

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 1st April 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

Alcohol misuse

[Budget 2014 ignores alcohol as a serious public health issue](#)

Wednesday 19 March 2014

Alcohol Concern responds to the Budget 2014 which includes a duty freeze on spirits and most ciders as well as a 2% duty cut on general beer.

[Big Alcohol, Big Tobacco, Big Influence videos](#)

Videos from the University of Southampton's Big Alcohol, Big Tobacco, Big Influence symposium.

[Evidence for the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of interventions to reduce alcohol-related harm](#)

Source: WHO

Chronic conditions

[Lung cancer rates climb by three quarters in women while halving in men](#)

19 March 2014 Lung cancer rates in women have risen by a staggering three quarters (73 per cent) over the last forty years according to new Cancer Research UK figures released today.

[Regular physical activity reduces breast cancer risk irrespective of age](#)

19 March 2014 The European CanCer Organisation (ECCO)

<http://www.alphagalileo.org/ViewItem.aspx?ItemId=140138&CultureCode=en>

['Step forward' in skin cancer fight](#)

30 March 2014, 18:01:05

Scientists say they have taken a step forward in understanding why some people are at greater risk of skin cancer because of their family history.

Source: BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health/>

[Doctors launch new tool to measure your 'heart age'](#)

27 March 2014, 12:00:00 | NHS Choices

"People are being urged to find out their "true" heart age in order to cut the risk of heart attacks and strokes," BBC News reports. Doctors have put together a new risk calculator called JBS3 that can tell you the real "age" of your heart.

[Dentists to be given defibrillators](#)

31 March 2014, 09:33:57

Defibrillators are to be installed in every Scottish NHS dental practice to boost the chance of survival of those having cardiac arrests.

Source: BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health/>

[Research to reveal value placed on self-management support by patients with long-term conditions](#)

31 March 2014 Health Foundation

A new series of research projects, led by three of the UK's leading universities, will develop our understanding of the value patients place on self-management support in coping with long-term health conditions

[The association between older age and receipt of care and outcomes in patients with acute coronary syndromes: a cohort study of the Myocardial Ischaemia National Audit Project \(MINAP\)](#)

European Heart Journal

This analysis of data from MINAP (n=155,818) found a reduction in the use of secondary prevention medicines and intensive management with increasing age. Intensive management was associated with better survival at all ages (although the benefit was smaller in older age).

[Unintended effects of statins from observational studies in the general population: systematic review and meta-analysis](#)

BMC Medicine

90 studies of 48 different unintended effects found statins linked to lower risks dementia/cognitive impairment, VTE, fractures, pneumonia. Statins not linked to higher risk depression, eye diseases, renal disorders, arthritis. Increased risk myopathy, raised LFTs, diabetes noted.

[Statins 'may help to control MS'](#)

19 March 2014, 01:07:06

Heart drugs called statins may be useful in treating advanced multiple sclerosis (MS), say UK researchers.

Source: BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health/>

Communicable diseases

[First cat-to-human TB infections reported](#)

28 March 2014, 11:00:00 | NHS Choices

"Cats have passed TB to humans for the first time," the Daily Mail reports. Authorities are closely monitoring the situation and the risk of further transmission has been described as "very low".

[Cases of TB in domestic cats and cat-to-human transmission: risk to public very low](#)

27 March 2014, 10:37:00

[PHE commits to tackling TB](#)

24 March 2014, 15:35:36

To mark World TB Day Public Health England (PHE) is today launching its collaborative tuberculosis (TB) strategy for consultation, aimed at bringing together best practice in clinical care, social support and public health to strengthen TB control.

[Scarlet fever cases increase across England](#)

21 March 2014, 12:11:00

Public Health England (PHE) has reported significant increases in scarlet fever notifications across England, with a total of 3,548 new cases since the season began in September 2013, compared to an average of 1,420 cases reported for the same period in the previous 10 years. The last season to have this level of scarlet fever activity was 1989 to 1990 when 4,042 notifications were received.

[ESUOM29: Difficult-to-treat scabies: oral ivermectin](#)

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

Oral ivermectin (unlicensed in the UK) appears to be effective for treating people with classical or crusted scabies. However, differences in treatment regimens and the length of follow-up make interpreting comparisons with topical treatments difficult.

