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LCHS4003

INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

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**Create a poster that explains one healthcare service and discuss the origins of
the NHS**

20/10/2025



The ambulance services are part of the emergency medical services that provide emergency care to people with acute illness or injury. The main purpose of an ambulance is to respond rapidly to medical emergencies, providing out-of-hospital care with trained medical professionals and specialized equipment, and transporting patients to a hospital or other appropriate care setting. Ambulances also provide [Grab your reader's attention with a great quote from the document or use this space to emphasise a key point. To place this text box anywhere on the page, just drag it.]

non-emergency patient transport and can be involved in public health initiatives and major incident response. Ambulance services are crucial for providing rapid emergency care, transporting critically ill or injured patients, and coordinating access to urgent care, acting as a vital link in the healthcare system. They offer essential pre-hospital treatment, stabilize patients, manage

The ambulance services have evolved a lot over the years. At the inception in the 1870s ambulances were horse-drawn. Key developments have included the transition from horse-drawn to motorized. Ambulances began carrying basic medical supplies like the "ambulance hamper" in the late 19th century, with more advanced equipment and trained personnel appearing in the mid-20th century and intensifying in the 1970s with the emergence of paramedics and advanced resuscitation techniques.



Horse-drawn St John's ambulance in the 1870s



Motorised ambulances in the 1940s



Modern ambulances are fully equipped and have paramedics



Current functioning of ambulance services

- **Strengthening healthcare systems:** They are a critical component in achieving universal health coverage by facilitating timely patient referrals to hospitals or other appropriate facilities.
- **Public Health Emergencies:** During public health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, ambulances coordinate medical referrals from overwhelmed hospitals to those with capacity, saving lives.
- **Addressing Health Inequalities:** Ambulance services can reach people in hard-to-reach areas and provide transportation for those who cannot afford it, helping to bridge gaps in access to care.
- **Preventive care and public health engagement:** Ambulance staff have opportunities to engage with patients and the public in their own homes, identify risk factors, provide health information, and direct people to

Challenges facing ambulance services

- Challenges are around staffing shortfall in both the Emergency Operations Centre (control room) and frontline clinical staff. This leads to staff being under time pressure and therefore not being able to do the most for patients, as they would want to, but to hurry on to the next patient.
- More investment is needed developing the paramedic profession to the same level of respect and recognition as nursing and other allied healthcare professions. The College of Paramedics has been doing much work in this area but should be better supported to do so. This would lead to a better motivated and supported clinical workforce leading to better patient outcomes. Parallel to this there should be investment in the non-registered clinical ambulance workforce to build consistency in qualifications and training across the country and the have a recognised

References: St. John Ambulance. (2021). <https://www.sja.org.uk/about-us/> British Red Cross. (2021). Ambulances in World War One. Retrieved from <https://www.redcross.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/uk-emergency-response/ambulances-in-world-war-one> London Ambulance Service NHS Trust. (2016). A brief history of the ambulance service. Retrieved from <https://www.londonambulance.nhs.uk> <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/112259/>

Discuss the origins of the National Health Service(NHS), exploring the historical context and key principles that led to its establishment. Critically examine the current structure of the NHS and its functioning.

The National Health Service (NHS) is a public funded healthcare system in the UK. It is primarily designed to provide healthcare to legal residents of the UK, with most of the services being provided for free at the point of use. Within the NHS is a wide range of services; hospital visits, GP care, ambulance services, midwifery inter alia.

The NHS was established by the government in 1948 after the second world war, providing healthcare at the point of use by all citizens. The concept emanated from the Beveridge Report of 1942.(<https://www.parliament.uk> Living and Learning. A Nation's Health from Elizabeth I to the NHS).

Before the inception of the NHS, patients were required to pay for their health care. That created problems because of the disparities between the have and the have-nots. Free treatment was sometimes available from charitable hospitals. Some local authorities operated hospitals for local rate payers, but the system was not uniform nationwide. After the second world war there was a critical demand for a more comprehensive healthcare system because people noticed how well government led initiatives had worked during the war. The weakness of the pre-war systems was bare for everyone to see, and the war had resulted in a wider gap between the different socio-economic classes. (<https://www.studyrocket.co.uk>) The war had also fostered a sense of unity and togetherness in communities.

