

Public Health Bulletin. 19 08 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. This Bulletin provides topical news and reports of relevance to public health teams, community health practitioners and anyone with an interest in health promotion. All content and links are provided for information only and we do not sponsor, endorse or otherwise approve of any mentioned website or the contents of the news items. Please refer to the terms and conditions of the relevant website should you wish to reproduce any of the information.

Details of alternative current awareness services which cover more academic/specialist sources of information can be found in the section *Other Bulletins*. Your local NHS library service can assist you in accessing other current awareness services/tailored alerts, locating peer reviewed journal articles and answer any other queries you may have regarding finding information.

The information about each news item only gives a brief overview so we recommend you view the original source by clicking on the title (or Ctrl+Click in the word document).

Please contact your local NHS library service 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 available on the Wessex Public Health Network website at:

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

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Alcohol misuse

[Alcoholic drinks should carry health warnings, says parliamentary group](#)

Monday 11th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Alcohol Misuse said labels should warn about the harmful effects of drinking to help reduce alcohol related problems. It wants political parties to commit to 10 recommendations to minimise alcohol-related problems in the UK - including cutting the drink-drive limit.

[London boroughs to trial alcohol measuring tags to cut down on drunk behaviour](#)

Tuesday 5th August 2014

Source: www.ukhealthforum.org.uk

Four London boroughs are testing new sobriety tags which, when attached to a person's skin can measure the amount of alcohol consumed. The device will be used on those that have repeatedly caused trouble when drunk. With alcohol-related crime up and alcohol related A&E visits raising, any method to help contain the problem is being considered.

Chronic conditions

[Macmillan finds cancer survival 'postcode lottery'](#)

Friday 15th August 2014

Source: www.nhs.uk

Cancer survival figures compiled by Macmillan Cancer Support suggest that the proportion of people who die within a year of a cancer diagnosis is two-thirds higher in poor-performing areas, compared with high-performing areas.

[Daily aspirin 'reduces cancer risk', study finds](#)

Wednesday 6th August 2014

Source: www.nhs.uk

People aged between 50 and 65 who take aspirin every day for 10 years could cut their risk of bowel cancer by 30% and cancers of the throat and stomach by 25%, according to the study published in the Annals of Oncology.

[Saturated fat in dairy 'may protect against diabetes'](#)

Wednesday 6th August 2014

Source: www.nhs.uk

A study has found that people with higher levels of the types of saturated fatty acid found in dairy products are less likely to develop type 2 diabetes.

['Resuscitation drug adrenaline questioned in cardiac arrest'](#)

Wednesday 13th August 2014

Source: www.nhs.uk

Approval has been given for a study where some cardiac arrest patients will be given a dummy drug, rather than adrenaline to kick-start their heart. There are concerns that adrenaline, used for more than 50 years as a key part of resuscitation, can do more harm than good.

[Could HIV drugs help treat multiple sclerosis?](#)

Tuesday 5th August 2014

Source: www.nhs.uk

A new study has discovered people with HIV were almost two-thirds less likely (62%) to develop multiple sclerosis (MS) than those who did not have the virus. The study was

prompted by the case of a patient who had HIV and MS, but stayed clear of any MS symptoms for more than 12 years.

'Nurse ratio' at weekends key to stroke survival for patients

Tuesday 19th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

The number of nurses available at weekends - but not the frequency of doctors' ward rounds - affects chances of survival after stroke, a study says. Researchers found patients admitted to stroke units with the lowest ratio of nurses were most likely to die in the month after a stroke.

'Stem cells show promise in stroke recovery'

Saturday 9th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

Infusing stem cells into the brain may help boost recovery after a stroke, according to a pilot study by Imperial College London. Scientists believe the cells encourage new blood vessels to grow in damaged areas of the brain. They found most patients were able to walk and look after themselves independently by the end of the trial, despite having suffered severe strokes.

Diet & nutrition

LGA - Surge in diabetes shows need to reinvest VAT on sugary drinks and fast food

Monday 11th August 2014

Source: www.local.gov.uk

Cllr Jonathan McShane of the LGA's Community Wellbeing Board responded to latest statistics showing a significant increase in diabetes prescriptions. "The sheer numbers of people with diabetes shows the very real need to help more of the population improve their diets and lead healthy lifestyles.the LGA is calling forthe next government to reinvest a small percentage of the VAT received by the Treasury from the sale of sugary foods and drinks into locally-run activity and weight management programmes. This extra money would be a massive boost in the battle to combat obesity and diabetes and has the potential to improve lives and save the public purse many billions of pounds."

