

Public Health Bulletin. 21 April 2015

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 also available on the Thames Valley Public Health Network at: <http://phabtv.net/bulletins/> and the Wessex Public Health Network at: <http://www.wessexphnetwork.org.uk/resources/public-health-updates.aspx>

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Alcohol misuse

[Leading alcohol charity teams with Media Trust to launch new logo](#)

24 April 2015

Source: Alcohol Concern www.alcoholconcern.org.uk

Alcohol Concern will today be launching their new logo, thanks to a pro-bono charity partnership with the Media Trust. The Media Trust, along with one of their design agencies, have supported Alcohol Concern to create a new logo and re-brand at no cost to the charity. Emily Robinson, Director of Campaigns at Alcohol Concern

[Drop in binge drinking leads to fewer injuries](#)

Apr 22, 2015

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

Cardiff University violence research group's annual survey has found a sharp decline in binge drinking. The decline correlates with a 10 percent fall in the number of people injured as a result of serious violence.

[Exposure to alcohol in films increases adolescent alcohol consumption](#)

Apr 15, 2015

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

New research from Bristol's Children of the 90s study has found that the more adolescents are exposed to alcohol consumption in films, the more likely they are to participate in risky drinking.

Chronic conditions

[Coffee could make breast cancer drug tamoxifen more effective](#)

22 April 2015

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/news

"A cancer-killing cocktail of the hormone drug tamoxifen and two coffees every day was found to reduce the risk of [breast cancer] tumours returning," the Mail Online reports. The same study also found evidence that caffeine slowed the cancer's growth.

[Breath test shows promise in diagnosing stomach cancer](#)

14 April 2015

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/news

"A simple breath test could help predict whether people with gut problems are at high risk of developing stomach cancer," BBC News reports. The test is designed to detect a distinctive pattern of chemicals associated with [stomach cancer](#).

[Short people may have an increased risk of heart disease](#)

09 April 2015

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/news

"Shorter people at greater risk of heart disease, new research finds," reports The Guardian. It reports that a study of nearly 200,000 people has found that for every 2.5 inches (6.35cm) less in height, there is a 13.5% increased risk of [coronary heart disease](#) or CHD (also known as coronary artery disease).

Communicable diseases

[Scots man tests 'negative' for Ebola](#)

14 April 2015

Source BBC www.bbc.co.uk

A Scottish man who had recently returned from west Africa showing possible symptoms of Ebola has tested negative for the virus

[Ebola survivors 'safe sex warning'](#)

15 April 2015

Source BBC www.bbc.co.uk

The WHO is urging recovered Ebola survivors to be even more cautious during sexual contact to make sure the virus is not passed on to partners.

Diet & nutrition

[Why you should drink \(water\) before you drive](#)

20 April 2015

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/news

"Not drinking enough water has same effect as drink driving," The Daily Telegraph reports. A small study found participants made more mistakes on a driving simulator task when they were mildly [dehydrated](#) than when they had plenty of fluids.

[Do diet soft drinks actually make you gain weight?](#)

08 April 2015

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/news

"Is Diet Coke making you fat? People who drink at least one can a day have larger waist measurements," the Mail Online reports. A US study found an association between the daily consumption of diet fizzy drinks and expanded waist size.

[Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity: Data, Trends and Maps](#)

Apr 16, 2015

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

The CDC Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity's Data, Trends and Maps online tool allows you to search for and view indicators related to nutrition, physical activity and obesity.

Front of packaging labels enable healthier food choices

Apr 22, 2015

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

Nutritional labelling on the front of food products can enable consumers to make healthier food choices, according to new research in the British Journal of Nutrition.

Daily high-fat diet impacts body muscle processes

Apr 15, 2015

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

New research has found that just five days of eating high fat foods can effect the way the body's muscles process nutrients changes, potentially leading to long-term conditions such as obesity and diabetes

Using price policies to promote healthier diets

Apr 13, 2015

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

This publication provides information on the use of price policies to promote healthy diets and explores policy developments from around the WHO European Region. It examines the economic theory underpinning the use of subsidies and taxation and explores the currently available evidence.

Disability

DNA changes in sperm may help explain autism

15 April 2015

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/news

"DNA changes could explain why autism runs in families, according to study," The Independent reports. Research suggests a set of changes in a father's DNA – known as methylation – is linked to [autism spectrum disorder \(ASD\)](#) in their offspring.

Drug Misuse

Five "legal highs" have been banned by the government.

8 April 2015

Source: Home Office www.gov.uk

The drugs were **made illegal** from **Friday 10 April 2015 for up to 12 months** while the independent *Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD)* decides whether they should be permanently controlled.

