



Public Health Bulletin. 8th July 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 8th July 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>

Alcohol misuse

[Two-question test for alcohol misuse 'effective'](#)

Monday 7 July 2014

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk

"Do you regularly have more than six drinks in one sitting? Or do you regret a drunken escapade that took place in the past year? Answering yes to both questions may be a sign that you have a drink problem," the Mail Online reports.

[Scientists "develop test for teen binge-drinking risk"](#)

Thursday 3 July 2014

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Scientists claim to have developed a way of predicting which teenagers are likely to binge-drink.

[Doctors, alcohol groups and local governments oppose possible relaxing of licensing laws](#)

Tuesday 24 June 2014

Source: UK Health Forum www.ukhealthforum.org.uk

The House of Lords were due to debate the possible relaxation of licensing laws in England which would allow the Women's Institute, B&B's and charities to sell alcohol at events or gatherings. Many of the groups opposed to this deregulation believe it would worsen Britain's drinking problem.

Chronic conditions

[Obesity and diabetes cost 'harms NHS'](#)

Sunday 6 July 2014

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

NHS Scotland has spent nearly £230m on drugs to treat diabetes and obesity within three years, figures have shown.

[Gene linked to higher stroke and heart attack risk](#)

Wednesday 2 July 2014

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Researchers have identified a gene that may put people at greater risk of strokes and heart attacks.

[Diabetes drugs 'may not be best'](#)
Tuesday 1 July 2014

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

The downsides of taking medication for type-2 diabetes may exceed the benefits for some patients, researchers have advised.

[Blood test for breast cancer 'has potential'](#)
Friday 27 June 2014

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk

"Blood test could give early warning of breast cancer," The Guardian reports. Researchers have identified a genetic signature that may be useful in predicting whether a woman is likely to develop non-inherited breast cancer.

Communicable diseases

[Ghana tests US man for Ebola virus](#)
Monday 7 July 2014

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

A US citizen is being tested for the Ebola virus in Ghana, which has had no confirmed cases of the virus in the current West African outbreak.

[Ebola outbreak: West African states agree strategy](#)
Friday 4 July 2014

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Health ministers from 11 West African countries have adopted a common strategy to fight a deadly Ebola outbreak in the region.

[Teens could be given whooping cough booster](#)
Wednesday 25 June 2014

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk

"One in five children who see a doctor with a persistent cough may have...whooping cough, new research indicates," The Independent reports. These findings have sparked calls for teenagers to be given a booster dose of the vaccine.

[Big jump in Mers cases reported](#)
Thursday 26 June 2014

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

More than 100 more cases and 34 deaths from the new respiratory disease Mers-coronavirus have been reported by officials in Saudi Arabia.

Diet & nutrition

[Children's TV 'unhealthy food' worry](#)
Friday 4 July 2014

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Unhealthy food makes a "startlingly" high number of appearances in children's television shows, researchers say.

[Vitamin D deficiency linked to high blood pressure](#)
Thursday 26 June 2014

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk

"Vitamin D supplements could help high blood pressure," The Independent reports. The paper reports on new research into genetic variations associated with low vitamin D levels and their relationship with blood pressure.

[Give kids water not fruit juice, parents advised](#)

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk

Thursday 26 June 2014

"Ban all drinks but water from dinner table, parents told," is The Daily Telegraph's front page headline.

[Water as only mealtime drink 'will combat child obesity'](#)

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Thursday 26 June 2014

Children should be given only water to drink with meals to help tackle the obesity crisis, experts argue.

[Call to halve target for added sugar](#)

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Thursday 26 June 2014

People need to more than halve their intake of added sugar to tackle the obesity crisis, according to scientific advice for the government in England.

[Local Government Association requests European Commission to ban misleading labels](#)

Source: UK Health Forum www.ukhealthforum.org.uk

Tuesday 24 June 2014

The LGA believe food firms should be banned from putting 'misleading' healthy labels on foods full of sugar and salt. Health experts have found "Low Fat" options in supermarkets can contain more sugar than their 'normal fat' equivalent. Other key words which mislead consumers are "wholegrain" and "antioxidants". The LGA want the traffic light labels to become universal and standardised as one method to combat the issue.