Restaurant dining 'as calorific as fast food'

Friday 8th August 2014

Source: www.nhs.uk

"Eating in restaurants no better than fast food for health," reports The Daily Telegraph after the publication of a study on the calorie intake of eating out. The US study found people who enjoyed dining at a full-service restaurant consumed just as many calories as those who ate fast food.

Salt content in cheese 'too high', say campaigners

Thursday 7th August 2014

Source: www.nhs.uk

Researchers looked at 612 supermarket cheeses and found that salt levels were high. They also found a wide variation in salt content within the same types of cheese. Halloumi and imported blue cheese contained the highest average amount of salt (2.71g/100g), more salty than seawater (2.5g/100g), whereas cottage cheese contained the lowest average amount of salt (0.55g/100g).

[Local Government Association criticise restaurant and pub chains for failure to reduce salt content in food](#)

Wednesday 6th August 2014

Source: www.ukhealthforum.org.uk

The LGA has criticised many chain restaurants and pubs for failing to reduce the salt content in food despite pledging to in the voluntary responsibility deal. Only two chains, Jamie's Kitchen and Subway, have followed the guidelines and reduced the salt content of their top 10 dishes.

[Eating baked or broiled fish every week could keep brain healthy](#)

Wednesday 6th August 2014

Source: www.ukhealthforum.org.uk

Researchers from the University of Pittsburgh have found evidence that eating baked or broiled fish weekly could keep the brain healthy later in life. Previous studies have found omega-3 fatty acids to be the significant contributors but this study looked at the preparation methods participants used and found those who baked or broiled fish had healthier brains than those who fried the fish.

Disability

[Parents feel more supported ahead of radical SEND reforms](#)

Friday 15th August 2014

Source: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education

An independent report into the new support shows that the measures are already making a real difference to the lives of children, young people and families. The biggest transformation to SEND support for 30 years will give children and parents greater say over their personalised care and assistance, and put in place a new, continual birth-to-25 system for children and young people with SEND.

[Therapeutic magic: Tricks to stretch your hands and fingers](#)

Monday 11th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

Young people with hemiplegia, a condition which results in one side of the body being weaker than the other, have been taking part in a magic camp in London. The Breathe Magic Summer Camp is intended to help young people with the condition to improve their hand movement, coordination and confidence by learning and practising magic tricks taught to them by real magicians.

[Lesser-known things about deafness](#)

Wednesday 6th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

Beyond being unable to hear, there's quite a lot about deaf people and culture that non-deaf people may be unaware of. It's estimated that one in six people are deaf to some degree which translates as 10 million people in the UK. Numbers are set to rise, with Action on Hearing Loss expecting them to reach 14.5 million by 2031 - they attribute this number to people listening to loud music on portable music players.

Drug Misuse

[Alcohol tax urged to fund abstinence-based rehab](#)

Sunday 17th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

Drink and drug addicts should be treated in abstinence-based treatment centres paid for with a new tax on alcohol, a think tank has urged. The Centre for Social Justice said that by 2024, a ring-fenced "treatment tax" would put up the cost of alcohol bought in shops by 2p per unit. It is among a number of measures recommended to tackle addiction.

[Councils issue health warning on 'laughing gas' use](#)

Saturday 9th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

A health warning has been issued by councils across England and Wales about the dangers of inhaling "laughing gas". Formally known as nitrous oxide, the gas - mostly used in medicine - has become a popular recreational drug, known for its relaxing effects. Regular intake of the chemical can lead to oxygen deprivation, which can result in loss of blood pressure, fainting and even heart attacks.

[Steep rise in antibiotic use for coughs and colds](#)

Tuesday 5th August 2014

Source: www.nhs.uk

GPs are still giving out antibiotics to treat coughs and colds in spite of warnings that the over-prescription of antibiotics could lead to the emergence of drug-resistant bacteria. The study found the proportion of people with coughs and colds given antibiotics rose from 36% in 1999 to 51% in 2011: an increase of around 40%.

