

Health Technology & Innovation:

Key Dates and Developments

This fact sheet summarises the key milestones in the history of health technology and innovation, with a particular focus on the NHS and UK healthcare developments.

1816 - Invention of the stethoscope by René Laënnec.

1895 - Discovery of X-rays by Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen.

1935 - Wimpole Street fire in London highlights the need for emergency access to services.

1937 - Launch of the 999 emergency number - the world's first.

1948 - Formation of the NHS, providing universal healthcare free at the point of use.

1972 - First CT scanner installed at Atkinson Morley Hospital, London.

1983 - First NHS MRI scanner installed at Hammersmith Hospital, London.

1980s - Growth of assistive technologies (mobility aids, alarms) and early health informatics in GP practices.

1992 - NHS Information Management and Technology (IM&T) Strategy launched, focusing on electronic patient records.

2000s - NHS Digital created; expansion of telecare and early telehealth pilots for chronic disease management.

2010s - Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) established; rise of mobile health apps like MyHealth (2012) and Patient Access (2016).

2020s - COVID-19 accelerates digital healthcare: telehealth, apps, data-sharing. AI, blockchain, and wearables emerge as future directions.