

Worcester Infirmary operated from this site from 1771 until 2002 and in that time observed many advances in healthcare and innovation. Those who worked here also proved instrumental and the exhibition and tours aim to convey these important discoveries. Local man Sir Charles Hastings presided over the first meeting of the Provincial Medical and Surgical Association in July 1832. The organisation which later became the British Medical Association and still continues to print the British Medical Journal sharing the results and research by medical professionals to improve the lives of many.

Worcester Infirmary was granted 'Royal' status on a visit from HRH Prince of Wales in 1932 and then was referred to as; Worcester Royal Infirmary.

The original Infirmary building is now part on Worcester City's University campus.

Many local doctors from our area were active in the beginnings of providing a first health service but not as we know it today. All would be patients had to be referred and the cost of 21 shillings was needed provided by income or from charity. If you were "chosen" as a patient, no children accepted, you were provided with good food, a warm clean bed, a "dose" of alcohol and plenty of fresh air; when beds were wheeled outside.

We were able to sit around the Board Room table amid all the portraits of the influential persons who had been, over the years engaged in organising and making provision of medical treatment to those who needed it. Many operational methods, medical discoveries were made here over the early years.

Luke, our guide was very knowledgeable, explaining both the history and layout of the hospital and about the persons who had been involved. The non-denominational Chapel is beautiful and is still used today, with past medical staff and now students choosing to be married there. The visit was made more interesting by Luke revealing many "inside" stories, but we had our own inside story teller who had worked in the Infirmary. She related many of her own experiences as a nurse and told us of everyday life on the wards and in the morgue!

We reflected on the changes in attitudes to health provision and practises from the 18thC to the present day, - still problems - but now of a very different nature.