[Sponsoring of major sporting events by 'junk food' companies is contradictory to worldwide efforts to halt obesity](#)

Source: UK Health Forum www.ukhealthforum.org.uk

Tuesday 24 June 2014

Honor Whiteman writes a detailed article regarding the influence of 'junk food' sponsorships on viewers of major international sporting events. Whiteman discuss the marketing strategies that tie-in with events like the 2014 World Cup and how they appear to influence purchase intent.

[Children on a Mediterranean diet have a 15 per cent lower risk of being overweight](#)

Source: UK Health Forum www.ukhealthforum.org.uk

Tuesday 24 June 2014

At the European Congress on Obesity, researchers from the University of Gothenburg presented their finding that children who ate a more Mediterranean based diet were less likely to be overweight or obese. Looking at eight European countries the results showed that geographical location had no bearing on adherence to a Mediterranean diet with Swedish children at the top and children from Cyprus having the lowest adherence.

Disability

[Family support disabled man with accessibility guide](#)

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Monday 7 July 2014

[Euan's Guide](#), a disabled access review website and app, is capturing attention and support where others have failed.

When Euan MacDonald became disabled due to Motor Neurone Disease diagnosed 10 years ago, he got frustrated that the only way to discover if a venue was fully accessible was by visiting it himself.

Health promotion

[Evidence proves Dry January changes lives and benefits your health](#) Source: Alcohol Concern www.alcoholconcern.org.uk
Thursday 3 July 2014

Early signs show just how much Alcohol Concern's campaign Dry January really works.

Health protection

[PM's antibiotics plan 'not enough'](#) Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk
Monday 7 July 2014

The prime minister's plan to tackle antibiotic resistance may be too slow, a parliamentary report says.

[Hay fever: Paying the price for an allergy](#) Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk
Friday 4 July 2014

For millions of people the sunshine and long days mean one thing - weeks of sneezing, coughing and itching while battling their way through hay fever season.

Health services administration

[Dying need 'free social care'](#) Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk
Friday 4 July 2014

Free end-of-life social care is needed to save the NHS in England money and improve patient care, campaigners say.

[Priorities for care part of new approach to care for dying people](#) Source: CQC
www.cqc.org.uk
Thursday 26 June 2014

A new approach to the care of people who are dying based on the needs and wishes of the person and those close to them has been launched today by the Department of Health and welcomed by CQC.

[Seeing a GP 'getting more difficult'](#) Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk
Thursday 3 July 2014

Getting to see a GP in England is getting more difficult, the official patient survey shows.

[NHS plan 'a recipe for disaster'](#) Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk
Thursday 3 July 2014

Cutting back on hospital services in England - before community services are geared up to provide care - is a "recipe for disaster", MPs say.

Infant & child health

[Kids who know their fast food logos 'grow up fat'](#)

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk

Tuesday 1 July 2014

"Children who recognise fast food brands are more likely to be obese," the Mail Online reports.

Mental health

['Major step' towards Alzheimer's test](#)

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Tuesday 8 July 2014

British scientists have made a "major step forward" in developing a blood test to predict the onset of Alzheimer's disease.

['Gaps' in mental care for new mums](#)

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Sunday 6 July 2014

There are "huge gaps" in support and care for the mental health of new mothers by the NHS in England, a parenting charity has said.

[Parents of autistic kids 'have autistic traits too'](#)

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk

Wednesday 2 July 2014

"Parents of children with autism are more likely to have autistic traits," the Mail Online reports. The news comes from research comparing the families of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) with those that are unaffected.

[Decline in trials for Alzheimer's](#)

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Thursday 3 July 2014

More than 99% of drug trials for Alzheimer's disease during the past decade have failed, according to a study.

["Advice on prescription" project to help beat depression](#)

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Tuesday 1 July 2014

The NHS in Liverpool is trying a different approach to help patients who are distressed or on the verge of depression. Every GP in the city is being given access to a Citizens Advice worker, who can offer support with housing and financial problems.

[Cannabis use 'genetically linked' to schizophrenia](#)

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk

Wednesday 25 June 2014

"Study finds people predisposed to [schizophrenia] and drug users share common genes," the Mail Online reports. A new study suggests that 'schizophrenia' genes are associated with cannabis use.

