

Sign our NHS 70th birthday card



East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust



Celebrating 70 years

Thursday 5th July 2018, marks the 70th anniversary of the National Health Service (NHS).



This momentous milestone offers a unique opportunity to celebrate local NHS achievements, pay tribute to the NHS staff and volunteers who help shape the service, and look to a future vision of the NHS.

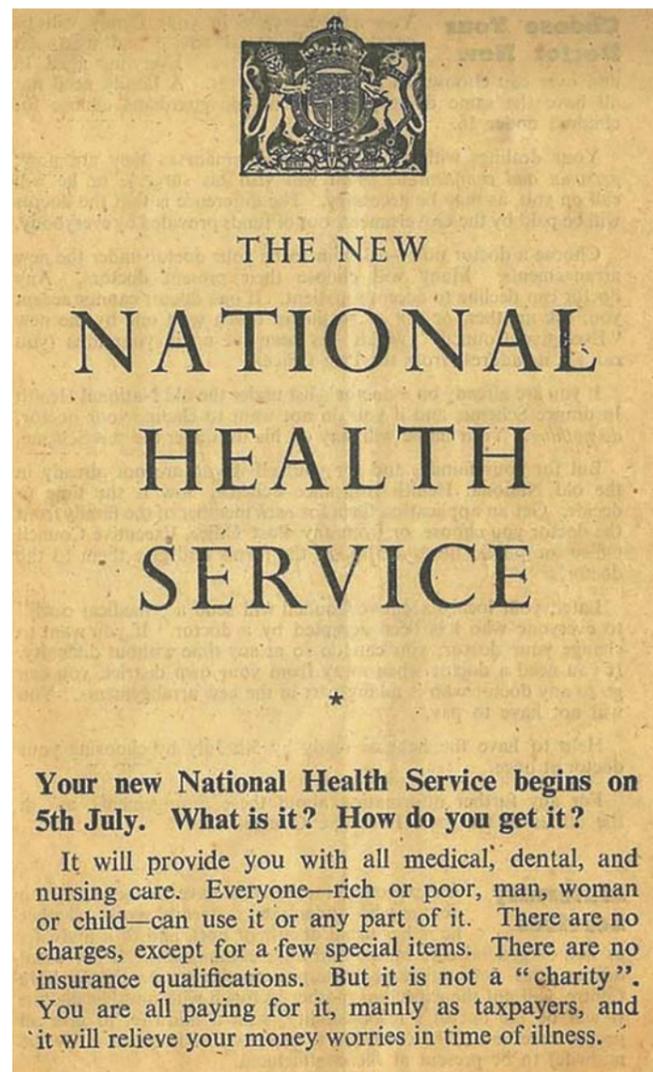
Over the last 70 years, the hard work and skills of NHS staff, coupled with medical progress, has continually helped drive up standards and quality of care for millions.



In 1948, for the first time, prevention, diagnosis and treatment were brought together under one umbrella organisation to create one of the most comprehensive health services in the world: the National Health Service.

People are now living longer than they did in 1948 - life expectancy was 61 years. In 2018 it is 81 years. Deaths from cancer and heart disease have fallen dramatically and Britain is one of the safest places in the world to give birth.

The NHS has shown the world the way to healthcare, not as a privilege to be paid for, but as a fundamental human right and the values of the NHS - universal, tax-funded and free at the point of need, remain as fundamental today to the NHS, as they were when launched back in 1948.



"The NHS saved my life; and the life of my baby"

"One evening in June 1960 when I was seven and a half months pregnant with my second baby, I was rushed into Buchanan Hospital, St Leonards, with appendicitis. The surgeon was sent for and successfully operated, saving my life and that of my baby.

"My daughter Chris arrived safely six weeks later weighing a healthy 9lbs 5ozs. She is now married and has a family of her own, and her two sons were both born at the Buchanan.

"It was a nice hospital to be in and was known as the "ladies hospital". Us patients would make a cup of tea and take it in the garden in the afternoon.

"I shall always be grateful to the NHS and a few more times since."

Patricia - Hastings

"Before the NHS, I remember them counting money to see if they had enough for father to visit the doctor"

"My father served with the Royal Navy. Like many Navy men, he suffered from tuberculosis. Part of the treatment back then was to wheel the patients on to a veranda during the day in all weathers, to breathe the good air. There was no known cure for tuberculosis at the time. So unable to resume duties in the Royal Navy, my father was discharged on medical grounds.