Environmental health

[Experiment by Healthy Air Campaign, King's College London and Camden track air pollution](#)

Wednesday 13th August 2014

Source: www.ukhealthforum.org.uk

This short video shows how public exposure to air pollution differs between the different types of transport along the same route. The researchers study the difference between walking, cycling, car and bus. The results might surprise.

[Idle cars at school gates monitored by students](#)

Wednesday 13th August 2014

Source: www.ukhealthforum.org.uk

A video clip about a school in Glasgow which is getting its students to monitor and inform parents who leave engines running while waiting for school to end.

[Combined agency to safeguard animal and plant health](#)

Tuesday 12th August 2014

Source: www.defra.gov.uk/ahvla-en/

A combined agency will start work this autumn to ensure government is better equipped to prevent the spread of animal and plant diseases.

[EU project helps monitor the environment around you](#)

Friday 8th August 2014

Source: www.europa.eu

Do you want to track how much ozone, black carbon and other pollutants you are exposed to when out cycling or walking? This is possible with an app – AirProbe – combined with a small sensor box. Partners from Belgium, Germany, Italy and the UK have developed this system to increase people's awareness of their environment.

Health protection

Pharmacies 'could play greater role'

Wednesday 13th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

Pharmacies should be providing a wider range of health services because of their excellent reach into communities, researchers say. A study by Durham University suggests 89% of England's population live within a 20-minute walk of a pharmacy and in deprived areas, the proportion was nearly 100%. The researchers said with more support pharmacies could provide everything from blood-pressure checks and diabetes screening to lifestyle advice.

Health services administration

More patients having their say about NHS services

Friday 15th August 2014

Source: www.gov.uk/government/topics/national-health-service

Around 33,000 more people have signed up to have their say about how their local foundation trust is being run.

Failing GP practices face closure

Thursday 14th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

Failing GP practices will face closure under plans being unveiled in England. The Care Quality Commission confirmed the sanction as they announced the special measure regime being used for hospitals will be extended to GPs.

£2.6 million funding for volunteers that support hospitals

Sunday 10th August 2014

Source: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/cabinet-office

Dedicated volunteers who give time to help patients have been recognised through a £2.6 million investment to grow and support their work. The funding boost will go to up to 14 projects that will provide extra help to hospitals by supporting older people during the busy winter months.

Patient choice: survey reveals more needs to be done

Thursday 7th August 2014

Source: www.nhs.uk

More than half of patients (51%) in a recent survey were aware of their legal right to choose a hospital or clinic for an outpatient appointment but fewer than two-fifths of patients said they were offered a choice of hospital by their GP when being referred for an outpatient appointment.

Sir Robert Francis QC asks NHS to speak up on whistleblowing

Thursday 7th August 2014

Source: www.cqc.org.uk

Sir Robert Francis QC, has launched an independent review into whistleblowing in the NHS by asking frontline staff across the country to speak up about their experiences. The independent review will look at how staff can be supported to raise their concerns to make sure people receive safe care.

Patients in peril due to threat of GP practice closures says RCGP

Wednesday 6th August 2014

Source: www.rcgp.org.uk

“We have excellent, committed GPs, who want to provide excellent, safe care to all their patients – but we can no longer continue to provide that care without the funding and resources to go with it. General practice conducts 90% of all NHS patient contacts for just 8.39% of the overall budget – the lowest share on record.”

Phone consultations do not reduce GP workload

Monday 4th August 2014

Source: www.nhs.uk

A two-year study into the effectiveness of phone consultations with a GP or a nurse instead of face-to-face appointments has concluded that they “don’t cut the pressure” on busy GP surgeries.

HIV & AIDS

HIV home testing kits available to buy for first time

Monday 11th August 2014

Source: www.fpa.org.uk

After a change in the law earlier this year, the first kit that enables people to test for HIV at home is now available to buy. The BBC reported the kit will appeal to those who are too nervous about being tested in a clinic or GP setting.

Infant & child health

Sharp rise in CT scans on children and adults

Thursday 14th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

There has been a sharp rise in the number of people having CT scans in the UK, according to experts assessing the risks of radiation on health. The number of scans on children - who are most at risk - doubled over the past decade to 100,000 a year in 2012. Concerns centre around evidence radiation can increase the chance of developing cancer.