Diet & nutrition

[Briefing: Junk food marketing to children campaign](#)

British Heart Foundation campaign.

http://nhfshare.heartforum.org.uk/RMAssets/JunkFoodCampaign_210314.pdf

[Concession stand makeovers: a pilot study of offering healthy foods at high school concession stands](#)

J Public Health first published online March 12, 2014

doi:10.1093/pubmed/fdu015

<http://jpubhealth.oxfordjournals.org/>

Disability

[Back pain 'leading cause of disability,' study finds](#)

25 March 2014, 12:30:00 | NHS Choices

"Back pain behind 'more disability than any other condition'," ITV News reports after a new study found that the condition may now be the leading cause of disability worldwide.

Environmental health

[7 million premature deaths annually linked to air pollution](#)

25 March 2014 | WHO

WHO reports that in 2012 around 7 million people died - one in eight of total global deaths – as a result of air pollution exposure

Health promotion

['Eat seven a day' fruit and veg call](#)

01 April 2014, 07:58:52

Eating seven or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day is healthier than the five currently recommended and would prolong lives, researchers say.

Source: BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health/>

Health protection

[Meningitis B vaccine may be available on the NHS](#)

21 March 2014, 01:00:00 | NHS Choices

"A vaccine that protects against a deadly form of meningitis is set to be introduced in the UK," BBC News reports, while the Mail Online adds that a "New life-saving meningitis jab [will be available] for all children on NHS as Health Secretary announces policy U-turn."

[News story: Successful start to rotavirus vaccination programme](#)

28 March 2014, 13:56:00

Preliminary [data](#) published today (28 March 2014) show an excellent start to the uptake of the rotavirus vaccination programme introduced last year by Public Health England, the Department of Health and NHS England.

[Meningococcal C conjugate vaccine: the 'freshers' dose](#)

Public Health England

This 'Dear colleague' letter from the head of immunisation at Public Health England reviews changes to the meningococcal vaccination schedule in 2014, particularly for first-time university students under 25 years of age.

Health services administration

[Consultation skills for pharmacy practice framework launched](#)

Health Education England 19 March 2014 - 09:32

Pharmacy, alongside the whole of the NHS, is committed to putting patients at the centre of their own healthcare, enabling them to share decisions and make informed choices about their own health. Effective consultations with patients lie at the heart of delivering patient-centred care.

[The future of public health: A horizon scan](#)

Rand Corporation.

Public Health England (PHE) commissioned RAND Europe to undertake a horizon scanning study exploring the future of public health and related scientific services.

[Raiding the public health budget](#)

BMJ 2014;348:g2274

<http://www.bmj.com/content/348/bmj.g2274>

Infant & child health

[Rapid breathing 'better' for premature babies](#)

20 March 2014, 12:00:00 | NHS Choices

"Rapid breaths 'protect early babies'," BBC News reports.

[PHE's 2014 Child Health Profiles published](#)

19 March 2014, 11:21:00

The [Child Health Profiles 2014](#), published today (Wednesday 19 March 2014) by Public Health England (PHE), presents a picture of child health and wellbeing for each local authority in England using 32 key health indicators which help local organisations work in partnership to improve health in their local area.

[Children 'under-dosed' on penicillin](#)

26 March 2014, 03:53:07

Millions of children in the UK are being given penicillin at too low a dose, putting them at risk of persistent infections, say researchers.

Source: BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health/>

Mental health

[MindEd](#)

Elearning portal for anybody working with children and young people's mental health issues.

<https://www.minded.org.uk/>

[Study Defines Link Between Depression and Obesity](#)

New research from a Rutgers University–Camden professor shows that adolescent females who experience one of the disorders are at a greater risk for the other as they get older.

Source: <http://news.camden.rutgers.edu>

Obesity

[Commissioning guide: Weight assessment and management clinics \(tier 3\)](#)

Sponsoring Organisation: British Obesity and Metabolic Surgery Society
Published March 2014

[Summary of the National Child Measurement Programme and nutrition and healthy weight regional events](#)

Report from PHE March 2014

[Could a DNA test predict obesity risk in children?](#)

27 March 2014, 01:00:00 | NHS Choices

"A DNA blood test can predict obesity levels in children as they grow up, scientists claim," the Metro reports. The test, which is based on measuring "switches" in DNA, may help identify children who would benefit from early intervention.

