

NHS Nightingale Hospital London

A tribute by Friends of Millbank

The NHS Nightingale Hospital London was constructed at breath-taking pace in a few days in March 2020 at the ExCel Centre to prepare for and combat the coronavirus pandemic. Teams of civilian and military personnel worked round the clock, under NHS lead, with whole-hearted commitment by Government, the National Health Service and the Ministry of Defence, in a truly inspiring example of civil-military co-operation in time of crisis. The military contribution is part of Operation Rescript (the military operation to assist the UK's efforts to tackle the coronavirus pandemic in the UK).¹

This co-operation demonstrated rapid innovation and adaptation in the face of an un-relenting foe [SARS-CoV-2], resulting in a massive and fully equipped and staffed hospital capable of rapid expansion to 4000 beds, with the sole aim of saving lives and relieving suffering from COVID-19.²

The hospital's resonant name was aptly chosen to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale, who revolutionised nursing care worldwide, both military and civilian, and demonstrates her enduring legacy.

Friends of Millbank, who celebrate the heritage and achievements of military medicine and its contribution to civilian healthcare worldwide, have sent the Military Medical Commander, Colonel Ashleigh Boreham L/RAMC, a personalised print as a gift for all civilian and military NHS Nightingale Hospital staff (maintaining the tradition of laughter being indeed the best medicine).



To NHS Nightingale Hospital London, from Friends of Millbank (print courtesy of Andrew Wing)

¹ GOV.UK, Forces Net and Wikipedia See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-support-force-the-mods-contribution-to-the-coronavirus-response> and <https://www.forces.net/news> for news on the military medical commitment to the NHS. In addition, Wikipedia is collating daily updates on Operation Rescript, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Rescript, and on Operation Broadshare, UK's operation overseas, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Broadshare.

² BBC News Timelapse video of NHS Nightingale Hospital (1 April 2020) https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/video_and_audio/headlines/52112652/timelapse-shows-creation-of-london-virus-hospital