Our Welfare! Our Health!
The Doctor's Bag



Audio Transcription for eLearning slides and audio buttons

Our welfare, our health, the doctor's bag, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and delivered by Creative Paths to celebrate 75 years of the NHS from 1948 to 2023.



Rose

Rose: So when the NHS started it was for everybody. It was all free, you see. You just went in and out of hospital and they just looked after you. It was a much, much better thing that's ever happened to me.

Karyn: And can you tell me a little bit about what used to happen before the NHS?

Rose: Yeah, well before the war, if you hadn't got the money you couldn't afford a doctor. But some of the doctors were very kind. If your kids were seriously ill they'd treat you for nothing.
I can remember my brother having...erm...

Karyn: I think you told me earlier he had meningitis.

Rose: Meningitis. And the doctor laid him on the table, on the kitchen table and treated him there and he got better.
END

Slide 5



Jean

Jean: I had to have a major operation in Nottingham City and they was absolutely perfect. And same with Kingsmill. I've been in Kingsmill, oh and Newark. I could stop there all day.

Growing up through National Health has been good for me because I've had first one thing and then another. They've always been there to help me.

I used to have to have the nurse come down because I have psoriasis and she used to have to come every other day.
END



Jean

Jean: David was the eldest. He went 9lb 10z, my aunty always when you can boil the kettle on you, you know it's time for it to be born. But Christopher, I started losing him when he was three months, so that I'd go in hospital, and they did pull me through, I had to stop in hospital. I think about a month.
END

Mabel

Mabel: I've seen the National Health grow, and I think it's a good thing because there are a lot of same with babies today, a lot of them are born with things we wouldn't of known about, cause you had most of your children at home. I was fortunate cos next door to me she was a midwife, that was luck on my part.
END

Slide 6

THE FIRS MATERNITY, NOTTINGHAM

Listen to Barbara and Margaret





BARBARA MARGARET NEXT

Barbara

Barbara: I had my first child and my second child at The Firs, but unfortunately The Firs have closed down now. I think half of it's a nursing home and the other's a private dwellings, aren't they? My last boy I had at home.

Chris: The children, when you say children at The Firs, were there midwives there who supported you?

Barbara: Yeah, the midwife was supposed to come, she came, and then I had to be stitched, so then I had to wait for the doctor coming to be stitched, but in them days it was no problem.

Chris: What do you recall about the midwives, what were they like?

Barbara: Oh, they was okay, I always got on with them.

Chris: Did they help you after birth as well, you know, the coming weeks and months?

Barbara: Yes, they did, yes, they was there, and then Rosemary House, I used to have to go there, and then you had your baby weighed and everything.
END

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Margaret

Margaret: I worked for the NHS three times. The first time I worked at Sherwood Hospital. I was in the staff dining room.

I used to feed the doctors and the nurses when they came in for their breakfast and lunches and teas and that. And I loved it. But then, I'm afraid, I should say I was perhaps a little bit of a coward because as I went through the corridors I saw all the old people and it upset me a bit.

And so, I left. And then, there was a job, came up at the first maternity hospital.

And this was in the kitchen as well. And I got the job and I were feeding the nurses and the doctors again. I can always remember once, Ken, he was the chef that Christmas morning and I was on duty Christmas morning.

Ken says, "hello". And we looked out the window and an ambulance pulled up and this baby were born in ambulance. Yes.

And that was one Christmas morning. I was at Firs maternity hospital 'til it closed. When it was closing, they had to find us all jobs, still in the NHS. And what I got, I got an evening domestic at Daybrook Health Centre and a morning domestic at Arnold Health Centre. And I did that for quite a few years. But then, unfortunately, my dad died and I had to leave to look after my mum. And I get a pension from the NHS.
END

CHILDREN'S NHS

Listen to Lillian and Brenda





LILLIAN BRENDA NEXT

Lilian

I got married and I had Peter, Mark and Judith in hospital. My little girl was very, very good. She was a happy little baby and she stayed in for two weeks. But then she got meningitis and I recognised it.

I remember then we were going to the doctor up the road where we were living in Doncaster and the doctor stopped on the street on the road in his car and said to me, 'Can I just ask you, you knew your baby had got meningitis.' And I said, 'Yes, I'd seen a child with it. It was when she cried, she gave this wail and never moved.'

He was a friendly doctor, talking to me on the street and everything, but he was curious.

END

Brenda

Karyn: I heard that you had an experience when you were younger of being in hospital.

Brenda: Yes.

Karyn: Do you want to tell me a little bit about that?

Brenda: Oh I had scarlet fever and meningitis and I remember standing up at the end of my crib crying and crying and crying because my mum and dad couldn't come. They used to come and look through a little window in the door. There was a window in the door and so I wouldn't see them. They used to come and see me that way and I used to cry and cry and cry. I thought I was there forever. I didn't like it at all. No.