"With father unable to work, mother nursed him and became the breadwinner. I remember them counting money to see if they had 7s.6d for father to visit the doctor. They had not. Being near the end of his life, father was placed in an isolation ward of the hospital which was at the top of the building. Children were not allowed in isolation wards. Two nurses supported father as he waved to me from the hospital window while I waved from the street outside with my mother. This was before the NHS.

"Now with the use of antibiotics, tuberculosis is treated swiftly. We should all be extremely thankful for that. Without any doubt, I am."

Sheila - East Sussex

"In those days it took at least two hours to get a dry film"

"I qualified in April 1956 as a diagnostic radiographer and I began work as a junior radiographer at the brand new x-ray department at the Royal East Sussex Hospital (RESH), Hastings. There were four radiographers, three office staff and a consultant radiologist. There was a small lift where we sent the wet films down to be viewed. In those days it took at least two hours to get a dry film - compare that to nowadays, almost instant with modern equipment.

"One night I was called out to x-ray a premature baby at Buchanan to discover our processor was not working. I had to take the film to be developed at RESH and return by car with the wet film. I'm glad to say all was well with the baby.

"I was also a patient at Buchanan twice as a child and twice as an adult, as well as working there. It was a very happy place to work and the matrons did a good job."

Beryl - Hastings

"It was interesting work; sad, but at times there was laughter too"

"I joined the NHS in the 1950s as a Junior Clerk in the Administrators' Office at St. Helen's Hospital. My work entailed listing admissions and discharges. After a few years working in London, I returned to St Helen's in 1960 to work for eight years as a Senior Clerk - now known as Bereavement Officer. I interviewed something like 5000 relatives. It was interesting work; sad, but at times there was laughter too. We had a lot of odd requests!

"I got a promotion and began work in Bexhill. The most rewarding task was to be there when the Irvine Unit was built from an allotment...wonderful times. It was called Bexhill Geriatric Unit for a few years. I was glad when it was renamed Bexhill Irvine. Bobby Irvine the eminent Doctor did so much for the elderly.

"My last five years at St Helen's before taking early retirement were spent as the Administrator and I later put a lot of my knowledge to good effect by writing a book about the history of St. Helen's."

Don - Hastings

In the Hastings and Rother area

When the NHS was formed on 5th July 1948 the newly formed 'Hastings Hospital Management Committee' took over the running of all the hospitals and institutions in Hastings and Rother.

At the time there were 20 sites with 1,548 beds offering care locally.



These included a Smallpox Hospital at Brede, Sanatoria at Robertsbridge and Fairlight, TB Clinics, Convalescent Homes in Bexhill along with the Royal East Sussex, Buchanan, St Helen's, Eversfield, Battle and Rye Hospitals.

There have been tremendous achievements in the NHS locally over the last 70 years. These have been as a result of many thousands of staff and volunteers who have worked in hospitals, clinics and in the community providing care and treatment.

Notable dates

July 1992 - Conquest Hospital opens allowing the closure of the Royal East Sussex Hospital and part closure of St Helen's Hospital. In February 1993 Conquest Hospital was officially opened by Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal. St Helen's Hospital finally closed in 1994.

October 1997 - Phase two of Conquest Hospital opens and the Buchanan Hospital closes. In July 1998 it was officially opened by Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal.

"I remember that the bath was very big!"

"In 1949, aged eight and a half years, I had my tonsils removed at St. Mary's Hospital, Eastbourne. My mother said I went off to hospital quite happily. I pointed out that the noticeboard said children could receive visitors on a Wednesday afternoon.

"As soon as we entered the ward I was whisked off to have a bath, although I had just had one at home. I remember that the bath was very big! When my mother asked when she could say goodbye, she was told it would not be a good idea.

"When my mother came to take me home, the first thing I asked was why she didn't visit me. She had been told she was not allowed. How different an experience to when my own son was in hospital!"

