



Working for Health

Doctors' views

Presenter

Four doctors put forward their views on health. First, Sir John Crofton, who is now retired, suggests that the traditional view of health is not so strongly held by young doctors.

Sir John Crofton

I used to say that in the big teaching hospitals the old fashioned physicians used to deal with a body in a bed, and if he was a surgeon an organ in a bed, then they began to realise that the background of the patient was of some importance, and have gradually moved out, so the medical profession is gradually moving out into this much more broader field. But they still obviously have a lot to learn.

Helen Mark (Presenter)

Now some views from three doctors currently in practice. First, Tony Barnet, a consultant in diabetic medicine.

Tony Barnet

Health means to me both mental and physical well being, and I think that the health profession in this country has for too long only considered the physical aspects that's the symptoms and signs of disease and so on, without considering the quality of life, that the psychological aspects which are involved in this feeling of general well being, so it's a total package it's both mental and physical well being.

Presenter

Sidhesh Kuma is a consultant in medicine.

Sidhesh Kuma

Well not just the absence of disease but I think it is a feeling of well being, being able to work to one's fullest potential, enjoy life, you know without fear of ill health. I think it would mean different things to different people, for a lot of people say if I look like Hugh Grant, no I think it's really from my perspective as a health professional really, not just absence of disease, it's being able to really live life to one's fullest potential.

Presenter

Sidhesh goes on to elaborate his views on workplace stress.

Sidhesh

People take home work on their laptops and things like that, and all this has a price there's a price to be paid from all this and that's a lot of psychological mobility and so on. For example the last patient I had, I believe all her problems were related to stress from all working, taking work home, work that she could not finish during the day. And, increasingly we are seeing this not just among executives and you know people like that, we are seeing it in people who work in the manufacturing sector.

The work is generally getting more stressful so there's a lot of mobility I think related to psychological problems these days more so than we had seen maybe twenty years ago.

Presenter

Finally, Philip Dwyer, a specialist in diabetes.

Philip Dwyer

I think health means being happy actually, and I think health means being able to do all the things you want to do. One thing I thought about recently was that you I mean being overweight and obese and etc. And after watching one good programme about it and this chap was talking about obesity, and he was saying you know we get wrapped up about people being overweight and you actually can say to somebody you've got to lose weight, got to lose weight, and all you're doing eventually is actually making them depressed, you know. And I thought so what are they losing their weight for. And the key is you've got to say, I say to my patients now you lose enough weight so you can do the things that you want to do. So being health is being able to do the things you want to do. That's what matters and all that matters is what you want to do not what somebody else says that you should be doing it's just that you've got to, to be healthy is actually being able to do what you want to do and there's no restrictions on doing what you want to do. That's being healthy, that's what I call being healthy is.