

PRESS RELEASE

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The First NHS

How John Tomley's Work Led to Modern Healthcare

Author: Emma Snow

Highlights

- **Incredibly timely for the 75th Anniversary of the NHS in 2023, this new release provides a fascinating insight into the decades of work which went on before our modern NHS was founded in 1948. Including many unseen primary sources and photographs**
- **Launching on 23 Nov, 7-9pm, at the Temple of Peace & Health, Cardiff. Attendees include Aneira Thomas, the first baby born on the NHS and author. For more information visit <https://www.wcia.org.uk/events/temple85-nhs75/>**
- **As seen on ITV Wales, BBC West, Great Western Railway, Tenby Observer Narberth & Whitland Observer, and more.**

"Emma Snow has a lifelong interest in, and knowledge of, the history of the NHS, through its precursors and early gestation in Wales. The key involvement of John Tomley too long has been neglected. This fascinating and detailed narrative provides a new and accurate perspective of the greatest of all the United Kingdom's contributions to social policy and public benefit." - Lord Carlile of Berriew CBE, KC - Former MP for Montgomeryshire

"A fascinating and personal story of the beginnings of the NHS, reminding us of its vital importance in the current climate of crises and loss of confidence." - Dr Russ Hewson, NHS Consultant Intensivist and Anaesthetist

We all think the NHS was first dreamed up by Nye Bevan when he became minister of health in 1945. Yet experiments with the NHS and welfare state in fact started many years before.

Inspired by a doctor who coined the phrase "national health service" in 1910, John Tomley and David Davies took steps to pilot the first ever national health service, focusing on TB in Wales, the WNMA. Through the findings of the WNMA's work, as well as John's work as a local health commissioner and UK leader of the largest health service providers, the friendly societies, John campaigned for effective treatment for TB, including prevention and a national health service.

John successfully led the campaign for the government's Welsh TB Inquiry, which led directly to the Beveridge Report and the founding of the NHS and wider welfare state in 1948. His family then forgot about his work, due to the ravages of a genetic disease, so John's story has never been told. Meanwhile the NHS, which John helped to found, also led to a cure for this disease for his great-great-granddaughter.

The moral of this surprising tale? If John can do it, any of us can. We have what John described as the "golden keys" in our hands. By understanding the crucial information John gave us from his life's work, the importance of fighting all the Beveridge Report's Five Giants at once, we can tackle the social determinants of health today, and change people's lives for our generation and future generations.

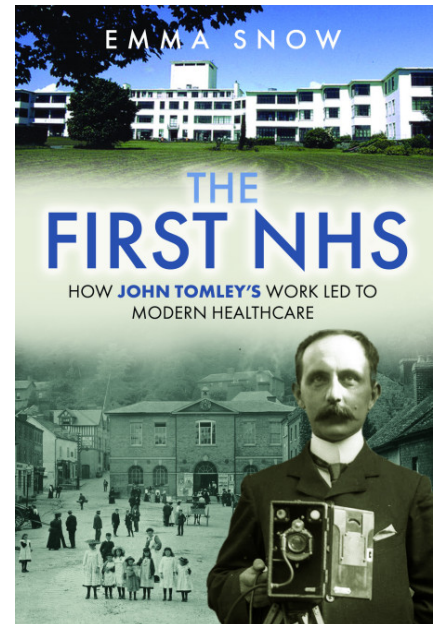
About the Author

Emma Snow is chief executive of health and social care charity Community Opportunity, works in change management for an NHS acute trust, and is an independent member of Oxfam GB's Audit & Risk Committee.

Emma has two decades' experience in the health and social care sector. She has been director of finance for national charities including the Refugee Council and Terrence Higgins Trust, as well as a trustee of charities including Anti-Slavery International and HDYO. Emma lives with her husband and daughter in the Cotswolds.



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