

# Celebrating the NHS

## What Is the NHS?

NHS stands for National Health Service: a group of organisations that provide medical care for people living in the UK. They help those who are feeling unwell or are injured.

## Did You Know...?

Around 1.5 million people work together to make up the NHS. Every person and every role is important and by working together they create a successful health system for the country.



## How Did the NHS Start?

Before the NHS was founded, only wealthy people could afford to go to hospital or get medical help. Every visit to a doctor or dentist would cost the person money. If the person could not afford it then they did not get the medicine or the treatment.

The UK government wanted to make things better for the nation after the Second World War. In 1948, the National Health Service was started by **Health Minister Aneurin Bevan** to keep everyone in the UK healthy.

## Why Is Our NHS Special?

The NHS was designed so that every person who lived in the United Kingdom could receive free medical help, treatment and advice. However, running the NHS is expensive and the government can't afford to pay for everything. So, every working adult pays taxes to the government which are then used to pay for the NHS and its staff.

People celebrate the NHS because they feel lucky to have it in the UK. In other countries, people pay **health insurance**. People who can't afford this insurance would not be able to receive medical care when they need it. There are also places in the world where the care that you receive will be of a lesser quality if you have less money.



### How Have We Been Celebrating Our NHS?

During the global coronavirus **pandemic**, people were especially thankful for the bravery of NHS workers who have worked hard to save the lives of those who became ill with the **virus**. 17 temporary hospitals were set up around the UK by the NHS during the pandemic to care for patients with coronavirus.

The British people said 'thank you' to the NHS in many ways:

Sir Captain Tom Moore became famous around the world when he walked 100 lengths of his garden using his walking frame. He challenged himself to complete this before his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and raised £32m for NHS charities.



During lockdown, families were told to stay at home to prevent the spread of the virus. Children and their families put rainbows in their windows as a way of spreading hope and thanking the NHS for their amazing work.



Every Thursday at 8 p.m., people stood outside their homes and clapped and cheered for the NHS. They did this to show their appreciation to the NHS and other **key workers** for working hard during the pandemic.



**Glossary**

**health insurance:**

People pay money to a company that will pay for your medical treatment.

**Health Minister:**

A person in the government who is in charge of the health department.

**key workers:**

People who carry out jobs which are essential to keep the country running, for example: teachers, police, fire service, delivery drivers and shop workers.

**pandemic:**

A disease which has spread across lots of countries or the whole world.

**taxes:**

Money collected by the government to pay for things that the country needs such as schools, roads and the NHS.

**virus:**

A tiny germ that can infect living creatures and cause disease.



# Questions

1. What does NHS stand for? Tick one.

- National Health System
- Natural Health Service
- National Health Service
- National Hygiene Service

2. Select the correct options to match each number to its statement.

1.5 million	a		The year that the NHS was founded.
100	b		The number of staff working in the NHS.
1948	c		The age of Sir Captain Tom Moore when he walked 100 laps of his garden.
£32m	d		The amount of money that Sir Captain Tom Moore raised for the NHS.

3. Find and copy one word that means the same as 'rich'.

4. Who has the author written this text for?

5. What does the word 'temporary' imply about the 17 hospitals which were set up during the pandemic?

6. Why did the author choose the phrase 'He challenged himself...' to describe Sir Captain Tom Moore's fundraising event.

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

8. How might we celebrate the NHS in the future?