

**IN
RUDE
HEALTH**

The Funniest and Most Explicit
Stories from the NHS



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Introduction

We are sick. We are dirty, kinky and sexually dysfunctional. We commit stupid acts in the heat of the moment, play with tools we don't know how to use, and generally hurt ourselves - a lot. And when we aren't suffering from some awful internet-trawled illness we are totally convinced that we are. Luckily for us, we have the National Health Service on hand to pick up the pieces.

The NHS is a beautiful thing. A free healthcare system, visible proof that we live in a society that looks after its citizens. A health service where you can get treated for whatever you want whenever you need it, day or night. Be it an eel up the arse, or an urgent case of blue legs, our highly-trained health professionals are on call.

This book is full of the very best stories gleaned from those at the frontline, a collection of the weirdest accidents and patients they have attended,

the ones that keep them smiling through a seventeen hour shift, or at least get them in to work the next day. A&E is a common spawning ground for these outlandish tales but the net was cast wider, to dentists, GPs, ambulance drivers, midwives, call handlers, first responders and the like.

As one would expect, all stories are supplied anonymously - to protect the innocent as well as the guilty. I'm hugely grateful to all those NHS workers who gave me material, tales that made me both laugh out loud and sometimes weep with despair... But, most of all, hearty thanks go to the Great British Public, whose imagination and inventiveness in finding methods to put itself in harm's way knows no bounds. For your perversion, stupidity and ignorance - I salute you.

Robbie Guillory

Cat and Mouse

An unconscious 30-year-old man was brought in to us by ambulance. His girlfriend had found him lying naked on the floor of his bathroom and called 999. Upon examination, he was found to have a large lump on his forehead and, strangely, several scratches on his scrotum. The lump was obviously from a fall of some kind, but we couldn't work out the cause of the scratches until he'd woken up.

He said he had been cleaning his bathtub while naked, kneeling on the floor beside the tub. His cat, apparently transfixed by the rhythmic swaying of his scrotum, lunged forward, sinking its claws into this deliciously pendulous target. The man wasn't sure what had happened next, but clearly he'd jerked forward to protect his package and cracked his skull on the edge of the bath.

A&E Consultant, Milton Keynes

The Eyes Have It

A few years ago I was working nights at an inner-city A&E in Manchester. A man staggers in, clearly the worse for wear drink-wise, and tells the front desk that he can't get his contact lenses out. Apparently they would come halfway out but then always snap back in again, and were causing him agony. A nurse attempted to get them off with a suction pump but to no avail, and the patient was getting more and more panicked, so they called me in to have a look. I checked both eyes, twice, but couldn't find any sign of lenses. The man had been trying to rip out his own corneas.

Doctor, Milton Keynes

Bottoming Out

I remember a case where a man reported to his GP complaining of severe constipation, and quite considerable pain. After some persuasion he revealed that he and his boyfriend had been getting into some very risqué sex games, and recently they had had the idea of pouring plaster of Paris into his bottom using a funnel. This had hardened, unfortunately, and thus the constipation and pain. The GP referred him to our hospital, and it was my privilege to remove what turned out to be a pretty perfect cast of his rectal passage, along with - somewhat surprisingly - a squash ball.

Nurse, Cambridge

Miracle Cure

A woman came into my A&E while I was on the front desk and the following conversation took place:

'What's the problem?'

'I've got appendicitis!'

'What makes you say it is appendicitis?'

'Because I had it before, when I was twelve! I had to go to hospital and have an operation!'

'You had your appendix taken out?'

'Yes!'

'And you think you've got appendicitis?'

'Oh...'

Needless to say, it was a touch of the shits.

Nurse, Bournemouth

Chilli Con Vagi

My colleague, a GP, recently told me about this patient he'd had. She came in to a drop-in appointment, refused to sit down in the waiting area, was sweating profusely and highly agitated, so the receptionist decided to bump her up the list a bit. When she came in she still wouldn't sit down and blurted out, 'I've got a chilli in my vagina!'

'Umm, ok, is it stuck?' my colleague asked.

'No, I just want some advice please!'

'Well, my advice would be that you take the chilli out of your vagina, and never put it back in again. Not only is it dangerous, they are far better used in a good curry.'

'Thank you!'

'Would you like to talk about *why* you've got a chilli in your vagina?'

'No thanks, you've been a lot of help already,' she said, and was out the door before the GP could say another word.

Doctor, Norwich

Speed Dogging

A story was doing the rounds in my area recently about a teenager with ADHD who had been taking dexamphetamine with some friends (the drug was prescribed by his local community Adolescent Psychiatry service to stop him setting fire to his homework, among other things...). His parents had brought him in when they found him in their attic in a very, shall we say, incoherent state. Once he'd come off his high somewhat, the doctor wanted to ask him if he's been doing anything that might put him at risk of contracting AIDS. The boy thought for a while and then said, '...screwing the dog?'

