



HEALTHCARE

“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and inhumane.”

Martin Luther King (1929 – 1968), American civil rights activist

1. Healthcare Discussion

1. What are some common problems people have that require medical attention?
2. How do you feel about going to see a doctor or visit a hospital? How have your experiences been?
3. How could people's experience in hospitals be improved (e.g. food, comfort, entertainment, etc.)?
4. Are healthcare workers, such as doctors and nurses, paid well in your country?
5. Which countries do you think have the best healthcare systems in the world?
6. How would you describe the standard of healthcare in your country? Is it expensive? Is the standard getting better or worse?
7. If you were in charge of the health service of your country, how would you improve it?
8. What do you think about charities providing healthcare to people? Is this a valuable service or is it something that should be provided by the government? Why?

2. Healthcare Vocabulary

- **(hospital) waiting list** (noun) – *a list of patients waiting for hospital treatment.*
- **single-payer healthcare system** (noun) – *a universal healthcare system publicly funded through taxation or a single compulsory national insurance.*
- **health insurance** (noun) – *insurance that covers medical expenses.*
- **intensive care unit (ICU)** (noun) – *a unit in a hospital for patients in a critical condition who need to be monitored.*
- **accident and emergency (A&E)** (BrE) / **the emergency room (the ER)** (AmE) (noun) – *the hospital area where patients go when they need immediate or emergency attention.*
- **check-up** (noun) – *a medical examination to detect any general health problems.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun)

1. I have a **check-up** every year to make sure everything is still in working order.
2. When John fell off his bike and broke his arm, his mother took him to **A&E/the ER**.
3. We're so lucky. Molly has great **health insurance** with her work.
4. Because of the increase in virus cases, **ICU** beds are now at full capacity.
5. Democrats proposed a **single-payer healthcare system** funded by an additional income tax.
6. The government was roundly criticised when it was discovered that **waiting lists** had reached over five million people.

Healthcare vocabulary comprehension questions

1. How are waiting lists in your country? How could these be reduced?
2. Will a single-payer healthcare system, such as those in the UK, Canada, Norway, Sweden and Japan, lead to a totalitarian dictatorship? Why would anyone think that?
3. Does everybody in your country have health insurance? Is it expensive? What does it cover?
4. Why might someone need to be placed in an ICU?
5. Have you ever had to visit A&E / an ER?
6. Do you see a doctor regularly for a check-up? Is it easy to make an appointment? Do you have to wait long for your check-up?

3. Video: The NHS

You are going to watch a video by CNBC News about the British National Health Service (NHS). The video explores the differences between the British healthcare model and the American healthcare system.

Watch the video here: <https://youenglishpal.com/blog/esl-conversation-lesson-plan-healthcare/>

While you watch the video (until 8m:51s), answer the following questions:

Multiple choice

1. What does Bernie Sanders want to abolish?
a) private insurance b) The Affordable Care Act c) Medicare
2. Out of the developed world, the UK healthcare system appears the most what?
a) economically liberal **b) socialist** c) communist
3. After which event was the NHS created?
a) The Napoleon War b) World War 1 **c) World War 2**
4. How is the NHS funded?
a) a tax on rich people b) a tax on poor people **c) a tax on everyone**

Sentence completion

5. As the government pays for the NHS through taxation to cover everyone equally, it could be described as **socialised medicine**.
6. Unlike in the United States, most people in the UK are **supportive** of the concept of a national health service.
7. Even under the NHS, people still have to pay out of their own **pocket** for dental care, eye care and some prescription drugs.
8. The British government doesn't just fund the NHS, it also **runs** it, meaning doctors who work in public NHS facilities are government employees.

Short answer

9. What aspect of general practice do GPs not want to assume? **Business / Running of business**
10. What does Nile Gardener predict more British people will choose in the future? **Private healthcare**
11. Where are cataract surgeries increasingly being provided? **The independent sector**
12. The private sector prefers to take on which kind of patients? **Low risk**

4. Healthcare Conversation Questions

1. Does everybody in your country have equal access to the same level of healthcare? Is it different for rich and poor people?
2. Is the healthcare system in your country private, public, or a combination?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of private healthcare systems? What are the advantages and disadvantages of public healthcare systems?
4. Do you agree with the UK's single-payer model of taxation to fund the health service where the more you earn the more you contribute? Why or why not?
5. Would you be happy to pay higher taxes for a better healthcare system?
6. In the run-up to the 2020 US Presidential Election, the healthcare industry (including pharmaceutical companies, health insurance providers and health professionals) donated approximately \$45 million to Joe Biden and \$20 million to Donald Trump. What effect do you think these kinds of donations could have on the type of healthcare policies pursued by government?
7. Is universal healthcare for all a fundamental human right? Should it be free for everyone no matter how much they earn?
8. How do you think healthcare will be different in the future? How will artificial intelligence and big data change healthcare?

5. Healthcare Writing Task

Write an assessment about the healthcare system in your country. Try to use some of the vocabulary you learned earlier in this lesson. In your answer, you could include some of the following topics:

- How the service is funded.
- What is good or bad about the service.
- How the service could be improved.

Alternative exam practice question:

Healthcare is a fundamental human right and should be provided for free for all people regardless of income. Do you agree or disagree?