

## **Title**

Celebrating 70 years of Nursing and Midwifery in our National Health Service (NHS) Scotland

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## **Article**

An enthusiastic team of nursing and midwifery academics organised a public exhibition and NHS Big 7Tea party on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at Edinburgh Napier University's Sighthill Campus to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the National Health Service (NHS). Led by Gillian Taylor, the five strong team spent several months pulling together a fun filled day of activities for staff, students, health and care professionals and the public to enjoy (see Figure 1). The free exhibition entitled "Celebrating 70 years of Nursing and Midwifery in

our National Health Service (NHS) Scotland” aimed to raise awareness of the history and evolution of nursing and midwifery education, research and practice. In particular, we wanted to highlight the role of nurses and midwives within Scottish/UK society from the inception of the National Health Service (NHS) in 1948 to 2018.



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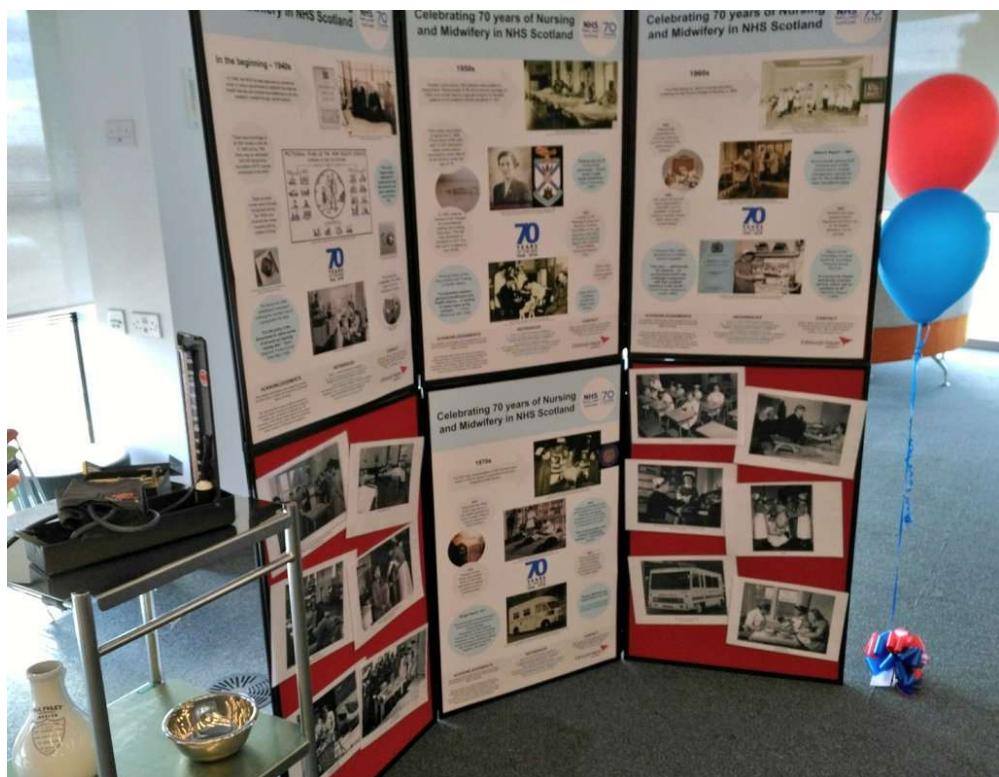
#NHSScot70

**Figure 1:** NHS 70<sup>th</sup> celebrations organising committee selfie

(L-R: Siobhan O'Connor, Bruce Harper-McDonald,  
Margaret Moran, Gillian Taylor, Connie McLuckie)

Part of the exhibition comprised a series of decade posters with historical photographs and fun facts from the 1940's to present day (see Figure 2). Colleagues from Lothian Health Service Archive at the University of Edinburgh (<http://www.lhsa.lib.ed.ac.uk/>) were helpful in pulling together old images of nurses and midwives in action across various parts of the NHS in Scotland. The team were also keen to raise awareness of academic and clinical career pathways

within nursing and midwifery and opportunities for interprofessional education, research and practice and so they integrated a quiz with prizes for the top three fully correct answers to all ten historical questions into the exhibit to encourage public participation. This created quite a queue at the exhibit!! A second year nursing student won the overall prize of a £70 Blackwell book voucher, with second and third prizes being awarded to administration staff at the university who took part.



**Figure 2:** Exhibition posters of each decade of the NHS

The exhibit was launched by Professor Tracy Humphrey, Dean of the School of Health and Social Care at Edinburgh Napier University and the attendees enjoyed tea, coffee and seventy delicious cupcakes courtesy of a local baker who whipped up NHS inspired yummy treats that were quickly devoured. Donations kindly received on the day amounted to £138.06. The team have decided to divide this money equally between NHS Lothian's Labour Suite Education and Equipment Fund and NHS Lothian's Specialist Palliative Care Fund.

The Royal College of Nursing Scotland also supported the event with a stand displaying key nursing artefacts, documents and images (see Figure 3). One such object was the "Case of Memories" which contains district nursing items or replicas (e.g. bandages, surgical spirit,

antiseptic cream along with nursing stories) designed to facilitate reminiscence and the sharing of memories. Alison O'Donnell from the RCN History of Nursing Forum, a keen nursing historian, popped along to answer questions from inquisitive visitors about the origins of nursing. Two interactive "Memory Trees", one for autumn and spring, were also showcased and people invited to write and post their experiences of nursing and midwifery in the NHS and hopes or aspirations for the future of the health service.



**Figure 3:** Emma Taylor from RCN Scotland showcasing historical nursing objects

A series of 'vox pop' videos of retired and current nurses and academic staff and students talking about their experiences of working in the NHS and education was pre-recorded by the team and those they could wrangle into being filmed and screened throughout the day so people could sit and listen to range of real-life stories about what ward or community life is really like. A popular hit amongst visitors while they were browsing the exhibit was a selfie-booth, where old nursing uniforms and props could be worn and images taken on a standalone machine that printed the photos for people to take away (see Figure 4). The exact number of selfies taken cannot be disclosed but the machine almost broke down at one point in the afternoon from over use! As the exhibit wound down the organising team decided to take it on tour as it had been such a hit with staff, students and the public who dropped in to see it. So keep an eye out for it at a local hospital near you and don't forget to share it on social media by using the

hashtag #NHS70 and #NHSScot70 @EdinburghNapier to continue celebrating 70 years of nursing and midwifery in the NHS.



**Figure 4:** A selection of selfie photos take during the NHS 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations at Edinburgh Napier University