The health system

Pre-task:

Read up on the health system in your country, preferably using a dedicated government website or some other official information. For England, see e.g. text 1. Then explain to your partner, how the healthcare system works.

Image 1

- Do you have health insurance in your country? If different types of health insurance are available, what is the difference between them?
- Are you required to have your own health insurance? What happens, if you don't?
- Who pays for health insurance? How much?
- Who pays the doctor? If you pay him yourself: when do you need to pay him?
- Is there a connection between health insurance and other social insurances and provisions, e.g. accident insurance, social care? Which social needs are covered by insurances at all?
- Does your health insurance or national health service include dental care, mental health care and so-called „alternative" treatments?
- How do general practitioners, specialist doctors, hospitals and care services interact
- How are hospitals organised: what kind of wards can you expect to find? With how many people do you normally share a room or bay? Are there any specialist clinics?

Task 1:

Compare your countries' health systems and their effects:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of these systems for families, employees, the young, the old, poor people and the self-employed?
- Is doctors' shortage a problem in your country? Or a shortage of other health specialists? Why? If so, could a different health system help?

Task 2:

Arrange with your partner to watch an episode from a medical drama series on the media player or live stream of a TV station from your country. Recommend a series that you know already and explain to your partner in advance:

- Who are the key characters?

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- What is the story so far?
- What is the setting of the series? I.e. is it a hospital or a surgery, is it in a city, in the countryside, in a particular region?

Whilst watching:

Take a note of details that are typical for your country's health system and, if applicable, details that could not possibly happen in real life in your country.

After watching:

- Talk with your partner about the country typical details. Ask him/her, whether there were situations that could not have happened in his/her country. E.g. in hospital, will you be led to your room immediately? When and where will your personal details be taken? Would a doctor visit patients at home and have long conversations with patients, as often shown in TV series?
- Discuss how realistic you find the series overall.
- Discuss whether the medical drama series would sell well in your partner's country.

Follow-up activity:

Try a different medical drama series and compare it with the first one.

Links for UK - Series:

Casualty (BBC 1) http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006m8wd

Doctors (BBC 1) http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006mh9v

Holby City (BBC 1) http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006mhd6

Hospital (BBC 2) http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08w8ktc

Embarrassing bodies (Channel 4) http://www.channel4.com/programmes/embarrassing-bodies/on-demand/50670-019

Where the heart is https://www.itv.com/hub/where-the-heart-is/PNEWHART

Media players:

BBC http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer

Channel 4 http://www.channel4.com/programmes/catchup

ITV http://www.tvnow.de/rtl

Sources

Text 1	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/194002/9421-2900878-TSO-NHS_Guide_to_Healthcare_WEB.PDF
Image 1	https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NHS_Blood_and_Transplant,_Liverpool.jpg

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