

# The ideology behind the Pioneer Health Centre

*“The Peckham experiment was then, from the beginning, essentially a family health centre. It was more: an unusual mixture of family club and biologist’s laboratory dealing with the leisure life of the family and its personnel. This particular set-up cannot be appreciated unless we understand the biological distinction between health practice and medical practice. The Peckham health technique is fundamentally different from any form of medical technique.*

*Health technique as applied to the family and its personnel is directed to determining how healthy they are by looking for and assessing what is right with them – physically, mentally, and socially. By contrast, the medical technique and services*

*are determining how disordered and/or diseased the person is, by looking for and assessing what is wrong (physically and mentally, and now, belatedly, socially).*

*The medical approach is essentially one derived from the study of pathology. The Peckham approach – the determination of what is right with the family and its personnel and home – is derived from the other branch of biology not previously differentiated, and for which hitherto there has been neither name nor technical procedure. Let us call this branch of biology – ethology.”*

An excerpt from the article *Peckham: The First Health Centre* by G. Scott Williamson, M.C., M.D. Edin, published in *The Lancet*, 16<sup>th</sup> March 1946.

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