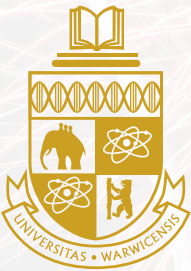




WARWICK
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK



Sir Muir Gray CBE Hon DSc

Oration by Professor Aileen Clarke
Chair of the Faculty of Medicine




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For around 40 years, the NHS has offered women in England the opportunity to undergo screening for breast and cervical cancers. These screening programmes, and others since introduced, have saved countless lives. Their success is due in large measure to the pioneering work of this morning's honorary graduand, Sir Muir Gray.

Sir Muir Gray has worked for NHS England since 1972. He was Director of Research and Development for Anglia and Oxford regional Health Authority and was instrumental in establishing the National Screening Committee (NSC) in 1996, serving as its Director until 2007. The Committee developed a framework for screening, and policies for screening for many conditions; it has overseen the successful introduction of a number of national screening programmes in England. It is envied across the world because of its influence and power and because of its commitment to the evidence base in screening decisions, which affect the lives of millions of people.

Sir Muir had already shown his own commitment to evidence-based assessment in 1993, when, together with Sir Iain Chalmers, he established the Cochrane Collaboration, whose database of systematic reviews of healthcare interventions enables people world-wide to make informed decisions. He subsequently founded the National Library for Health, to ensure fast, easy access to evidence-based information for both healthcare professionals and the public. He was Director of the NHS National Knowledge Service and became the first person to hold the post of Chief Knowledge Officer of the NHS (England). He has become an internationally-renowned authority on healthcare systems, advising governments in Australia, New Zealand, Italy, Spain and Germany.

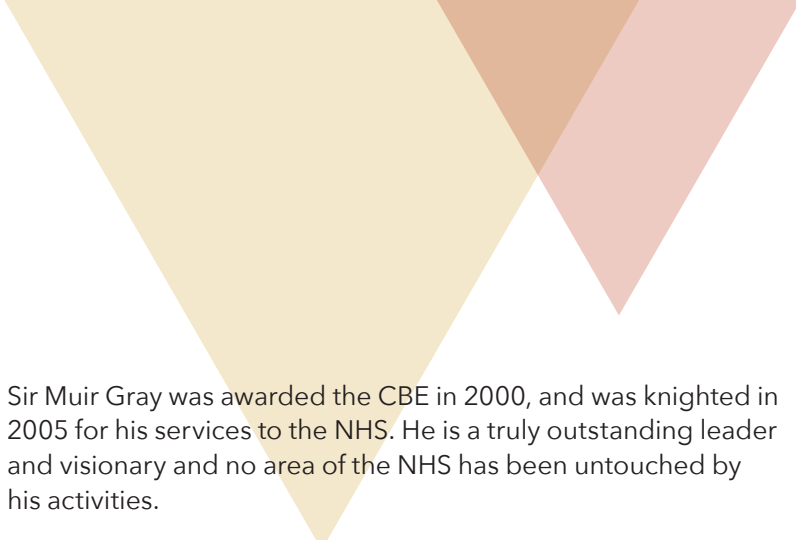


He designed and worked on Value Based Healthcare and has brought into being Healthcare Public Health, which revolutionised the way the NHS approached improving and maintaining 'health' as opposed to just treating disease. In 2008, he set up the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare, changing the way professionals think about sustainability and the environment in healthcare research and practice.

Sir Muir is a pioneer in his chosen field of Public Health, but his influence and expertise extend far beyond this speciality. He has led the NHS through a huge number of changes. He has pioneered walking as a health improvement activity, and was the intellect behind the drive to improve the health of those working in the NHS.

Recently, he has turned his attention to keeping active and healthy as we age. Declaring, 'Sitting is the new smoking', he has published two innovative books, entitled, with delightful irreverence, *Sod Sixty!* and *Sod Seventy!*, in which he encourages older people to swap their slippers for walking shoes, get moving and increase their strength, stamina, suppleness and skill. *(And Sir Muir practises what he preaches: he recently confessed to a journalist that he brushes his teeth each morning standing on one leg to improve his balance, then does a press-up for each year of his life... I should quickly add that we are not going to ask him to demonstrate!)*

At the University of Oxford, he is a Visiting Professor in the Nuffield Department of Surgical Sciences and an Honorary Clinical Researcher at the Nuffield Department of Primary Care, where he continues to work on the Value Based Healthcare theme.



Sir Muir Gray was awarded the CBE in 2000, and was knighted in 2005 for his services to the NHS. He is a truly outstanding leader and visionary and no area of the NHS has been untouched by his activities.

Throughout his working life he has been in the forefront of ideas and actions to improve health. In public health we say where Muir Gray is today others will be tomorrow. He has always strongly encouraged and supported the work of younger researchers and practitioners and he has a strong commitment to building capacity amongst those who would go out and improve health. His values and ideas are an inspiration to many of us in Warwick Medical School where we deliver value based, evidence based, medical teaching and research and where we have a strong programme of health screening research and teaching.

I am delighted Provost: in the name of the Senate, to present to you for admission to the degree of Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*, Sir Muir Gray.