

## 2016 Royal College of Physicians Milroy Lecture



Peter Littlejohns, professor of public health at King's College London delivered the 2016 Milroy lecture on state medicine and public health at the Royal College of Physicians London on Monday 24 October.

The title of Professor Littlejohns' lecture was "NHS Quality 1998-2013: why did it go so wrong". In the lecture, Professor Littlejohns argued that the NHS is facing the greatest funding challenge in its history. In this context, he set out the challenges of maintaining quality in care and public health, and in particular, looked at the role of the state. He drew on a study which used in-depth interviews with senior leaders of major organisations that were established to set standards and monitor quality in the NHS – the Commission for Healthcare Improvement, the Commission for Health Audit and Inspection, the Quality Care Commission and the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (now the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence). This study sought to understand the political and organisational influences on the organisations. In the lecture, Professor Littlejohns discussed some of the common themes that emerged, including the relevance of the socio-political environment, governance, clarity of purpose, leadership, the quality of external relationships and organisational reputation.

The Milroy annual lecture and bursary was founded in 1888 by a bequest from the Scottish physician and writer Dr Gavin Milroy, with the intention of 'promoting the advancement of medical science along with the interests of philanthropic benevolence and of social welfare'.

Read Professor Littlejohns' lecture slides here

[http://www.clahrc-southlondon.nihr.ac.uk/files/Milroy\\_Lecture\\_2016.pdf](http://www.clahrc-southlondon.nihr.ac.uk/files/Milroy_Lecture_2016.pdf)