information and referral for men with family and relationship concerns. Open 24 hours, every day of the year.
Telephone: 1300 789 978
www.menslineaus.org.au

Sexual Health Helpline
Confidential telephone service for sexual health matters. Open weekdays 10:00am-4:00pm.
Telephone: (+61 8) 9227 6178 or 1800 198 205 (rural only)

Women’s Domestic Violence Helpline
Provide support and counselling for women going through family or domestic violence.
Telephone: (+61 8) 9223 1188 or 1800 007 339 (24 hours, 7 days)