

1930s

Before 1948 and the NHS

Patients generally have to pay for their healthcare

At the start of World War Two an Emergency Hospital Service is set up to care for injured soldiers.

1936 BBC Television Service begins

It is put on hold when war breaks out.

1939 World War Two begins

Women are called up for the first time.

1940s

1948 The NHS is born

It provides free healthcare to everyone and employs 144,000 people.

These days, over 10 times more people work for the NHS and it sees 1.7 million patients every 24 hours.



1950s

1958 A vaccination programme is launched for under 15s

The vaccines greatly reduce disease.

Children can now receive far more vaccinations to prevent diseases.

1955 ITV, the first commercial TV station, is launched

1957 Russia launches Sputnik

The first satellite to orbit the earth.

1960s

1960 First UK organ transplant

Organs are donated from one person to another in a lifesaving operation.

Transplants are an incredible achievement of modern medicine.

1969 Man walks on the moon



1970s

1972 CT scans allow doctors to inspect the inside of the body like never before

CT scans use X-rays and a computer to create detailed pictures. They are carried out in hospital by specially trained operators.

1975 A new law is passed – Sex Discrimination Act

It says men and women need to be treated equally and given the same opportunities in the workplace.

1979 First woman prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, is appointed



1980s

"Watching patients go from being really unwell when they arrive to feeling better when they leave is what I love about my job"

Luke
Healthcare support worker

1983
Men can work as midwives

Back in 1975, the law said men and women should have the same opportunities.

1989
The World Wide Web is invented

1990s

1998
NHS Direct launches

It provides health advice to the public by telephone or through a website. It went on to become one of the largest e-health services in the world. It was later replaced by NHS Choices and the 111 service.

1991
First website goes live

It provided information on the World Wide Web project. It was made by its inventor, Tim Berners-Lee.

2000s

2007
Robotic arm is used in ground-breaking heart operations

Doctors control the robot arm through a computer using a joystick. In future, it might be possible to program the robot arm to target a place in the heart chosen by the doctor.

2000
Britain celebrates the start of a new millennium

2005
First video is uploaded to YouTube

2010s

2012

The NHS is celebrated at the London 2012 Olympic Games

2018

In December 2018 the NHS App is launched and is now used by over 36 million people.

2010
First iPad is launched



2020s

2020

A worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 puts the NHS under immense pressure.

2021

The UK was the first country to launch its COVID-19 vaccination programme. Many volunteers and all areas of the NHS came together to prevent the spread of the disease.

2026

A rollout of Microsoft Copilot AI to 505,000 clinicians and support staff was announced

2022

ChatGPT, an AI chatbot, is launched.

2022

Queen Elizabeth II, the longest reigning British monarch, dies.

2025

England's women's football team become the first England football team to win a national overseas tournament.