'Scans chart how quickly babies' brains grow'

Wednesday 13th August 2014

www.bbc.co.uk

Led by scientists at the University of California, researchers scanned the brains of 87 healthy babies from birth to three months. They saw the most rapid changes immediately after birth - newborn brains grew at an average rate of 1% a day. This slowed to 0.4% per day at the end of the 90-day period. Researchers say recording the normal growth trajectory of individual parts of the brain might help them better understand how early disorders arise.

BCG vaccine prevents TB infection in children

Wednesday 6th August 2014

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

A new study from Public Health England (PHE) published in the British Medical Journal has found Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine may protect against M. tuberculosis (TB) infection, in addition to decreasing progression of TB from infection to disease.

Men's health

[Prostate cancer drug ruling a 'fiasco', says charity](#)

Friday 15th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

A charity says a decision by the NHS in England to reject a drug for men with prostate cancer is a "fiasco". Abiraterone is already given to patients at the end-of-life after chemotherapy as it gives patients an extra few months.

Mental health

[Depression 'more common' in early Parkinson's](#)

Saturday 16th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

Depression and anxiety are twice as common in people newly-diagnosed with Parkinson's disease compared with the general population, research suggests. US researchers say depression increases in frequency in Parkinson's patients and is often left untreated.

[Dieting leaves some people 'feeling depressed'](#)

Friday 8th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

A study of 1,979 overweight and obese people found that those who lost 5% of their bodyweight were nearly twice as likely to feel some symptoms of depression, compared with those who stayed a similar weight.

[Clegg: Mental health research 'needs boost'](#)

Thursday 7th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

A major push is needed to boost mental health research, Liberal Democrat leader Nick Clegg has told the BBC. Mr Clegg said the sector needed a breakthrough "comparable to penicillin". The Deputy Prime Minister said his party's next election manifesto would include a pledge to raise annual research spending in England by £50m by 2020.

Obesity

[Being overweight or obese 'linked to 10 common cancers'](#)

Thursday 14th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

Being overweight and obese puts people at greater risk of developing 10 of the most common cancers, according to research in the Lancet medical journal. Scientists calculated individuals carrying this extra weight could contribute to more than 12,000 cases of cancer in the UK population every year.

Older people

[Can technology help defuse the dementia time bomb?](#)

Monday 11th August 2014

www.bbc.co.uk

Although some medical treatments do slow the progression of some types of dementia, there is currently no cure. Round-the-clock help is often needed, but for many a live-in carer is not practical or affordable. So scientists have started to look at ways that

technology can support people with dementia and help them live independently for as long as possible.

[Lack of vitamin D may 'raise dementia risk'](#)

Thursday 7th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

A study found people severely lacking in the sunshine vitamin were twice as likely to develop dementia and Alzheimer's disease compared with people with healthy levels (50nmol/l or more).

Oral health

[Confusion over best way to brush teeth, study finds](#)

Friday 8th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

Advice on the best way to brush teeth for adults and children is confusing and inconsistent, according to University College London researchers. There is also a lack of agreement on how often to brush and for how long, they said, because of an absence of good research.

Physical activity

[Getting Girls Active](#)

Wednesday 6th August 2014

Source: www.ukhealthforum.org.uk

The physical health benefits of regular physical activity are well documented, equally important for teenage girls are the benefits to emotional health and wellbeing: overcoming low self-esteem, reducing levels of anxiety and decreasing the incidences of teenage pregnancy. Increased participation in physical activity can also help to improve educational outcomes and develop life skills such as self-management, leadership and team work.

Sexual health

[Cuts to funding could increase sexually transmitted infections and teenage pregnancies](#)

Monday 11th August 2014

Source: www.fpa.org.uk

The closure of youth centres and axing of more than 2,000 youth worker roles across Britain in the last two years could have a knock-on effect for young people's sexual health outcomes.

[Sexual Health Week 2014](#)

Monday 11th August 2014

Source: www.fpa.org.uk

FPA's Sexual Health Week will take place from 15–21 September and the theme will be emergency contraception with lots of information for women on the choices available. Free campaign packs are available for GP, pharmacy and sexual health clinic settings which provide emergency contraception.