That's what I remember about that.

Karyn: How old was you?

Brenda: Oh I don't know.

Other: In your crib?

Brenda: I was born 1938. I'd probably be, oh I don't know, I can't remember.

Other: I think you was about seven or eight when you had your scarlet fever.

Brenda: I know I was young. I thought I was there forever. I didn't know I was going to go home. That's all I can remember about it.

Karyn: D'you know how long you were there for?

Brenda: Pardon?

Continued on next page

Karyn: D'you know how long you were there for?

Brenda: Six weeks.

Karyn: Six weeks.

Brenda: Six weeks, yeah. I remember that. I thought I was never going home. Yeah.
And they could just come and look through a little window in so I wouldn't see them when they wanted to see how I was. Oh it was horrible. Horrible the. It's changed so much today. Changed so much. Yes. Yeah I was in first for scarlet fever, my tonsils out, my appendix out. Yeah. I was in quite a lot.

Karyn: Bad luck, isn't it?

Brenda: But I got over it. You've got to live. You forget about it. Get on with your life. Yeah.

Karyn: At least you got it all done very early.

(Laughter)

Karyn: Yeah. So what other kind of memories do you have of the NHS? And what d'you think the NHS has done for you in your life and your family?

Brenda: Well. It's there when you want them today. When you really need help, you know, they're there. And also if you want a doctor, they're there straight away. You've got a doctor. Where it was hard in my day. Hard. My mum and dad had to pay for the doctor to come and that, you know. But it's changed now so much.

Karyn: A lot of people used to have to have insurance.

Brenda: Yeah, but it's changed for the better. It's changed for the better. Because I mean the poorer people now, they can get treatment straight away. In my day, they couldn't. You're struggling. You have to borrow money.
END

Slide 8

THE DENTIST

Listen to Carol





CAROL

NEXT

Carol

When I was young, I went to the dentist, and I was supposed to be having teeth out and I was told I could have an injection and have my teeth out. When I got there, there was four ladies greeting me.

They said, 'Oh no, you're not having a needle.'
I said, 'I want to go back to my mum then.'
And they said, 'No, we'll take your teeth, you'll be all right, you've got to have some teeth out.'

So, between the four of them, they held me down and put this horrible balloon to my mouth. They told me that it was gas, and I just didn't go under. They kept saying blow into this and I kept blowing but I definitely didn't go under, and I can remember every tooth coming out. It was horrible. When it was finished, they put a big pad over my mouth and sent me out to my mum.

Continued on next page

My mum was most concerned what had happened. Anyway, we went home and luckily it wasn't that far from where the dentist was to where I lived but we had to go over this bridge and I can remember we just got to the top of the bridge and the anaesthetic must have hit me from the gas and balloon.

I just went down on the floor. Mum remembers having to try and pick me up as best she could and carry me the rest of the way home. I got home and she put me on the couch, and I slept the rest of the day and when my dad came in from work.

He said, 'What's the matter with Carol?'
And mum says, 'I'm just going to phone the doctor because she's not coming around. She's been asleep since we got in.'

But luckily, my dad kept shaking me and I eventually came around and when mum queried it with the doctor, he said the anaesthetic hadn't taken and it had taken the fresh air and the warmth to really make it come out and that's what affected me.
END



Barbara

Chris: What was your local doctor's surgery like?

Barbara: When I was really young, it was just an ordinary sitting room and and yet there was two doctors, and then you'd get the receptionist at one part and then the doctors at the other end. We didn't used to book any appointments in them days. You just went in and sat down and waited.
END

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INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Listen to Diana and Brenda





DIANNA BRENDA NEXT

Dianna

Dianna: The other thing we did with the Poliomyelitis, they went into iron lungs. They wouldn't have survived without an iron lung and we had to teach them how to breathe properly. The iron lung, it had certain pressures that helped the breathing and we used to help with their arms and legs, which were obviously, they were paralysed and their heads came out of the iron lung and they had a mirror so they could see who we were. We had to see that their paralysed arms and legs moved everything now and again.
END

Brenda

Brenda: Me uncle's wife she had TB, and she was in Hollowood, I went to see her and err there was a ward with all beds, and all an open space with all pine trees and that, you know, it was all open.
END



Dianna

Dianna: I think it was about 1950s when they had a poliomyelitis. They had a very bad section because they didn't know where it was coming from.

And it was in bad waters. People used to go swimming. That's how they got the poliomyelitis.
Yes, the polio. Students were... they were young students in the universities and they used to play tennis and be very fit and then they got ill. And a lot of them were completely paralysed.
It was very sad.
END

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