

Dear Colleagues,

Please find below a list of news items from the past fortnight that may be of interest to those involved in public health on the afternoon of Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2014.

This service provides topical news and reports of relevance to public health teams, community health practitioners and anyone with an interest in health promotion in collaboration with other health library services in Thames Valley & Wessex.

Please contact me if you no longer wish to receive this bulletin, or if you know of anyone else who would like to join the mailing list. The bulletins are now also available on the Health Education Wessex website at:

[http://www.workforce.southcentral.nhs.uk/libraries\\_elearning/library\\_knowledge\\_resources/public\\_health\\_updates.aspx](http://www.workforce.southcentral.nhs.uk/libraries_elearning/library_knowledge_resources/public_health_updates.aspx)

## Alcohol misuse

### [Five things you can do to cut your alcohol consumption](#)

24<sup>th</sup> December BBC News

According to the alcohol and drugs partnership in the Scottish Borders, cutting down on drinking is not "just for January". It points out that benefits can be far-reaching if undertaken on a more prolonged basis.

### [Rise in alcohol abuse help expected after festivities](#)

31<sup>st</sup> December BBC News

More people are expected to seek help from drug and alcohol charities over the new year.

### [Pub pregnancy test plea to halt FASD](#)

1<sup>st</sup> January BBC News

Mothers-to-be are bombarded with advice during pregnancy, but when it comes to alcohol the NHS message is clear: avoid it.

### [Drinkers urged to have a Dry January as thousands prepare to take on the month long booze free challenge](#)

31<sup>st</sup> December Alcohol Concern

Drinkers are being urged to start the New Year with a clear head and more money in their pocket by joining Alcohol Concern for Dry January 2014 and steering clear of booze for 31 days.

## Chronic conditions

### [New genetic clues for rheumatoid arthritis 'cure'](#)

25<sup>th</sup> December BBC News

An international team of researchers has found more than 40 new areas in DNA that increase the risk of rheumatoid arthritis.

### [Diabetes risk gene 'from Neanderthals'](#)

25<sup>th</sup> December BBC News

A gene variant that seems to increase the risk of diabetes in Latin Americans appears to have been inherited from Neanderthals, a study suggests.

### [Cancer doctor: My changing relationship with the disease](#)

31<sup>st</sup> December BBC News

After losing his grandmother to the illness - and later surviving it himself - he decided he needed to do something to bring comfort to people suffering from the disease.

#### [Oesophageal cancer deaths rise by 50%, report says](#)

6<sup>th</sup> January BBC News

Deaths from oesophageal cancer have risen by almost 50% in the last 40 years, according to Cancer Research UK.

#### ['Sticky balls' may stop cancer spreading](#)

7<sup>th</sup> January BBC News

Cancer-killing "sticky balls" can destroy tumour cells in the blood and may prevent cancers spreading, early research suggests.

#### [Early animal research into blocking breast cancer](#)

2<sup>nd</sup> January NHS Choices

"An injection that prevents breast cancer is being developed by scientists," is the news on the Mail Online website.

### **Communicable Diseases**

#### [Tackling drug-resistant TB in London](#)

6<sup>th</sup> January BBC News

Health experts are trying to tackle an increase in a highly infectious drug-resistant form of TB which could leave London on the cusp of a TB epidemic.

### **Diet & nutrition**

#### [Eating nuts during pregnancy 'may curb allergies'](#)

24<sup>th</sup> December BBC News

Children are less likely to have a nut allergy if their mother ate nuts while pregnant, a study has concluded.

#### [Could vitamin E slow dementia?](#)

2<sup>nd</sup> January NHS Choices

Research suggests that a daily dose of vitamin E could help people with dementia, BBC News reports.

#### [Intermittent fasting: Trying it out for science](#)

1<sup>st</sup> January BBC News

If losing weight is on your January wish-list, you're not alone - it's one of the most common New Year resolutions.

#### [New push to inspire healthy eating habits](#)

2<sup>nd</sup> January BBC News

Families are being urged to remove fatty and sugary foods from their diets, in a new campaign by Public Health England.

#### [Vitamin D in pregnancy may aid child's grip](#)

6<sup>th</sup> January NHS Choices

"Higher levels of maternal vitamin D during pregnancy have been linked to better muscle development in children," BBC News reports.

### [Buffaloberries – 2014's new 'superfood'](#)

3<sup>rd</sup> January NHS Choices

"The buffaloberry is the new superfood of 2014," the Mail Online declares.