Environmental health

[Air pollution travels further than previously thought](#)

Apr 22, 2015

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

Air pollution is associated with a number of health issues and previous research has shown that air pollution can travel up to 250 metres away from the roadway.

[High levels of air pollution in South East England](#)

Apr 10, 2015

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

This week the South East and Eastern England has had 'high' levels of air pollution. This has been caused by a combination of warm weather, low wind and traffic fumes

Health protection

[Cancer vaccines](#)

Source: British Medical Journal www.bmj.com

This review covers the different types of tumour antigens, approaches to inducing antitumour immunity, and preclinical and clinical data so far. It also discusses aspects of standard of care treatments that promote antitumour immunity and recent controversies.

[Australia crackdown on non-immunisers](#)

12 April 2015

Source BBC www.bbc.co.uk

The Australian government announces its intention to stop welfare payments to parents who refuse to vaccinate their children.

Health services administration

[What are the parties promising on health and social care?](#)

Apr 22, 2015

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

This King's Fund website looks at some of the big questions in health and social care and sets out the policies and pledges made by the main parties in England

[We say it's time for a sustainable, health-creating economy](#)

22 April 2015

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

The next government will have a duty to introduce measures which protect the health of current and future generations and reduce health inequalities. These include upstream policy measures which are proven to be effective and cost effective. UKHF has called for any new government to prioritise public health, increase resources and investment in the prevention of chronic diseases, and develop safeguards to help protect public health policy making from conflicting commercial interests. UKHF is not party political and does not support individual candidate or parties. Read our [manifesto](#) and thoughts on the [first 100 days](#)

[Conquering the Twin Peaks: London's Health and Wellbeing Boards](#)

Apr 22, 2015

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

This report is based on a survey, interviews, focus groups and in-depth case studies, the research provides a comprehensive picture of the position of health and wellbeing boards in London, their direction of travel and their future ambitions

HIV & AIDS

[New approach against HIV 'promising'](#)

08 April 2015

Source BBC www.bbc.co.uk

The first human trial of a new type of HIV therapy suggests it could be a promising weapon in the fight against the virus

Infant & child health

[Influencing children's health: critical windows for intervention](#)

Apr 15, 2015

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

With almost one in four Australian children overweight or obese and one in three expected to be by 2025, Influencing children's health: critical windows for intervention looks at the key moments for developing healthy habits in children and adolescents.

[Foetal alcohol damage appeal refused](#)

21 April 2015

Source BBC www.bbc.co.uk

A child born with foetal alcohol syndrome is refused permission to take her case for criminal injuries compensation to the UK Supreme Court

Men's health

How dogs could sniff out prostate cancer

13 April 2015

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/news

"Dogs trained to detect prostate cancer with more than 90% accuracy," The Guardian reports. Two trained bomb-sniffing dogs also proved remarkably successful in detecting compounds associated with [prostate cancer](#) in urine samples.

Mental health

Mindfulness 'as good as drugs for preventing depression relapse'

21 April 2015

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/news

"Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy may be as good as pills at stopping people relapsing after recovering from major bouts of depression," The Guardian reports.

Middle-age spread 'seems to reduce dementia risk'

10 April 2015

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/news

"Being overweight 'reduces dementia risk'," BBC News reports. The story comes from a cohort study of nearly 2 million UK adults aged over 40. It showed that being overweight or [obese](#) was linked to a lower risk of [dementia](#) up to 20 years later, compared with people who were a healthy weight. Underweight people were at a higher risk of dementia.

New diet could reduce the risk of Alzheimer's Disease

Apr 15, 2015

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

A new diet mixes the Mediterranean diet and DASH (dietary approaches to stop hypertension) diet and could potentially reduce the risk of Alzheimer's disease. The new diet is called MIND diet and was created by nutritional epidemiologists at Rush University Medical Centre.

Loneliness and social isolation are risk factors for mortality

Apr 22, 2015

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

Authors of new research suggest social connections should be added to the list of health and lifestyle risk factors that could lead to early mortality. The meta-analysis showed that loneliness and isolation predicted early mortality in those under 65 years of age.

Thousands of patients could be saved thanks to Bradford scheme

8 April 2015

Source: NHS England <http://www.england.nhs.uk>

Thousands of people with serious mental illness (SMI) could now be saved from an early death thanks to an innovative scheme in Bradford helping to lead the parity of esteem agenda. A new system is being used across Bradford and Airedale in 80 GP surgeries with 5,000 patients with serious mental illness; across five new clinics; and within hospitals with 200 plus beds in order to help improve the physical health of patients

Obesity

[Student dies taking 'online diet pills'](#)

20 April 2015

Source BBC www.bbc.co.uk

A student dies after taking suspected diet pills bought online, police reveal.

