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Almost a Legend

Max Blythe

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No one championed evidence-based general practice more than John Fry, arguably the world's most influential GP of his day.

John Fry, 1922-1994, made unparalleled contributions to the reformation of British general practice in the second half of the 20th Century. In the 1950s and 1960s he dominated the movement for evidence-based primary care and the operational intelligence of better practice management. He became the most prolific publisher of facts and figures in the history of general practice, and the first systematic surveyor of all the everyday diseases of a single practice, monitoring their natural histories and the effectiveness of treatments.

His pioneering, evidence-based approach was fundamental to the transformation of general practice into a specialty and its modern strengths as the bedrock of <?xml:namespace prefix = st1 ns = "urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:smarttags" />UK health care.

Almost a Legend documents the journey of a young immigrant Polish boy to becoming the best known GP in the world, beginning with Jewish origins and remarkable family heritage. It follows his career from public school, through medical school and into General Practice, including his contributions to the Royal College of GPs, the Royal Society of Medicine, the GMC, WHO and Royal Army Medical Corps.

"John Fry was a radical, unique and unheralded sceptic anxious to improve the delivery of patient care by questioning existing practice in a nice iconoclastic fashion. Sadly, from the patient's perspective, only in recent times are many of his sensible ideas being taken up by his conservative profession."
Alan Maynard, Professor of Health Economics, University of York, UK

"Many of us in the United States and Canada and many other countries consider John Fry a legend because of his seminal contributions to our thinking about the care of patients with common diseases, and his concept of primary care as a functional level of care from where secondary care and long-term support can be mobilised and coordinated. His work contributed directly to the Report of the US Institute of Medicine "A Manpower Policy for Primary Care" published in 1978. Fry never blew his horn, but his ideas travelled widely and influenced thinking about primary care world wide. Few physicians contributed more to medicine in the second half of the 20th century."
Philip R Lee, Professor of Social Medicine Emeritus and Chancellor Emeritus, University of California, San Francisco

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