[More discussion needed on anal sex, consent and pleasure](#)

Monday 11th August 2014

Source: www.fpa.org.uk

Many young people don't know how to negotiate anal sex, according to a new study published in BMJ. Ciceley Marston from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine said we urgently need more open discussion to challenge the culture and attitudes around anal sex.

Parliamentary inquiry launched into standards in sexual health services

Monday 11th August 2014

Source: www.fpa.org.uk

Parliamentarians today announced the launch of a cross-party accountability inquiry on sexual health services in England. It will examine how the NHS and wider public health system can meet the ambitions of the Government's national sexual health framework in light of emerging concerns that standards are falling short, and little is being done to hold decision-makers to account on this.

Smoking

Standardised packaging can save lives and boost local economies

Wednesday 6th August 2014

Source: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england

Public Health England (PHE) responds to standardised packaging of tobacco products consultation. PHE figures reveal the potential benefits that standardised packaging of tobacco products could bring, not only for health, but in savings of around £500 million – providing a real economic boost to the most deprived communities.

Social & economic issues

Councils forced to divert money to pay for free school meals, new research shows

Tuesday 19th August 2014

Source: www.local.gov.uk

Councils and schools have been forced to divert money from other budgets to ensure the Government's promise of a free school meal for all pupils aged seven and under can be delivered when the new school year begins next month, despite promises that it would be fully funded, new research shows.

Troubled Families programme expanded to help younger children

Tuesday 19th August 2014

Source: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government

Work will begin this year in 51 of the best performing areas, ahead of a national 5 year programme from 2015 to help more troubled families who cost the taxpayer tens of thousands of pounds per year without intervention. Recent research shows that troubled families that have been worked with so far have an average of 9 serious problems such as truancy, crime, anti-social behaviour, worklessness and domestic violence.

Social care reforms: Councils raise funding concerns

Thursday 7th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

Plans to cap the amount of money people in England spend on their social care could be jeopardised by a lack of funding, councils say. Reforms to the adult social care system will cap the amount some people pay towards their care at £72,000 and allow them to

apply for council funding. A poll of 152 councils in England found nine in 10 had concerns over the cost of the new scheme.

Women's health

[Exercise may cut breast cancer risk, study finds](#)

Monday 11th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

"Exercise lowers risk of breast cancer after menopause," reports The Independent. This and similar headlines were sparked by a large study of postmenopausal teachers that found increased recreational activity was associated with a 10% decrease in the risk of breast cancer.

[NHS says no to new breast cancer drug Kadcyła](#)

Friday 8th August 2014

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

A pioneering new breast cancer treatment will not be routinely available in England and Wales, the NHS drugs advisory body NICE is proposing. The drug - Kadcyła - adds six months of life on average to women dying with an aggressive form of breast cancer

Workplace health

[Offices with more daylight improves employees sleep, physical activity and quality of life](#)

Wednesday 13th August 2014

Source: www.ukhealthforum.org.uk

Researchers from Northwestern Medicine and the University of Illinois found employees benefited significantly from receiving more natural daylight than from overhead lighting. The researchers recommended workstations be within 20 to 25 feet of walls with windows for employees to feel the benefit.

Local news: []

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Other Bulletins

Big Four Bulletin

This is a weekly Bulletin that details original articles in the BMJ, JAMA, New England Journal of Medicine and The Lancet.

<http://cash.libraryservices.nhs.uk/cash-service/rss-newsfeed-menu/medicine/big-four-bulletin/>

Daily Health Bulletin

The Daily Health Bulletin is produced by the Knowledge Service of the West and South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Commissioning Support Unit.

<http://cash.libraryservices.nhs.uk/cash-service/daily-health-bulletin/>

NICE Public Health Awareness Bulletin

This is a monthly update highlighting 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>

PHE Bulletin (Public Health England)

The PHE Bulletin is issued monthly and contains public health news and information.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/phe-bulletin>

Public Health and Social Care Bulletin

This is published weekly and created by Kent & Medway Public Health Observatory. It provides an update on what is new in public health and social care, both nationally and locally.

<http://www.kmpho.nhs.uk/events-and-updates/bulletins/bulletins-archive/>