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Mass Miniature Radiography:
The Tuberculosis Screening Programme in Post War Britain
Kimberley Bradshaw

Background

After the Second World War ended, the Department of Health and the National Health Service developed a new screening programme to tackle tuberculosis (TB). TB was prevalent in Great Britain and so a community screening approach was deemed the most appropriate way to tackle the endemic. A robust public health campaign was used to encourage attendance. The widespread campaign involved posters, stamps, pamphlets, newspaper adverts, and specially commissioned songs. The population were offered incentives such as badges, bookmarks, chocolates and cigarettes. Those who attended were often put into a draw to win prizes such as electrical goods and brand-new cars. Mass miniature radiography images were produced and viewed on a projector. The use of mass miniature radiography screening for TB declined in the 1960s, once TB infection rates slowed.

Purpose

- To explore the history and impact of the mass miniature radiography screening programme for TB.
- To explore the public health campaign approaches used.
- To determine to impact of this early screening programme on modern-day healthcare practice.

Summary of Context

This submission aims to explore the history behind mass miniature radiography and how it was utilised for TB screening in post-war Britain. This submission also explores the robust public health campaign, and the incentives used to encourage compliance with chest x-ray attendance. This submission will conclude how this early screening programme impacted on current healthcare practices, including how community-based screening programmes are still utilised today.