[Mental health services 'a car crash'](#)

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Tuesday 24 June 2014

Mental health services in England are "a car crash" and the health secretary is not taking the problems seriously, according to the outgoing president of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Physical activity

[One in five women put off from physical activity because of their breasts](#) Source: UK Health Forum www.ukhealthforum.org.uk
Wednesday 25 June 2014

Researchers from the University of Portsmouth have found that many women are put off doing sports or exercise because of their breasts. Two of the reasons given by women surveyed were not being able to find the correct sports bra and embarrassment due to their breasts moving during exercise. The study found women who knew more breast health were more likely to do physical activity.

[People find the Government guidelines too hard to meet and become discouraged](#)
Source: UK Health Forum www.ukhealthforum.org.uk
Tuesday 24 June 2014

The head of exercise medicine at University College London has stated that Government guidelines for physical activity are discouraging people from doing more physical activity. Dr Loosemore suggests that instead of setting lofty targets for the public, Government should be promoting small but frequent physical activity, like standing or walking up one step on an escalator. These small changes could lead to more and bigger changes, helping to improve many people's lives.

Sexual health

['Remote control' contraceptive chip](#) Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk
Monday 7 July 2014

A contraceptive computer chip that can be controlled by remote control has been developed in Massachusetts.

[Older sperm donors 'just as good'](#) Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk
Monday 30 June 2014

Women should not worry about using sperm from older donors as the success rate is the same as using a younger man's sperm, researchers say.

[UK facing 'major' sperm shortage](#) Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk
Saturday 28 June 2014

The UK is facing a major sperm shortage that may be tempting fertility clinics to accept poorer quality sperm, the British Fertility Society (BFS) warns.

Smoking

[Menthol cigs 'encourage teens to smoke more'](#) Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk
Tuesday 24 June 2014

"Menthol cigarettes ARE more addictive," the Mail Online claims, based on a survey of 5,000 teenagers. The 2010-11 Canadian school survey found that 16% of teenagers aged 14 to 18 smoke cigarettes.

[Ban new smokers, call from BMA conference](#)

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Tuesday 24 June 2014

Smoking should be banned for anyone born in the UK in the 21st Century, doctors say. Delegates at the British Medical Association (BMA) annual conference voted in favour of a motion to prohibit smoking to anyone born after 2000.

Social & economic issues

[Mobile phones carry owners' bacterial 'fingerprint'](#)

Source: BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Tuesday 24 June 2014

Smartphones reflect the personal microbial world of their owners, say US scientists. More than 80% of the common bacteria that make up our personal bacterial "fingerprints" end up on their screens, a study suggests.

[Warm homes into the future: Meeting the UK's energy challenges](#) Source: UK Health Forum www.ukhealthforum.org.uk

Tuesday 24 June 2014

This UNISON report provides compelling evidence that addressing domestic energy efficiency issues in a comprehensive and systematic way is the most viable policy approach we can take, in addressing the multiple energy challenges the UK faces.

Women's health

[Aggressive breast cancer protein discovered](#)

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk

Monday 7 July 2014

"A breakthrough by scientists could lead to a new treatment for one of the most aggressive forms of breast cancer," the Mail Online reports. Researchers have identified a protein called integrin $\alpha\beta6$, which may help trigger the spread of some types of breast cancer.

[FPA and Brook respond to Home Affairs Committee report on FGM](#) Source: Family Planning Association www.fpa.org.uk

Thursday 3 July 2014

Responding to the publication today of the Home Affairs Select Committee report, [Female genital mutilation: The case for a national action plan](#), the acting CEO of FPA, Dr Audrey Simpson OBE, and Chief Executive of Brook, Simon Blake OBE, said: "Brook and FPA agree with the report's finding that urgent action is needed.

Workplace health

[New figures show all time low in fatal injuries to workers](#) Executive www.hse.gov.uk

Source: Health and Safety

Wednesday 2 July 2014

New figures released today indicate the number of workers killed in Britain last year has fallen to the lowest annual rate on record.

Work aggravated asthma: A review of reviews

Executive www.hse.gov.uk

Monday 30 June 2014

Source: Health and Safety

Seven percent of the adult population have asthma, a condition commonly made worse by inhaling irritant exposures at work; termed work-aggravated asthma (WAA). A variety of factors that cause WAA have been identified by this review, including inhaled exposures, physical factors and behavioural issues.

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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