

MODULE SPECIFICATION

KEY FACTS

Module name	Health Policy in Britain
Module code	HPM003
School	Health Sciences
Department or equivalent	Division of Health Services Research and Management
UK credits	15
ECTS	7.5
Level	7

MODULE SUMMARY

Module outline and aims

Why was the NHS created, and how has it evolved? How are decisions about health care in Britain made, by whom and in whose interests? What are the main challenges facing the NHS? Can it survive?

The last few decades have seen far-reaching changes in the way health care in Britain is organised, delivered and funded. Many factors - such as medical and technological advances, an ageing population, the growing prevalence of chronic disease, patient choice and rising public expectations - have put considerable strain on the National Health Service (NHS) and resulted in major upheaval and numerous reorganisations. Successive governments and policymakers have struggled to cope with the rapid and continuous change, and have often failed to resolve the highly emotive and politically charged debates and controversies surrounding health care.

This module provides a critical analysis of the development of health policy and the organisation and delivery of health services in Britain since the creation of the NHS in 1948, focussing particularly on more recent developments. It covers not only the *content* of health policy (what it aims to achieve), but also the *process* of policy making (how policies are developed, implemented and evaluated). It aims to identify the main social, economic and political influences that have shaped health policy in Britain, explores where decision making power lies, and evaluates attempts to improve quality and performance in the NHS. The module also considers the future prospects for the NHS and what health care in Britain might look like in the decades to come.

Content outline

Topics covered in this module will include:

- Key stages in the history and evolution of the NHS since its inception, focusing particularly on developments after 1997.
- Policy initiatives designed to improve performance in the NHS, and evidence of their effectiveness, including international comparisons.
- Approaches to funding health services in Britain, including the increased use of market forces and private provision.
- The challenges of resource allocation, priority-setting and rationing.

- The politics of health: theories of how power is distributed within the NHS, and whose interests it serves; the role of political ideology in shaping differing conceptions of and responses to policy problems.
- The influence on health and health policy of: the medical profession; business and industry; the media; pressure groups; social and demographic change; and other areas of public policy (such as agriculture and transport).
- The 'rediscovery' of public health and initiatives to tackle health inequalities.
- The policy making process at national and local level, including the relationship between national policy and local implementation.
- The role of NHS and other bodies in managing, regulating and monitoring health services.
- Differences in health policy and services between England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland post-devolution.
- Prospects for the future of the NHS as a universal, comprehensive service free at the point of delivery, and for health care in Britain.

WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?

On successful completion of this module, you will be expected to be able to:

Knowledge and understanding:

- Have acquired a critical understanding of the historical development of the British health care system, and of the role and organisation of the NHS, the Department of Health and related bodies.
- Demonstrate an analytical and evidence-based understanding of key debates within health policy, such as those relating to quality and performance improvement, funding mechanisms and resource allocation.
- Show a critical appreciation of the health policy process in Britain, including how policies are initiated, developed and implemented at national and local level.
- Demonstrate critical awareness of: the political, social and economic influences on health and health policy in Britain; the role of key actors and stakeholders; how power is distributed; how policy is shaped by political ideology.
- Show a critical understanding of debates regarding the future of the NHS and health care in Britain.

Skills:

- Conduct electronic and library searches in order to identify relevant literature and evidence from a range of sources, and to critically appraise and synthesise it.
- Critically apply appropriate theories, concepts and evidence to the analysis of the issues covered in the module.
- Present the results of your research and analysis clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing.
- Engage critically and independently in debates related to the issues covered in the module.

- Work effectively and collaboratively within multi-professional groups.

Values and attitudes:

- Show appreciation of the range and complexity of the political, economic and social factors influencing the development of health policy in Britain, and of the perspectives of those involved in and affected by this process.
- Show respect and tolerance for other participants.
- Correctly reference the work of others and adhere to University regulations regarding plagiarism and academic misconduct.

HOW WILL I LEARN?

Teaching and learning will take place via a mix of lectures, group activities and discussions which allow you to examine the issues in more detail, providing both teacher and peer led input, promoting discussion and developing communication and group working skills.

Teaching sessions will take place over four days (typically 10am to 5pm), and are supplemented by self-directed study which allows you both to gain a deeper understanding of the subject generally, and to pursue topics which are of particular interest to you in greater detail.

Teaching and learning are facilitated by Moodle, the University's online Virtual Learning Environment.

Teaching pattern:

Teaching component	Teaching type	Contact hours (scheduled)	Self-directed study hours (independent)	Placement hours	Total student learning hours
Lectures, group work, class exercises and discussions	Lecture	24	126	0	150
Totals:		24	126	0	150

WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?

Assessments

You will write an essay of 4,000 words relating to a topic or topics covered in the module.

Assessment pattern:

Assessment component	Assessment type	Weighting	Minimum qualifying mark	Pass/Fail?
Essay	Written assignment	100%	50%	No

Assessment criteria

Assessment Criteria and Grade-Related Criteria for module assessments will be made available prior to an assessment taking place. More information will be available from the module leader.

Feedback on assessment

Lecturers and/or the module leader will be available to provide formative feedback and advice on the written assignment prior to submission. Following the assessment marks and feedback will be provided in line with the Assessment Regulations and Policy, normally within 4 weeks of the submission deadline. Markers will be available to answer queries about the marks and feedback if these are not clear. A selection of all assessments will be internally moderated and sent to the external examiner. All initial marks will be therefore provisional, pending external examiner approval and ratification by the Assessment Board.

Assessment Regulations

The Pass mark for the module is 50%. The Programme Specification contains information on what happens if you fail an assessment, but in the first instance you should contact the module leader.

INDICATIVE READING LIST

Baggott R. (2015) *Understanding Health Policy*. 2nd Edition. Policy Press.

Cylus, J. et al. (2015). *United Kingdom: Health Systems in Transition*. At <http://www.euro.who.int/en/about-us/partners/observatory/publications/health-system-reviews-hits/full-list-of-country-hits/united-kingdom-hit-2015>.

Crinson, I. (2009). *Health Policy: A Critical Perspective*. London: Sage.

Greener, I. (2009). *Healthcare in the UK: Understanding continuity and change*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Ham, C. et al. (2015). *The NHS Under the Coalition Government*. London: King's Fund. At: <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/nhs-under-coalition-government>.

Ham, C. (2009). *Health Policy in Britain*. 6th Edition. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Klein, R. (2013). *The New Politics of the NHS: From Creation to Reinvention*. 7th Edition. Abingdon: Radcliffe Publishing.

Marmot, M. et al. (2010). *Fair Society, Healthy Lives (The Marmot Review)*. At <http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org>.

Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry (including the Francis Report). At: <http://www.midstaffpublicinquiry.com>.

Timmins, N. (2017). *The Five Giants: A Biography of the Welfare State*. New Edition. HarperCollins.

Timmins, N. (2012). *Never Again? The story of the Health and Social Care Act 2012*. London: King's Fund. At: <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications/never-again>.

Webster, C. (2002). *The National Health Service: A Political History*. 2nd Edition. Oxford University Press.

Other useful resources:

- Department of Health: <http://www.dh.gov.uk>
- The King's Fund: <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk>
- The Nuffield Trust: <https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk>
- British Medical Journal: <http://www.bmj.com>
- The Guardian (health policy): <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/health>

Version: 1.0

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For use from: 2018-19

Appendix:

CODES

HESA Code	Description	Price Group
B	Subjects allied to medicine	

JACS Code	Description	Percentage (%)
L431	Health policy	100%