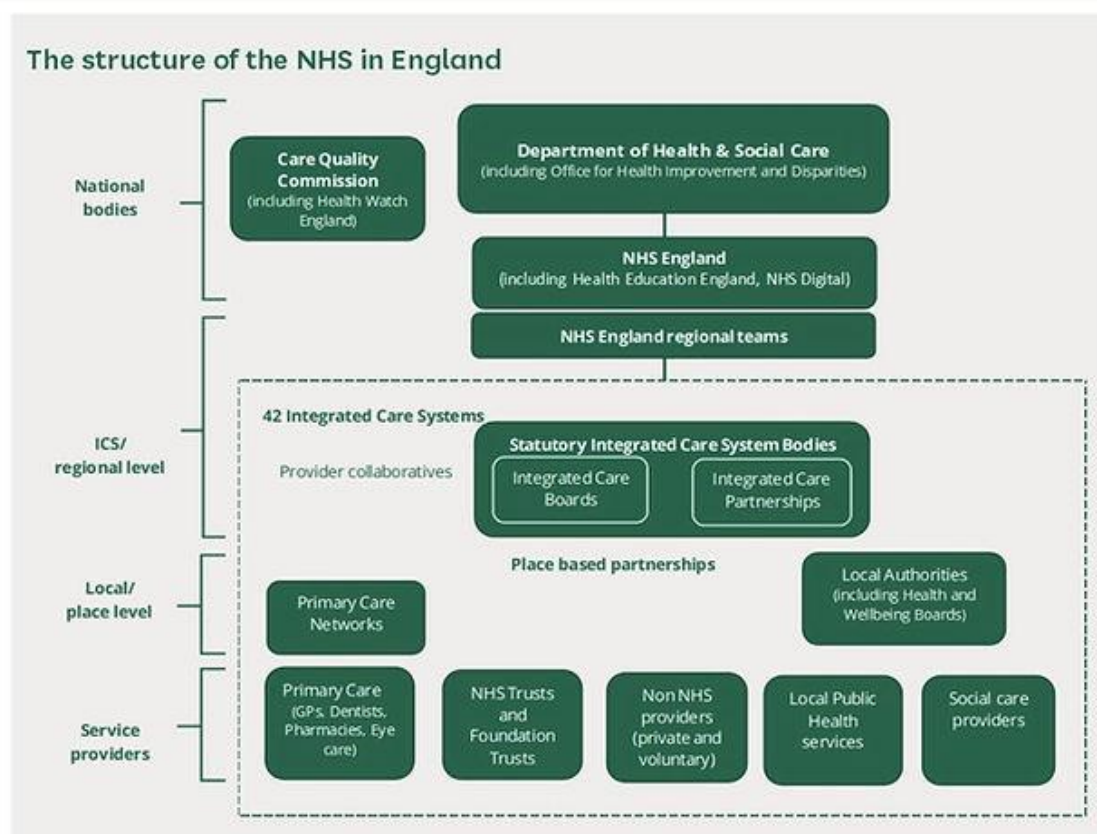


Figure 1: <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7206/CBP-7206.pdf>

The NHS is a combination of organisations working together, consisting of doctors, managers and other health care professionals. Each organisation is responsible for its own recruitment and administration. The whole organisation falls under the remit of the secretary of state for health and social care.

The Secretary of State for Health and Social care have a very important role to play in the NHS. Some of the roles are listed below.

They decide how health services are organised by allocating finances. They write the NHS mandate, which is a set of key aims and expectations for the NHS for the following year. This is then fulfilled by the NHS. The Secretary of state for Health and Social care can intervene where they feel certain bodies of the NHS may be lacking or failing to meet targets. It is also their duty to develop public health initiatives by ensuring health-related legislation is recognised in parliament.

The NHS is structured with national oversight from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), which allocates funding to the NHS. The NHS commissions services through a system of Integrated Care Systems (ICSs), which are locally focused groups that plan and deliver joined-up health and social care. ICSs are composed of Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) that oversee local services, which are delivered by various providers like GPs, NHS Trusts (hospitals, mental health, community services), and other public and private organizations. This structure functions by integrating services at a local level to better meet community needs, with the overall goal of providing healthcare free at the point of use, funded by taxation.

The structure of the NHS is its strength but also its weakness. It ensures affordable healthcare to all and allows for input from all stakeholders. Experts from different fields work together for the common good. (<https://digital.nhs.uk/>)

However, it poses other challenges. The organisation is over budget and funding the sub-groups is costly. (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/health-34802722>) This gives rise to shortages in funding and staffing levels are negatively impacted. The upshot is that waiting times increase, staff retention is difficult due to low morale, and the overall standard of care falls.

In conclusion the NHS is in a bad state of health but, by no means in the Intensive Care Unit.

References

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/health-34802722>

<https://digital.nhs.uk/>

<https://www.medicmind.co.uk/medicine-ucas-guide/the-structure-the-future-of-the-nhs-explained>

<https://www.parliament.uk> Living and Learning. A Nation's Health from Elizabeth I to the NHS) <https://>

[researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7206/CBP-7206](https://www.studyrocket.co.uk)

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