Irene - Eastbourne

"Before the NHS we had a hospital box on the mantelpiece and any odd coppers were popped in"

"I am 84 years old and remember life and health issues before the NHS. I did not realise at the time how difficult it must have been for my parents to pay for our medical needs. I do know they belonged to a Friendly Society and we had a hospital box on the mantelpiece and any odd coppers were popped in. I remember one visit to Princess Alice Hospital when mother produced the box and the contents was emptied.

"I had my tonsils removed in 1939 and had my appendix removed in the middle of the Second World War. The Boys Ward had been damaged so girls and boys were in together in the Girls Ward. The staff were superb especially under such difficulties circumstances. These hospitals have now disappeared and we have the District General Hospital, where again on numerous visits, the standards have always been high.

"Finally I must add that both of my daughters took up nursing as their careers. My younger daughter worked back in Eastbourne, at St Mary's Hospital, until it closed and then at the DGH. I feel that through them we have paid back for all of the care my parents and my family I have received over many years."

Anne - East Sussex

"I believe I was the first clerical person to work at the DGH"

"I started work in 1957 at St Mary's Hospital as a junior clerk. In 1962 I transferred to Princess Alice Hospital as a secretary. I worked there until I left to get married in 1970. I believe I was the first clerical person to work at the DGH. I was then asked if I would be willing to work one of two evenings a week filing x-rays in the new hospital. I began to do that in 1976. At that time there was only a porter and myself in that very large hospital. I began to work as a receptionist in A&E in 1976. I worked there until I retired in July 2001. I have very happy memories of my many years working in the NHS."

Sheila - Eastbourne

"I can remember when the bombs came over"

"In 1940 I had a very bad accident and burns over my body. I first went to Princess Alice Hospital, I cannot remember much as I was only three years old. However I can remember when the bombs came over, I was told it was the man upstairs and the nurses put me under the bed for protection.

"I was also given the job of rolling up bandages which in those days were washed. It was exercise for my arm that had been badly burnt. I also helped to tuck-in the sheets in (my physio!).

"From the first time I went to hospital, and later after the introduction of the NHS, I have had the best care ever. If it was not for the NHS, I might not be here today. The hospital was a very big part of my life. Thanks to the NHS."

Heather - Eastbourne

In the Eastbourne and district area



Princess Alice Hospital



St Mary's Hospital

In 1948 the Eastbourne hospital Management Committee managed eight hospitals with 733 beds.

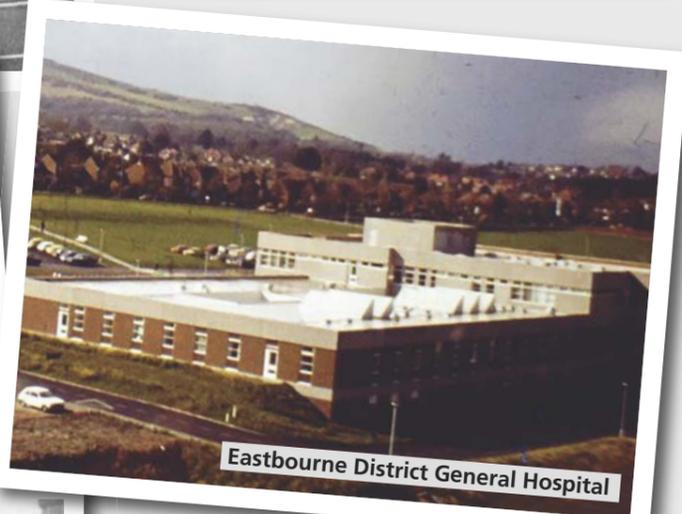
They were Downside Hospital, Gildredge Hospital, The Leaf Hospital, Princess Alice Hospital, St Mary's Hospital, Maternity Home, Seaside Convalescent Hospital in Seaford and the Merlynn Convalescent Home.



Seaside Convelescent Home, Seaford



Leaf Hospital



Eastbourne District General Hospital



All Saints Hospital

There were two separate clinics in Avenue House for VD and TB. All Saints Hospital was taken over by the NHS in 1959. Other hospitals outside the Eastbourne area included Hellingly Hospital, Uckfield Cottage Hospital and the Queen Victoria Hospital at Lewes and the Crowborough Memorial Hospital.

Notable dates

1976 - Eastbourne District General Hospital opens for patients. It was officially opened in 1977 by Her Royal Highness the Princess Alexandra.