Doctor, Truro

Funny Games

A man had inserted an acupuncture needle in his penis. We found this out only after having X-rayed, following complaints of a severe pain in his stomach. It had reached his bladder. When we showed him this X-ray, he admitted having put it there, 'for fun'.

Nurse, Leicester

Buried Treasure

I have personally removed the following items of flotsam and jetsam from various rectums over the past forty years:

Several shapes of bottle

Sex toys galore

One aubergine

A snapped broomstick handle

The handle of an axe, with the axe head attached but not inserted

The bauble from the end of a curtain rod (became unscrewed, apparently)

A light bulb (unbroken, thankfully)

One fluorescent tube

A champagne glass (it had smashed)

A full jar of instant coffee

A prosthetic arm

A plethora of toothbrushes

Only one cucumber, oddly

A marble pestle (luckily no mortar)

A large rubber 'Hulk' fist (and again, two years later)

Many eggs

A can of Carnation condensed milk

Limes

A mobile phone, curiously not set to
vibrate mode

A stapler.

Surgeon, Bristol

Beardbugs

I was once assisting a dentist as she was doing a filling. The patient was a bear of a man, with an imposing beard. Suddenly, as I was reaching for a packing pad, I noticed an ant running across the tray where we kept the tools. Not wanting to cause undue alarm, I decided to ignore it, and swapped the tools for sterile ones. Once the patient left I asked the dentist if he'd seen any ants, thinking we might have a pest problem, to which she replied, 'It was the patient. His beard was seething with them, but I didn't want to upset him by mentioning it. They kept trying to climb up my gloves.'

Dental assistant, Newcastle



Premium Call Rate

This incident was related to me by a senior colleague who worked in the days when general practitioners still did lots of routine house calls and when doors were never locked. He knocked on the door of a female patient who called for him to walk straight in. He did so, to find her lying naked in a tin bath in front of the fire. She looked up and said cheerfully, 'Oh it's you, doctor! I thought it was the insurance man.'

Doctor, Ayrshire

Currant Affairs

During our anatomy years, a group of us had to dissect the green body of an elderly female with a proud risus sardonicus (a death-mask grin).

As the dissection progressed to the lower extremities, our tutor decided to demonstrate how a PV (a treatment applied to the vagina) would have to be done later in clinical training. As he withdrew his gloved middle finger, sitting happily on the tip of it was a raisin. He mused in wonderment, 'How did that get there?' A mutter response came from our worldly-wise colleague, having partied well the night before:

'Maybe she had a bun in the oven!'

Surgeon, Brighton

Turd Time Lucky

A young GP Registrar, who cut her teeth on squelchy carpet home visits in urban Ayrshire, later moved to a greater calling in deepest Drumchapel, Glasgow. Early one afternoon, summoned to minister to a sick child, she found herself walking up a nominal garden path, through the standard avenue of discarded couches, mattresses and old cookers to the battle-scarred door of a tenement, outside of which sat a big dog.

Receiving the customary no answer to her knock, she called out 'Doctor here!' and as she slowly opened the door, the big dog immediately bounded upstairs ahead of her. She followed it cautiously into a dimly-lit living room, where half a dozen assorted, multi-pierced male and female slackers sat menacingly around the walls in a fug of wacky baccy, watching her intently.

Uncomfortable and self-conscious - and from past experience unwilling to kneel on the floor - she crouched beside the settee to examine the florid chickenpox of

her young patient. As she did so, she was conscious, out of the corner of her eye, of the big dog arching its back in the middle of the room and dumping a huge turd on the threadbare carpet.

Nobody moved. Not a word was said. Appalled by this lumpen display of total indifference to filth, she hurriedly scribbled a script for Calpol and Calamine Lotion, handed it to the mother, and beat a hasty retreat towards fresh air and civilisation. Nobody moved.

As she exited the room and closed the door in relief, behind her she heard someone cry:

'Haw, Doctor! Yev forgotten yer fuckin dug!'

Doctor, Glasgow

Not Getting Through

A 92-year-old woman had a full cardiac arrest at home and was rushed to the hospital. After about thirty minutes of unsuccessful resuscitation attempts, the old lady was pronounced dead. The doctor went to tell the lady's 78-year-old daughter that her mother didn't make it. 'Didn't make it? Where could they be? She left in the ambulance forty-five minutes ago!'

Doctor, Sunderland

Stuck in the Middle of You

We were on call in our ambulance, when an ESA (Embarrassing Sexual Accident) came on the screen. The notes said that a couple had got stuck while in the midst of coital passion, with the man unable to remove his member. The notes went on to say that 'The female is not in pain, but the male is feeling the pinch.' This was enough to have us laughing uncontrollably; but what was more, the caller's name had been recorded as 'Male - friend on scene'. Sadly he had scarpered by the time we arrived.

