



Public Health Bulletin 13 May 2014

Produced by NHS libraries in Thames Valley and Wessex.

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 13th May 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 Wessex Public Health Network website at:

<http://www.wessexphnetwork.org.uk/resources/public-health-updates.aspx>

Chronic conditions

[Asthma is still a 'killer,' report warns](#)

Tuesday 6 May 2014

Source: NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk>

Health news today is dominated by the news that, as The Daily Telegraph reports, two in three asthma deaths "could have been prevented". The Daily Mail says that half of those who died were given the wrong medication.

[Mini-stroke dismissed as 'funny turn'](#)

Thursday 1 May 2014

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

Those who ignore symptoms of a TIA (transient ischaemic attack) or mini-stroke are running the risk of having a major stroke, the Stroke Association warns.

Communicable diseases

[Why is polio a public health emergency?](#)

Tuesday 6 May 2014

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

At first glance it might seem odd for the spread of polio to be declared an international public health emergency. There have been 68 recorded cases of wild poliovirus so far in 2014. Last year there were 417 cases.

[Pakistan to immunise people going abroad against polio](#)

Tuesday 6 May 2014

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

The Pakistani government says it will set up mandatory immunisation points at airports and border crossings to help stop its polio outbreak from spreading.

Diet & nutrition

[Affordable healthy diet 'too expensive for many'](#)

Thursday 1 May 2014

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

Many people do not have enough income for a "decent diet", public health experts have claimed in an open letter to the prime minister.

Disability

[Health Ombudsman urges action to prevent 'avoidable' deaths of people with a learning disability](#)

Thursday 1 May 2014

Source: Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
<http://www.ombudsman.org.uk/>

Too many people with a learning disability are not getting access to the right care and treatment at the right time, leading to avoidable deaths in some cases, the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) warns today.

Drug Misuse

[Casual cocaine users may be risking heart damage](#)

Thursday 1 May 2014

Source: NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk>

"Even 'social' cocaine users are doing catastrophic damage to their hearts," the Mail Online reports after an Australian study found that casual cocaine use was associated with heart damage.

Health protection

[Pregnant women urged to get whooping cough jab](#)

Friday 2 May 2014

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

Pregnant women are being urged to take up the offer of a whooping cough vaccine, even though cases have fallen by half since an outbreak in 2012.

Health services administration

["When the public complains, leaders in government need to pay attention" says Julie Mellor as complaint figures are revealed.](#)

Tuesday 6 May 2014

Source: Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman: <http://www.ombudsman.org.uk/>

The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman has published new findings today which reveal the number and nature of complaints about government departments and agencies in 2013.

[Regulators publish guide to special measures for trusts](#)

Tuesday 6 May 2014

Source: Care Quality Commission:

<http://www.cqc.org.uk/>

CQC, Monitor and the Trust Development Authority (TDA) have brought together guidance on special measures, which has been published on the regulators' websites as a guide for trusts.

Infant & child health

[Four rare diseases added to newborn screening](#)

Monday 12 May 2014

Source: NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk>

"Newborn babies to be tested for rare diseases," reports BBC News online.

[Breastfeeding 'cuts childhood asthma risk'](#)

Wednesday 7 May 2014

Source: NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk>

"Breastfeeding DOES cut the risk of asthma, says landmark study of 250,000 babies over 30 years," the Mail Online reports. A major review has found a link between breastfeeding and reduced childhood asthma rates.

['Marijuana refugees' give cannabis to epileptic children](#)

Wednesday 7 May 2014

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

Parents in the US with severely epileptic children are turning to marijuana for treatment.

[Study suggests 'smacking children doesn't work'](#)

Friday 2 May 2014

Source: NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk>

"Parents smack their children more than they admit – and it DOESN'T improve behaviour," the Mail Online reports.

[Baby helmets 'have no added value', study finds](#)

Friday 2 May 2014

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

Corrective baby helmets have virtually no effect on head shape, according to the most definitive study yet. The use of rigid plastic helmets has become popular with parents concerned their baby has an odd-shaped head.

Mental health

[Fat shaming 'more damaging than racism'](#)

Monday 12 May 2014

Source: NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk>

"Fat shaming can have a much worse impact on mental and physical health than racism or sexism," the Mail Online reports, describing "fat shaming" as discrimination against those who are overweight.

