12 mark medicine explain model answer on modern treatment [sample paper 1]

**4 Explain why there was rapid change in the treatment of illness in Britain during the twentieth century.**

*The first reason for the rapid change in the treatment of illness in Britain during the twentieth century is the development of new technology in order to treat illness more effectively. For example, the work of Marie Curie resulted in the development of x rays to enable the use of radium to diagnose cancer and radiotherapy to treat cancers. This was important because without the technology to treat cancer in this way the disease more often than not led to the death of the patient. Another example of new technologies producing rapid change can be seen in the invention and use of dialysis machines. These have proven vital to treatment of patients suffering kidney failure as they keep the patient alive whilst they await a transplant becoming available. This meant that many patients who would previously die from kidney failure have recovered.*

*Another reason for the rapid change in the treatment of illness has been the increased focus on improving public health. For example, at the time of the establishment of the NHS in 1948 an estimated eight million people in Britain had never seen a doctor before. The NHS meant all citizens could benefit from free health care such as vaccinations, blood transfusions, hospitals and even home visits. The wide range of services provided by the NHS have dramatically improved life expectancy as illnesses can be diagnosed and treated earlier and previously high risk procedures like childbirth no longer regularly lead to the death of the mother. In addition, the focus on public health has led to increased government action to improve access to treatment such as free medical treatment in schools from 1912.*

*A further reason for the rapid change in the treatment of illness in Britain has been increased investment of pharmaceutical companies in research and mass production of effective medicine. For example; companies such as Glaxo-Smith-Kline and Boots have invested in research and development of better remedies and used industrial technology to make vast quantities of each remedy in order to make available to the consumer. Competition between the companies has also made it integral that companies ensure people are aware of the products and that the price is affordable for ordinary people. This has resulted in widespread use of painkillers such as aspirin and paracetamol which can effectively combat the effects of illness and aid recovery.*

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