

Celebrating the NHS

What Is the NHS?

The initialism NHS stands for National Health Service: a group of organisations that provide medical care for people living in the UK. Staff working for the NHS support the health and wellbeing of the population.

An estimated 1.5 million people work for the NHS including: cleaners, cooks, doctors, nurses, midwives, office staff and paramedics. Every single person's role is important for the NHS to work effectively as a health system for the country.



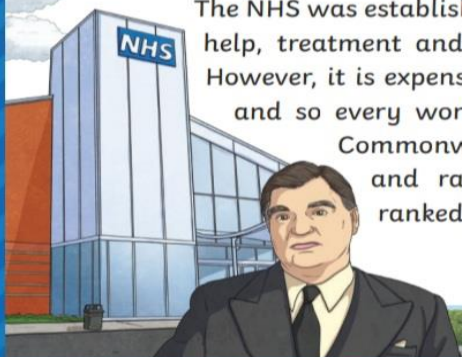
When Was the NHS Founded?

Before the founding of the NHS, only affluent people could afford to access hospital care or seek medical help; every visit to a healthcare professional would cost money. Therefore, many people did not have access to the medical care that they needed.

After the Second World War, Aneurin Bevan became the Minister of Health in the Labour government. He started the National Health Service on 5th July 1948. Mr Bevan wanted a system which provided medical care that was free for everyone to access within the UK.

What Makes the NHS Special?

The NHS was established to ensure that everyone could access medical help, treatment and advice regardless of their financial situation. However, it is expensive to provide medical care for a whole country and so every working adult pays taxes to the government. The Commonwealth Fund conducted a study of 11 countries and ranked each healthcare system: the NHS was ranked first for quality of care and efficiency.



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Many people consider themselves lucky to have access to the NHS in the UK. While there are some countries which have government-funded healthcare, other nations operate very differently. In some parts of the world, people without insurance (or who can't afford treatment) would not be able to access medical care. There are also places where the quality of care you receive will be dependent on what you can afford.

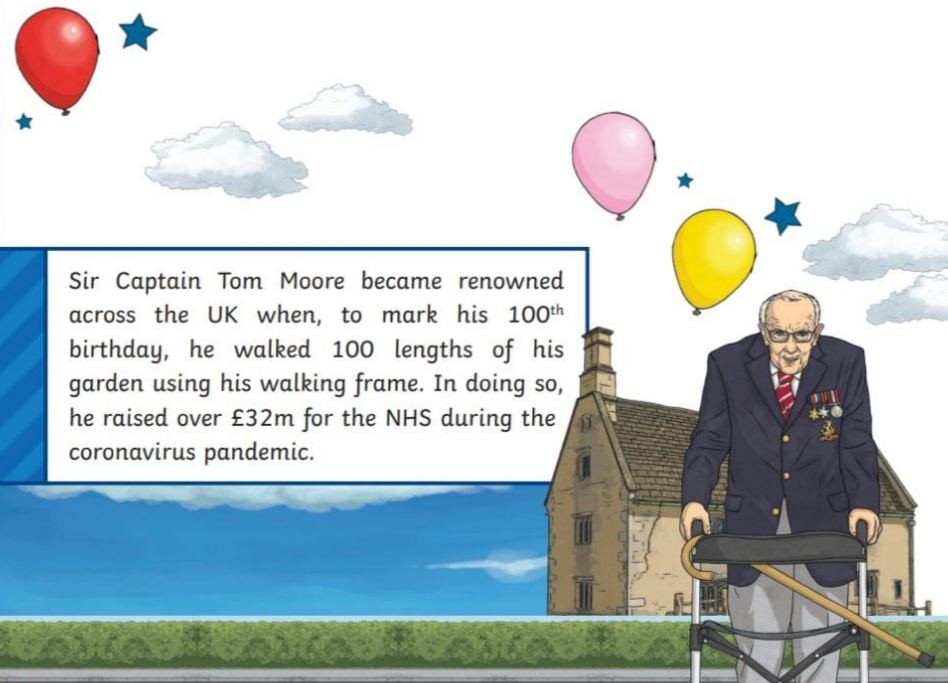
How Did the NHS Respond to the Coronavirus Pandemic?

During the global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, NHS staff were praised for their bravery and self-sacrifice. Doctors, nurses and other healthcare workers have risked their own lives to care for other people.

A total of 17 buildings around the UK were converted into hospital facilities to deal with the pandemic. Many professionals (who had left or retired from the NHS) were asked to return to help.

How Have We Been Celebrating Our NHS?

During the coronavirus pandemic, the British people showed their gratitude towards NHS staff in several ways.



Sir Captain Tom Moore became renowned across the UK when, to mark his 100th birthday, he walked 100 lengths of his garden using his walking frame. In doing so, he raised over £32m for the NHS during the coronavirus pandemic.



During what was referred to as 'lockdown', families were advised to stay home to prevent the spread of the virus. People could only leave their homes once a day for exercise and were instructed not to meet with anyone from outside their own household. Children and their families made and displayed rainbows in their homes as a way of spreading hope and thanking the NHS for their amazing work.