[Should people with 'fat genes' avoid fried food?](#)

19 March 2014, 01:00:00 | NHS Choices

"Eating fried food is more likely to make you fat if you have 'obesity genes'," The Independent reports after a study in the BMJ suggested that those with a genetic predisposition towards [obesity](#) should avoid fried food.

Oral health

[Fluoride monitoring report finds lower levels of tooth decay in fluoridated areas and no evidence of harm to health](#)

25 March 2014, 11:26:21

Children in local authorities with water fluoridation schemes (where the level of fluoride is adjusted to 1 part per million) have less tooth decay than those in local authorities without such schemes, says a new report by Public Health England (PHE).

Screening

[Press release: Latest bowel cancer screening technique reaps benefits](#)

31 March 2014, 09:50:22

New figures released today, 31 March 2014, from Public Health England (PHE) show that nearly 37% (36.6%) of bowel scope screening centres in England are operational, clearly exceeding the 30% roll out target, set by the Department of Health in their ['Improving Outcomes: A Strategy for Cancer' document \(2011\)](#).

[Call for change to breast screening](#)

22 March 2014, 02:09:38

Almost one-third of women are at a higher risk of developing breast cancer and should be screened more than once every three years, a study says.

Source: BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health/>

Sexual health

[Survey shows need for quality sex and relationships education](#)

21st March, 2014 Family Planning Association

Results from Northern Ireland's annual Health Survey have reiterated the need for quality sex and relationships education and access to a full range of contraceptive methods

Smoking

[Smoke-free laws linked to improved child health](#)

28 March 2014, 01:00:00 | NHS Choices

"Laws banning smoking in public places have had a positive impact on child health," BBC News reports. Researchers found lower rates of preterm births and childhood severe asthma cases after the introduction of smoke-free laws.

[Plain cigarette packaging doesn't work, says industry funded study](#)

26 March 2014, 12:00:00 | NHS Choices

"Unbranded cigarettes could mean people smoke more, experts warn," The Daily Telegraph reports.

[Big Alcohol, Big Tobacco, Big Influence videos](#)

Videos from the University of Southampton's Big Alcohol, Big Tobacco, Big Influence symposium.

Social & economic issues

[Inequality Costs UK £39 Billion per Year](#)

Source: The Equality Trust

Report on inequality in the UK and the cost on health.

[Smartphone overuse may 'damage' eyes](#)

28 March 2014, 07:08:08

Opticians say people are so addicted to things like smart phones there's increasing risk of damaging their eyes.

Source: BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health/>

Women's health

[NICE: 'schools should provide morning-after pill'](#)

26 March 2014, 12:00:00 | NHS Choices

New guidelines on contraceptive services for young people issued by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) have prompted widespread coverage.

[Study fails to prove effects of stress on fertility](#)

24 March 2014, 11:30:00 | NHS Choices

"Stress can double the risk of infertility for women," The Daily Mail reports. However, the evidence provided by the latest study is not as clear cut as the reporting implies.

[Hospitals treat 4,000 FGM patients](#)

19 March 2014, 08:48:54

Nearly 4,000 women and girls have been treated for genital mutilation in London hospitals since 2009, new figures show.

Source: BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health/>

[Miscarriage link to low IVF success](#)

21 March 2014, 03:29:56

Women who produce fewer eggs during IVF treatment are more likely to miscarry, research suggests

Source: BBC <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health/>

Local news: []

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

Other South East Public Health news update services:		
Title	Focus areas	Contact details/ Website
NICE Public Health Awareness Bulletins:	A monthly update containing national public health news and information from NICE.	https://www.evidence.nhs.uk/about-evidence-services/bulletins-and-alerts/whats-new-in-public-health/public-health-bulletin-archive
Health Intelligence bulletin	Fortnightly email update containing public health news, publications and information from government and other relevant websites.	Jill Rutland Kent & Medway Public Health Network jill.rutland@nhs.net