

The Mass Observation Project

Spring 2008 Directive

Part 1: You & the NHS in 2008

How have you been treated by the NHS in the last decade?

In 1997, we sent out a directive on the National Health Service as it was celebrating its 50th anniversary. This year, as the NHS enters its 60th year, we would like to ask you to describe what your experiences of health and social care have been over the past decade so we can look at what has changed. If you do not use the NHS we are still interested in your views on private care or on care you have received abroad.

As explained in the covering letter, this directive has been designed by two people who are not only interested in gathering your stories for future generations through the Archive, but are also planning to present your views (summarised in reports with extracts) on the past, present and future of health care to policymakers. Policy makers have access to copious statistics, but are very rarely given the chance to read the words of people who use the services.

NB Please start your reply by saying whether you write as a patient, carer, family member or someone who works in health and social care - you may fit several categories.

As usual, please start each part of your directive reply on a new sheet of paper with your MO number (NOT name), sex, age, marital status, the town or village where you live and your occupation or former occupation.

Remember not to identify yourself or other people inadvertently within your reply.

Your own experiences of health care since 1997

What improvements and/or deterioration have you experienced? (for example: GP services, out of hours services, hospital services, waits for referral and appointments, physiotherapy and in particular **dentistry**.) What was your relationship with staff like? Did you feel safe and treated with dignity?

Do you have any experience of private health care or care abroad which you can compare with care received in the NHS?

Please describe any specific health and social care experience from the list below that apply to you and your family: as patients, carers or health professionals

- Childbirth, child or adolescent health
- Long term conditions - for example asthma, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, multiple sclerosis, mental illness, physical and/or learning disabilities
- Older age including dementia, dying and death
- Self help and support from self help groups

PLEASE TURN OVER

Your views on the future of health and social care and the NHS

The costs

How do you think health and social care should be paid for?

Health care priorities

As resources are limited, what would be your priorities? You might want to consider expensive new drugs; further reductions in waiting times; more care at home rather than hospital; more private services delivered in the NHS; or something else?

Research and ethics

Have your views changed over the last 10 years about research and ethics - about, for example, genetics, stem cell research, organ donation, clinical trials, assisted conception, assisted dying?

Rights and health care

Who should have rights to health care?

Our own responsibilities

What are patients' responsibilities for lifestyle choices (for example, drugs, alcohol, smoking, diet?) Should patients or government pay for self help, preventative services, and medical intervention?

Health information

Do you have concerns about access to information for patients? Should there be sharing of information and records between professionals and patients?

Do you have concerns about the development of electronic systems and the privacy of patients' records and data protection?

What do you think about healthcare professionals using the internet to share details, diagnose illnesses and obtain information? Do you use the internet yourself for health information, diagnosis and treatment?

Please clearly state your age at the start of this section as well as your number and other biographical information.

Part 2: Your life line

Mass Observation is all about people's lives looking back and forwards. In Part 2, could you draw us your "life line" marked up with the key events in your life. If you have never done one before, you start in the year of your birth and come up to the present. Then you mark off as many key events as you think are really important to you. I don't want to prompt you too much as part of the reason of asking you to do this is to see what you think ARE the key events. Just to give you an idea, you might want to mark up the year you started school, or began working for a living, moving house, major travelling experiences, meeting new friends and partners. If you got married or had children those dates might be included. But there are lots of other events which you may feel should be included (like, say, the day you joined Mass Observation!).

This can be as detailed as you wish, and can run on to as many pages as you need. Try to make it as legible as possible - PLEASE! Avoid using real names but if you are mentioning other people use initials and make sure you add their relationship to you (eg "my brother was born").

Please post your response to:

The Mass Observation Archive, FREEPOST BR 2112, The Library, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 1ZX

Or by email to: moa@sussex.ac.uk