[Workplaces must get 'dementia friendly'](#)

Wednesday 7 May 2014

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

Businesses must become more dementia-friendly and support employees who care for loved ones with dementia, says the government.

[Mental health patients forced to travel miles for care](#)

Tuesday 6 May 2014

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

A lack of beds is forcing mental health patients in England to seek treatment in other NHS facilities up to hundreds of miles away, BBC research has found.

[Could watching TV be making you stressed?](#)

Friday 2 May 2014

Source: NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk>

"Stress can be transmitted through TV screen," The Daily Telegraph's website reports. The site's report uses an image from hit US TV series "Breaking Bad" to imply that box-set binges may not be good for your stress levels.

[Mass memory and reasoning tests 'track dementia risk'](#)

Friday 2 May 2014

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

A third of a million adults in the UK are to be invited to take part in the world's biggest study of cognitive function. The aim of the trial, funded by the Medical Research Council, is to try to predict what factors may increase the risk of developing dementia.

Sexual health

[Syphilis cases on the rise across north Wales](#)

Thursday 1 May 2014

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

There has been a huge rise in cases of the sexually transmitted infection syphilis in north Wales, according to health experts. Since the middle of 2013, 39 cases have been reported to Public Health Wales (PHW) in the region, when there are usually only around seven a year.

Social & economic issues

[Claims that men are being 'nagged to death' inflated](#)

Friday 9 May 2014

Source: NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk>

"Nagging could drive men to an early grave, study suggests," The Independent reports. A Danish study found that both sexes were adversely affected by constant nagging, but men seemed to be more vulnerable.

[The ageing game: Could we all be 95-year-old athletes?](#)

Wednesday 7 May 2014

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

People in rich countries are getting older. But is a longer life always a better life? In the first of a series about the ageing population, Smitha Mundasad looks at whether we can influence the rate at which we age.

Care agencies 'must ensure recruits can speak English'

Wednesday 7 May 2014

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

Agencies should ensure people recruited as carers can speak English before placing them in vulnerable people's homes, a government adviser has said.

Children 'influenced by parents' screen-viewing habits'

Thursday 1 May 2014

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

Children are three times more likely to spend lots of time watching TV and playing on screens if their parents do the same, suggests a Bristol University study.

Statistics

ONS suggests that one in four deaths are 'avoidable'

Thursday 8 May 2014

Source: NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk>

"1 in 4 deaths could have been prevented," The Times reports. Figures released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) found that 23% of deaths could have been prevented through better care, more effective treatment and healthier living.

Cancer waiting time overhaul trial in Wales

Wednesday 7 May 2014

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

An overhaul of the way cancer waiting times are measured is expected to be trialled throughout Wales.

Why the UK has a high child death rate

Saturday 3 May 2014

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

The UK has one of the most advanced health systems in the world, but one of worst child mortality rates in Western Europe. In this week's Scrubbing Up, Dr Ingrid Wolfe of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health and lead author of a report published this week entitled 'Why Children Die' examines why the UK is lagging behind its European counterparts and suggests what we should be doing about it.

WHO warns about threat of drug resistance

Thursday 1 May 2014

Source: NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk>

"WHO calls for urgent action to preserve power of antibiotics and make new ones," The Guardian reports. The World Health Organization (WHO), has published a report highlighting the growing global threat of drug resistance.

Women's health

New advice encourages more home births

Tuesday 13 May 2014

Source: NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk>

"More women should give birth at home, advice suggests," reports The Guardian after draft guidelines produced by the National Institute for Health and Care

Excellence (NICE) recommended that women with a low risk of complications in childbirth should be encouraged to either give birth at home or at a midwife-led unit.

Lack of exercise 'highest risk' for women over 30

Friday 9 May 2014

Source: NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk>

"Heart disease warning: Lack of exercise is worse risk for over-30s women than smoking or obesity," The Independent reports. It is important to stress that this headline is based on a result that is applicable to a population, not to an individual.

Early menopause linked to mental decline

Thursday 8 May 2014

Source: NHS Choices: <http://www.nhs.uk>

"Premature menopause is linked with poor thinking and reaction times," The Daily Telegraph reports.

Workplace health

Sitting while working can increase risk of diabetes

Wednesday 7 May 2014

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

Whether it's at home, in the office or in the car, there's a chance sitting down is a big part of your day...but should it be?

Local news: []

Other relevant bulletins – in order to avoid duplication we leave Department of Health 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

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