The National Health Service

- A brief history of the NHS in the UK.
- How the NHS is today.
Before the National Health Service

Before 1948 all health care was the responsibility of private individuals to pay for the care they received.
  - Some paid into insurance schemes.

Charities and churches did often help with the costs
  - But somebody had to pay for medicines or treatments received. Usually funding came from donations.

Government did pay medical costs for the military!
The Beginnings of the National Health Service

The Labour Government that was elected in 1945 had committed to implement the recommendations of the Beveridge Report of 1942.

The report recommended a “comprehensive health and rehabilitation services for prevention and cure of disease” which came into being in the UK on the 5th July 1948, with the expectation it would be the “envy of the world”. Funded by taxation and National Insurance as part of the new Welfare State.
Timeline of the National Health Service (1950s)

- **1952 - Charges introduced.** Patients started being charged one shilling for prescriptions. In England, it now stands at £7.10, although fees have been abolished in Wales and are being phased out in Scotland.

- **1958 - First mass vaccination programme.** Polio and diphtheria jabs offered to under 15s. Before introduction, there were 8,000 cases of polio and 70,000 of diphtheria each year.
Timeline of the National Health Service (1960s)

1961 - **Pill becomes available.** The launch of the contraceptive pill gives women control over how many children they have.

1962 - **Birth of the modern hospital.** Health Minister Enoch Powell, set out a 10-year plan for hospital building. Every population of 125,000 was to get a hospital.

1968 - **UK's first heart transplant.** At the National Heart Hospital in London, 18 doctors and nurses operated for seven hours on a 45-year-old man.
Timeline of the National Health Service (1970s)

- **1972** - CT scanners used for first time.
- **1978** - World's first test tube baby. On 25 July, the world's first “test tube baby” was born shortly before midnight in Oldham District General Hospital.
1988 - **Breast screening programme starts.** To reduce breast cancer deaths in women over 50, breast screening was introduced with units set up across the country to provide mammograms to women. Screening, along with improved drug treatments, was estimated to have cut deaths by a fifth.
Timeline of the National Health Service (1990s)

1990 - **NHS and Community Care Act.** The legislation introduces what became known as the NHS internal market with health authorities given their own budgets to buy care for local populations from hospitals.

1994 - **Organ donor register created.** A NHS register set up to co-ordinate supply and demand. It was the result of a five-year campaign by John and Rosemary Cox whose son Peter died in 1989. He had asked for his organs to be used to help others.
2006 - **Patient choice.** Patients were given the choice of four or five hospitals, ending the long-held tradition of going where a GPs decides. The scheme has now been extended to include all hospitals in England. But approach not adopted elsewhere in the UK.
Funding the National Health Service in 2013

Although all the major political parties pledged to protect the NHS from spending cuts, after a period of unprecedented growth there is the prospect of a three-year funding freeze.

The funding freeze would be the most austere period for the NHS in over thirty years.
The Effects of a *Funding Freeze*

- Rising demands from an ageing population, together with high public demand, means that there will be a “funding gap”. The NHS Chief Executive estimates that savings of around £15-£20 billion will be required by 2013-14 to maintain the current quality of care that the NHS offers.

- George Osborne, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, said that salaries of NHS staff will be capped at 1%, remaining below inflation levels until at least 2016.
The Privatisation of the NHS?!  

- The new ‘Heath and Social Care Act’ allows doctors to choose where they spend their funding.  
- The Government argue this gives more freedom to doctors and hospitals to manage budgets.  
- NHS campaigners say it is ‘back-door privatisation’, as they are controlled by market forces.  
- Many doctors in the NHS are against the new law, saying that it would “force virtually every part of the English NHS to be opened up to the private sector to bid for its contracts”.

The End