

From Ann Keen MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health



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9 April 2007

Dear Colleague,

60th ANNIVERSARY OF THE NHS

As many of you will be aware, Saturday 5 July marks the 60th anniversary of the National Health Service (NHS). I am writing to let you know about our plans to mark the occasion and encourage you to join us in recognising the unique contribution the NHS makes to British society.

This momentous milestone, coupled with a new vision for the NHS through the *Our NHS, our future* review provides us all with an unmissable opportunity, not only to celebrate achievement over the last 60 years but also to look forward to our future vision for a world-class NHS.

The focus of much of our activity will be to recognise the achievements of NHS staff - without them, none of the improvements of the last 60 years, or future advances in patient care and public health - would or will be possible.

The NHS, stakeholders, patients and the public are planning a range of exciting activity across the country to mark the occasion. At a national level, we are organising a series of high profile events, culminating in NHS 60 week (29 June – 5 July).

Events and activities during the week include:

- NHS Live and the Health and Social Care Awards on 1 July at Wembley Stadium. NHS Live will showcase innovation and best practice in the NHS, featuring case studies and exhibitions. In the evening, the awards will recognise the achievements of NHS and social care staff across the country.
- A national service of celebration on 2 July at Westminster Abbey. Staff, patients, stakeholders and those who contribute to the NHS will form the congregation.
- On 5 July, the anniversary itself, we are encouraging the NHS and stakeholders to celebrate 'NHS day' in ways appropriate to their communities.

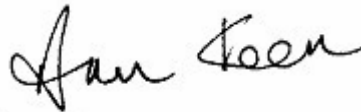
We are also documenting the history of the NHS and some of its remarkable achievements through the NHS Choices website and a commemorative publication. We may approach your organisation for contributions to this.

We want to involve future users of the NHS, children and young people and are exploring different ways to engage them in health and wellbeing issues through schools and are highlighting the important contribution that volunteers make.

We are aware that many of you will be planning your own NHS 60 activity and are keen to support you in this. We have designed a special 'Celebrating NHS 60' mark for you to use on your anniversary communications and have a number of other resources available for you.

We are very keen to capture all of the exciting activity, which is taking place across the country. Can you please ask your teams to forward details of your plans along with potential areas for collaboration to: NHS60@dh.gsi.gov.uk

The 60th anniversary of the NHS provides a real opportunity for us to work together to ensure a celebration with lasting impact and I hope you will join us in this.



ANN KEEN