Ambulance driver, London

Fire in the Hole

'In retrospect, lighting the match was my big mistake, but I was only trying to retrieve the hamster,' Philip told colleagues in the Severe Burns Unit he'd been rushed to.

Philip and his partner William had been admitted for emergency treatment after a felching session had gone seriously wrong. 'I pushed a cardboard tube up his rectum and slipped Gerald, our Campbell's hamster, in,' he said. 'As usual, Will shouted, "Apocalypse!" - our safe word that he'd had enough. I tried to retrieve Gerald, but he wouldn't come out again, so I peered into the tube and struck a match, thinking the light might attract him.'

The match must have ignited a pocket of intestinal gas and a flame shot out of the tube, igniting Philip's hair and severely burning his face. It also set fire to Gerald's fur and whiskers, which in turn ignited a larger pocket of gas further up the intestinal tract, propelling the

hamster out like a cannonball.

Philip suffered second-degree burns and a suspected broken nose from the impact of the hamster, while William suffered first and second-degree burns to his anus and lower intestinal tract.

I never heard what happened to Gerald the hamster.

GP, Wolverhampton

Taking the Plunge(R)

The oddest thing that has happened in my career so far has to be the woman who Superglued a plunger to her vagina. Apparently she'd been having fun with her girlfriend when the harness for their strap-on broke. In the heat of the moment (she told us she 'wasn't thinking straight'), she thought that the plunger under the sink would give the right amount of, well, movement. After a quick wash under the hot tap (so considerate), she then tried to work out how to attach it. To cut a long story short, the pair decided in the heat of their ardour to use Superglue to affix the device. A foolish thing to do, and one that is very hard to hide whether you are sitting, lying or standing in the waiting room of A&E.

Nurse, Manchester

Foiled Again

As a pharmacist, I am often a patient's source of information about their medication. When one woman came to the pharmacy to get a refill on her suppositories, she asked me if I had any suggestions she could take to her doctor. She said that the suppositories were not working. 'And not only don't they work, they hurt! Sometimes they even make me bleed!'

I looked at her prescription, pulled some suppositories from the shelf, and opened the box for her. She then showed me that the corners of the hard foil wrapper were sharp. I cringed when I realised that she was not removing the packaging before inserting them.

Pharmacist, Croydon

Well Fly

When I was still training to be a dental assistant, this happened during one of my last practical exams. A very important exam was being graded by an observer supplemented with input from the dentist. The dentist was working on an amalgam for a filling, and I was handing him the instruments and materials as he needed them, without him having to ask. I was sweating buckets, I was so nervous. Then out of nowhere a bluebottle spirals down, and where does it land but on the tip of the patient's tongue, seemingly stone dead, on its back, no wing twitching, nothing.

Now, I can't afford to make a mistake, and I'm so nervous that all I can think is, 'What's the proper instrument for removing a dead stuck fly from a person's tongue?' I had to think fast, so I look at my tray, grabbed an amalgam carrier, and pressed it into the hands of the dentist. The dentist, a terrifying professor known for his brutal marking, grunts, takes the

carrier, scoops the bug up with the large end and hands it back to me, saying, 'That was correct.'

I couldn't believe it.

Dental assistant, Warrington

Weighty Pronouncement

A couple of years ago one of my fellow midwives was an extremely large woman called Lucy, who was so large it made you want to give up eating for her. Not only was she fat, she also had a 'big personality', and with that came a very blunt way of speaking. Now, usually this wasn't a problem, as not many people argue back to someone who looks like they would happily snack on them if given the chance, but there was one incident that will always stick in my mind.

It was once considered good practice to weigh expectant mothers every time they came in for a check-up and Lucy was always one to make comment on this. So an expectant mother comes in, looking quite normal, and Lucy takes her into a cubicle. They can only have been in there for a few minutes when we hear an almighty SLAP! and the mother-to-be shouting, 'If I need to watch my weight, then we'd better send out a bloody search party for whoever is watching yours!'

With this the mum-to-be storms out.
Thirty seconds later, Lucy emerges and
says quite calmly, 'Who's next, please?'
No one mentioned the perfect handprint in
scarlet across her right cheek.

Midwife, Padstow

A Good Lay

Last month I attended the most memorable 'accident' of my career. It was on a rare quiet night in A&E, when in waddles a man in his mid-thirties. I ask him the matter - though I can smell the booze a mile off - and he says it's his birthday, and he's been playing a drinking game. Now, whenever we hear the words 'drinking game' uttered by someone in A&E we know it isn't going to be pretty. It turned out that the final forfeit was the insertion of a carton of six eggs up the arse, and this poor sod had lost, and was now overcome with worry that they might smash inside him before he could lay them to rest, as it were. We got them out all right, and presented them back to him in an egg box to take home. Things like that that make A&E worth it.

A&E Consultant, Edinburgh