1989 - Phase two of Eastbourne District General opens leading to the closure of St Mary's Hospital.

Life before the NHS

In the years before the NHS, people had to pay to see the doctor and to stay in hospital.

Hospitals were mainly funded from charitable and voluntary donations and most were in debt. Patients with infectious diseases formed an important part of the doctors work.

Diphtheria was a deadly disease, killing 3,000 children a year, although the two other main killers were tuberculosis and heart disease followed by rheumatic fever.

Some GPs had two entrances to their surgery, one for patients with national health insurance - who were working men known as Lloyd

George panel patients (that usually did not cover their wives and families) and one for private patients.

Analyzing of health trends then and now, it's easy to forget that the standards we now take for granted, were once novel.

There were regular epidemics of measles, whooping cough and

infantile paralysis (polio). Hospital wards were full of people suffering from the complications of these diseases.

With the introduction of the NHS, hospital consultants were, for the first time, paid a salary for their hospital work, and GPs no longer had to tout for patients in order to make a living.

Did you know?

- In 1948, a cataract operation meant a week of total immobility with the patient's head supported by sandbags. Eye surgery is now over within 20 minutes, and most patients are out of hospital after a couple of hours
- In 1958, hip replacements were so unusual that the surgeon who invented them asked patients to agree to return them post-mortem. The NHS now carries out 1,000s of these replacements every week. In East Sussex some hip replacement patients are walking four hours after surgery and home within 24 hours of surgery
- The world waited until 1978 for Britain to produce the first test-tube baby; 19,000 IVF babies are now born here each year
- The breast-screening programme introduced in 1988 now saves the lives of 1,300 women a year
- Before the NHS, one in twenty children died before the age of 12, now death is most unusual and commonly due to accidents
- In 1948 one mother in 500 died in child birth now the figure is less than one (0.82) in 10,000
- The NHS in England treats 1 million people every 36 hours
- The NHS in England is expected to spend £126 billion in 2018/19
- There are more than 7,400 GP practices in England
- The NHS is one of the largest employers in the world, along with the Chinese People's Liberation Army, the Indian railways and the Wal-Mart supermarket chain
- In March 2017, the NHS employed 106,430 doctors, 285,893 nurses and health visitors, 21,597 midwives, 132,673 scientific, therapeutic and technical staff (across England's hospital and community healthcare services (full-time equivalent))
- There were 16 million total hospital admissions in England in 2015/16, 28 per cent more than a decade earlier
- The total annual attendances at England's accident and emergency departments was 23 million in 2016/17, 23.5 per cent higher than a decade earlier
- In comparison with the healthcare systems of ten other countries (Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and USA) the NHS was found to be the most impressive overall by the Commonwealth Fund in 2017
- In East Sussex, the Trust has around 750 volunteers across its sites, who give their time and skills for free to improve the patient, staff and visitor experience



The Future

The NHS has been very successful in keeping people alive and increasing life expectancy.

- In 2018 there are over 3 million people over the age of 80 years old. This is set to double by 2030 – in just 12 years' time.
- The number of people aged 60 and over is projected to increase from 14.9m in 2014 to 21.9m by 2039.
- The UK population is projected to increase from an estimated 64.6 million in mid-2014 to 69.0

million by 2024 and 72.7 million by 2034.

- The number of people of State Pension Age (SPA) in the UK exceeded the number of children for the first time in 2007. By 2014 the disparity had declined to 0.2 million. The ONS currently projects by 2029 there will be 0.5 million more pensioners than children.
- There are an estimated 3.0 million people with diabetes in England (2016).

In the future there is a challenge of an aging population, more people

developing diabetes due to obesity and lifestyle.

But looking into the future there are exciting possibilities being created by advances in science, technology and information. Innovations such as precision medicine, artificial intelligence, genomes research and the way we use NHS services will transform healthcare as we know it. This is a future where healthcare is based around early detection and preventative care, where patients can access expert advice on demand, treatments could be tailored to an individual's DNA or surgeries be carried out virtually from remote locations.

We can all play a role in supporting the NHS in this special birthday year. This could be by:

- volunteering
- giving blood
- using services wisely
- signing up to NHS research programmes
- taking steps to look after our own health
- raising money for local NHS charities
- Considering a career in the NHS - there are a vast range of job roles in the NHS