[There are six different types of obesity, study argues](#)

20 April 2015

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/news

"Researchers have identified six 'types' of obese person," The Independent reports. It's argued that each type would benefit from a targeted treatment programme for [obesity](#), rather than a "one-size-fits-all" approach.

Older people

[Living well for longer: One year on](#)

Apr 13, 2015

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

This report sets out progress over 2014/15 by Government, Public Health England (PHE) and NHS England to reduce premature avoidable mortality as set out in Living Well for Longer: National Support for Local Action to Reduce Premature Avoidable Mortality.

Screening

[Breast cancer risk test devised](#)

09 April 2015

Source BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Scientists have predicted the odds of women developing breast cancer by looking for tiny DNA errors in 77 genes

[Breath test for stomach cancer risk](#)

14 April 2015

Source BBC www.bbc.co.uk

A simple breath test could help predict whether people with gut problems are at high risk of developing stomach cancer, a small study suggests.

Sexual health

[The New STIF Website is now live!](#)

April 2015

Source: STIF Foundation www.stif.org.uk

Providing comprehensive information about the STI Foundation and STIF Competency programmes, the web site has been designed to facilitate navigation allowing you to access the information you need quickly.

Smoking

[Study doesn't prove e-cigs make quitting smoking harder](#)

17 April 2015

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/news

"E-cigs don't help smokers quit fags – in fact they make it harder to stop," the Daily Mirror reports, apparently turning on its head the common view that using e-cigarettes can help you quit smoking conventional cigarettes.

[E-cigarettes pose risk to developing brains](#)

Apr 22, 2015

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

This article provides practitioners with information about the dangers of e-cigarettes and highlights the vulnerability of children to both the intense marketing surrounding e-cigarettes and their pharmacologic effects.

[E-cigarette use rising among adolescents](#)

Apr 22, 2015

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

Data from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and U.S Food and Drug Administrations Center for Tobacco Products has shown that e-cigarette use among middle and high school students has tripled in one year. E-cigarette use jumped from 4.5 percent in 2013 to 13.4 percent in 2014, approximately two million students. In middle school students, use went from 1.1 percent to 3.9 percent, approximately 450,000 students.

[CDC smoking cessation campaign effective](#)

Apr 22 2015

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

An analysis of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2012 tips from former smokers campaign has shown that at least 100,000 people have permanently quit as a result.

[Plain cigarettes pack case adjourned in Irish High Court](#)

Apr 15, 2015

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

Japan Tobacco International (JTI) Ireland Ltd has argued before the Commercial Court that Ireland, as a member of the EU, cannot introduce plain packaging on its products. They claim that it will distort the dynamics of competition in the tobacco market,

[Smokefree map](#)

Apr 15, 2015

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

This new SFP interactive map aims to highlight which Member States are providing sufficient and effective protection from passive smoking and which Member States could do more to protect their citizens either through improved legislation or improved compliance.

[Graphic warnings on cigarette packs increase adolescents' knowledge of health risks](#)

Apr 08, 2015

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

A study published in Annals of Behavioural Medicine was one of the first to investigate how much individuals learn from the graphic warnings on cigarettes packets. Young adult smokers and non-smokers aged 18-25 evaluated different packaging. The packages with graphic warnings were perceived to give a better understanding and provide new knowledge about the health risks of smoking compared to text only packets.

Social & economic issues

[Chilled to death: The human cost of cold homes](#)

Apr 22, 2015

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

This briefing from Association for the Conservation of Energy calculates the number of cold home deaths during the last five years of this Parliament, they have taken the official figures for Excess Winter Deaths for 2010/11 to 2012/13, used the provisional figure for winter 2013/14 and calculated their own estimate for this last winter, 2014/15.

[Middle age 'starts at 60' claims media](#)

16 April 2015

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/news

“Middle age begins at 60, say researchers,” The Times reports. A new population modelling study estimates that due to increased lifespan, what was once regarded as elderly should be seen as middle-aged, and this trend will continue into the future.

[Back pain in young people rising](#)

13 April 2015

Source BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Almost half of young people suffer with back pain, new research suggests, and it's being blamed on sedentary lifestyles.

Women's health

[Mistreatment of extreme morning sickness 'leading to abortions'](#)

21 April 2015

Source: NHS Choices www.nhs.uk/news

"Extreme morning sickness causes 1k abortions a year, study finds,
" The Daily Telegraph reports. The report states that poor treatment of some cases of extreme morning sickness (hyperemesis gravidarum) is leading some women to terminate their pregnancy, despite there being safe and effective treatments available.

Local news: []

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Other Bulletins
<p>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/</p>
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