

# Nightingale Museum reveals hidden work of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century nurses

May 12<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2015

To celebrate the International Year of Light, a new exhibition at the Florence Nightingale Museum will look at the contentious history of light therapy.

**The Kiss of Light: Nursing and Light Therapy in 20<sup>th</sup>-century Britain** opens on Florence's birthday on May 12<sup>th</sup> 2015 and centres on the healing powers of light – and its risks. Funded by the Wellcome Trust and co-organised with University of Warwick medical historians Tania Woloshyn and Hilary Marland, the exhibition showcases a remarkable photographic record of nurses and their vulnerable patients being exposed to both natural and artificial light. Light therapy was especially used for children to combat tuberculosis and rickets in clinics and sanatoria and even in the home by mothers eager to protect their child by exposing them to rays from trendy portable ultra-violet lamps. We may have very different ideas now towards light safety but the health and protection of our children remains an issue today.

Natasha McEnroe, Director of the Florence Nightingale Museum, says:

“We are delighted to be able to reveal the hidden role that nurses played in this ground-breaking treatment, often displaying highly technical skills and specialist knowledge. From Queen Alexandra introducing the amazing Finsen Light to the most junior nurse working in a TB sanatorium, women played a leading role in light therapy.”



*Courtesy of The Royal London Hospital Archives & Museum*



Tania Woloshyn, Wellcome Trust Research Fellow, says:

“Professor Marland and I are very proud and excited to be a part of this Wellcome Trust-funded exhibition at the Florence Nightingale Museum. It's providing an invaluable opportunity to showcase an unusual but very relevant topic to the public and highlight the contentious issue of light exposure, child welfare and national health”.

**For more information, please contact Natasha McEnroe, Director:  
natasham@florence-nightingale.co.uk or 020 7620 0374**

**Notes to Editors about the Florence Nightingale Museum:**

**Opening hours:** Daily, 10am – 5pm

**Address:** Florence Nightingale Museum, 2 Lambeth Palace Road, London SE1 7EW

**Website:** [www.florence-nightingale.co.uk](http://www.florence-nightingale.co.uk)

**Nearest transport:** *Tube* - Westminster, Waterloo, Lambeth North, *Rail* – Waterloo, *Riverboat* – London Eye Pier, Westminster Pier, *Buses* – numerous routes

**Admission Prices:** Adults £7.50, Child (under 16) £3.80, Concessions £4.80, Small Family £13.00, Large Family £18.00

**Accessibility:** Fully accessible for wheelchair users, including toilet facilities. Located on the site of St Thomas' Hospital at parking level. For the deaf and hearing impaired there is a loop system as well as subtitles on all the films.

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