At 8 p.m. on Thursday evenings, a round of applause could be heard across the nation as people clapped and cheered for the NHS from their doorsteps. Some found other creative ways of making noise such as banging saucepans, beeping car horns and playing instruments. This was to show their appreciation for the key workers who were going to work to keep everyone safe.



What Might the Future Hold for the NHS?

The NHS costs the country around £153 bn every year. Over recent years, there has been a lot of debate amongst politicians as to whether or not the NHS should be privatised. Privatisation is when a service is no longer run by the government but by private companies (the rail service has been privatised). Those in favour of privatisation argue that people are now living around 13 years longer than they did when the NHS was established: the NHS is becoming more expensive to operate.



Questions

1. What was Aneurin Bevan's job title? Tick one.

- ☐ politician
- ☐ Minister for the NHS
- ☐ doctor
- ☐ Minister for Health

2. Draw **four** lines and match each word to its definition.

health insurance

pandemic

privatisation

National Health Service

When a service is no longer run by the government but by private companies.

A disease which has spread to lots of countries.

The government-funded healthcare system for people in the UK.

The money people pay to companies to cover the cost of medical care.

3. Who has the author written this text for?

4. Find and copy one word which shows that the NHS staff put the needs of others before their own.

5. Who conducted the study in which the NHS ranked the highest for quality of care?

Answers

6. How is healthcare different in the UK compared to other countries?

7. Which is the most important section in the text? Justify your choice.

8. Summarise how the NHS dealt with the coronavirus pandemic in 25 words or fewer.

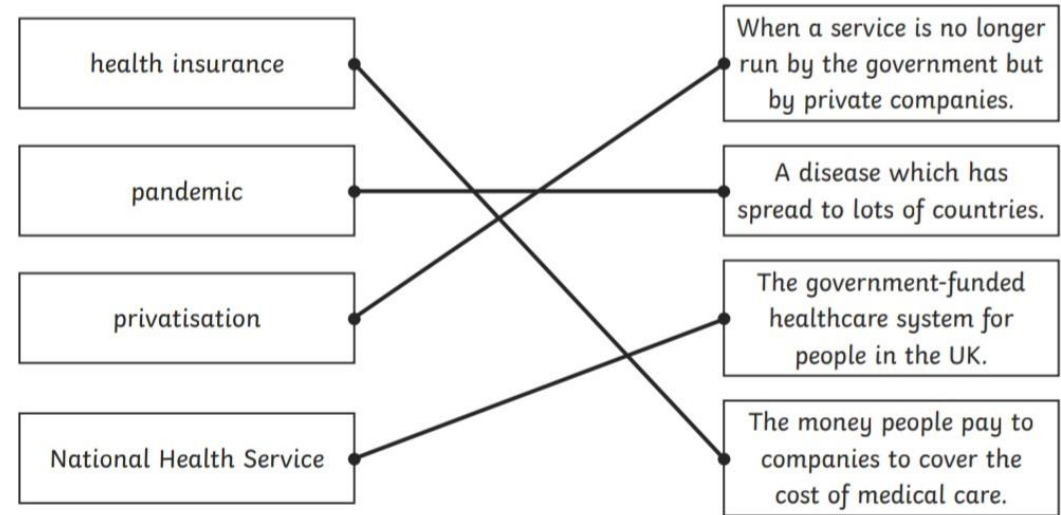
9. Why do you think so many people helped Sir Captain Tom Moore to raise over £32m for NHS charities?

10. Explain in no more than 50 words what makes the NHS worth celebrating.

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- ☒ **Minister for Health**

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3. Who has the author written this text for?

Pupils' own responses, such as: The author has written this text for people who want to learn more about the NHS and how we celebrated the NHS during the coronavirus pandemic.

4. Find and copy one word which shows that the NHS staff put the needs of others before their own.

self-sacrifice

5. Who conducted the study in which the NHS ranked the highest for quality of care?

The Commonwealth Fund conducted the study of 11 countries.

6. How is healthcare different in the UK compared to other countries?

Pupils' own responses, such as: In the UK, the NHS provides healthcare for everyone which is funded by taxes. Everyone who lives in the UK is treated fairly and can access the treatment that they need. Other countries have a different healthcare system where they might have to pay health insurance. This means that not everyone will be able to access the care that they need.

7. Which is the most important section in the text? Justify your choice.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that the most important section in the text is 'What Might the Future Hold for the NHS?' because it is important for us to consider what might happen to the NHS in the future.

8. Summarise how the NHS dealt with the coronavirus pandemic in 25 words or fewer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: The NHS responded quickly to the pandemic by building 17 temporary hospitals to treat people. They also encouraged retired NHS staff to return and help.

9. Why do you think so many people helped Sir Captain Tom Moore to raise over £32m for NHS charities?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I think people thought walking 100 laps at 100 years old was a brave and challenging task for Sir Captain Tom Moore to complete. People also wanted to give money to the NHS to help fight the coronavirus pandemic.

10. Explain in no more than 50 words what makes the NHS worth celebrating.

Pupils' own responses, such as: The NHS is free for anyone living in the UK to access regardless of how much money they have. It is also ranked as one of the best healthcare systems out of 11 countries. NHS staff have worked incredibly hard during the pandemic to help those who need it most.