### [Asthma: Altering diet may ease symptoms](#)

6<sup>th</sup> January BBC News

Fruits, vegetables and whole-grains might be an unlikely treatment for asthma according to animal studies

## Health services administration

### [GP visits: Millions wait a week or longer](#)

24<sup>th</sup> December BBC News

Millions of patients in England wait a week or longer to be seen by their GP surgery, official NHS figures reveal.

### [Patient data to be collected from GPs](#)

6<sup>th</sup> January BBC News

The NHS in England is to start collecting anonymised data on patient care by GPs for the first time.

## Infant & child health

### [From syphilis to sterilisation: A long history of infant feeding](#)

7<sup>th</sup> January BBC News

Breast is best, as the saying goes, but it has never been the only option: a look at infant feeding throughout history.

## Mental health

### [Schizophrenia: talking therapy offers 'little benefit'](#)

2<sup>nd</sup> January BBC News

Talking therapies have "little impact" on the symptoms of people with schizophrenia, a study suggests.

### [Mental health staff to be based in police stations](#)

4<sup>th</sup> January BBC News

Mental health nurses are to be based in police stations and courts in 10 areas of England as part of a pilot scheme aimed at cutting reoffending.

### [Stress test: Are you fit for work?](#)

7<sup>th</sup> January BBC News

Stress can lead to burn-out, whether you're a chief executive or a shelf stacker.

### [Experts say sadness is wrongly being medicalised](#)

6<sup>th</sup> January NHS Choices

Two experts have warned that antidepressants are being "doled out as cure for simple sadness," reports The Daily Telegraph.

## Obesity

### [Peterborough hospital staff wear 'fat suits'](#)

30<sup>th</sup> December BBC News

About 1,000 hospital staff are being trained to better understand their obese patients by wearing a "fat suit".

### [Obesity quadruples to nearly one billion in developing world](#)

3<sup>rd</sup> January BBC News

The number of overweight and obese adults in the developing world has almost quadrupled to around one billion since 1980, says a report from a UK think tank.

## Smoking

### [New push to make cigarette smokers in England quit](#)

29<sup>th</sup> December BBC News

A new public health campaign in England is highlighting the toxic damage tobacco smoke does to vital organs such as the brain, as well as the lungs.

### [Call for restrictions on sale of electronic cigarettes to children](#)

30<sup>th</sup> December BBC News

Restrictions should be placed on the sale of electronic cigarettes to prevent them being bought by children, according to an MSP.

### [Five ways to help give up smoking](#)

2<sup>nd</sup> January BBC News

The new year is traditionally a time when many people aim to ditch their cigarettes once and for all.

### [Smokers twice as likely to die of stroke](#)

29<sup>th</sup> December Inside Government - Public Health England

New Public Health England smokefree campaign highlights the toxic effect of smoking on the heart, brain and lungs.

### [Triple tobacco tax to prevent 200 million early deaths worldwide](#)

2<sup>nd</sup> January University of Oxford

Tripling the tax on tobacco would cut smoking worldwide by a third and prevent 200 million early deaths this century, according to leading researchers writing in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

### [Cigarette smoke could disrupt sleep](#)

7<sup>th</sup> January UK Health Forum

New research published in FASEB journal has found that smoking disrupts the circadian clock function of both lungs and brain.

## Women's health

### [Are IVF pregnancies more 'precious'?](#)

29<sup>th</sup> December BBC News

Women who have gone through fertility treatment often say it had a huge emotional and psychological impact on them and their partners.

### [New register for breast implants in England](#)

29<sup>th</sup> December BBC News

A register of all breast implant operations is to be introduced in England in the wake of the PIP scare, the Department of Health has announced.

## Local news:

**Other relevant bulletins – in order to avoid duplication we leave DH and NICE publication to Public Health Awareness Bulletins.**

### **PHE Bulletin**

Public Health England's regular update

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/260912/PHE\\_Bulletin\\_Issue7\\_final\\_25\\_November.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/260912/PHE_Bulletin_Issue7_final_25_November.pdf)

Other Public Health news update services:		
Title	Focus areas	Contact details/ Website
<b>NICE Public Health Awareness Bulletins:</b>	A monthly update containing national public health news and information from NICE.	<u><a href="https://www.evidence.nhs.uk/about-evidence-services/bulletins-and-alerts/whats-new-in-public-health/public-health-bulletin-archive">https://www.evidence.nhs.uk/about-evidence-services/bulletins-and-alerts/whats-new-in-public-health/public-health-bulletin-archive</a></u>