

Public Health Bulletin. 19th May 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

[Women not getting drink-drive message - Police Federation](#)

Tuesday, 19th May 2015

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

More should be done to discourage women from driving while drunk, the Police Federation says. It says female drink-driving levels are not falling quickly enough as warnings are not "getting through". The body also wants the legal limit in England and Wales to be reduced from 80 to 50 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood - in line with changes introduced in Scotland in 2014.

[UK needs to get tougher on alcohol](#)

Tuesday 12th May 2015

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

Tougher measures are needed to tackle high rates of alcohol consumption in the UK, international experts say.

Chronic conditions

[Warning after '55% increase in Huntington's disease sufferers'](#)

Tuesday, 19th May 2015

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

A charity has warned the number of Scots being diagnosed with a rare brain disease has risen by 55% in three years. The Scottish Huntington's Association (SHA) said the growth in cases of Huntington's disease is "alarming". In 2012, there were 709 referrals in Scotland but by last year that had risen to 1,103. The charity said 5,000 people are potentially at risk and are calling for a national action plan.

Communicable diseases

[Drug-resistant typhoid 'concerning'](#)

Monday, 11th May 2015

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

Antibiotic-resistant typhoid is spreading across Africa and Asia and poses a major global health threat, warn experts. Researchers from the Wellcome Trust, who have been tracking the hard-to-treat infection, say it is replacing regular typhoid in many countries.

Diet & nutrition

[Eating little and often 'no better for dieters than fewer feasts'](#)

Friday, 8th May 2015

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

"Eating little and often – like Jennifer Aniston – could help dieters achieve a healthy weight loss," reports the Mirror. Meanwhile, the Mail Online urges us to "Forget three square meals a day – eating six smaller portions is better for your waistline".

But don't rush to change how often you eat: the claims are based on a tiny study that has been overstated and misinterpreted by the media. In fact, women lost a similar amount of weight regardless of the number of daily meals they ate.

[Appetite for apples? How fruit sugars may not suppress hunger](#)

Wednesday, 6th May 2015

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

Are you tempted to avoid eating fruit "because the sugar in it triggers cravings," as the Mail Online suggests today? If you are, it's worth having a look at some of the reassuring facts that can keep you chomping cherries and guzzling grapefruit.

Drug Misuse

['Home-brewed morphine' made possible](#)

Tuesday, 19th May 2015

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

Scientists have figured out how to brew morphine using the same kit used to make beer at home. They have genetically modified yeast to perform the complicated chemistry needed to convert sugar to morphine. The findings, published in Nature Chemical Biology, raise promise for medicine but also concerns about "home-brewed" illegal drugs.

[Fingerprints 'can reveal drug use'](#)

Friday, 15th May 2015

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

Scientists say they can tell if someone has been taking drugs by analysing their fingerprint. The team at the University of Surrey showed that chemicals produced when cocaine is broken down in the body could be detected in the fingerprint. They argue the test could be useful in prisons, drug abuse clinics and even for routine testing in the workplace.

Emergency planning

[Ebola crisis prompts \\$100m WHO emergency fund](#)

Monday, 18th May 2015

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

The World Health Organization is to set up a \$100m (£63m) emergency contingency fund following the Ebola outbreak, its director-general has announced.

Health protection

[How do sunscreens and lotions protect us?](#)

Friday, 15th May 2015

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

We slap it on when the sun comes out, but do we know what kind of sunscreen we are applying and what it does?

[Antibiotics crisis could lead to 'millions of deaths'](#)

Thursday, 14th May 2015

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

The pharmaceutical industry has been urged to set up a \$2bn (£1.3bn) innovation fund to develop new antibiotics. The proposals are in a report by a UK government-appointed review team headed by economist Jim O'Neill.

HIV & AIDS

Fighting HIV where no-one admits it's a problem

Wednesday, 20th May 2015

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

For years Russia has remained remarkably silent on the challenge it faces from HIV and Aids. Now that silence has been broken by an epidemiologist who has been working in the field for more than two decades - and he calls the situation "a national catastrophe".

Men's health

Hormone oestrogen linked to male breast cancer

Tuesday 12th May 2015

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

"Men with high oestrogen more likely to develop breast cancer," reports the Daily Telegraph. This headline is based on an international study looking at potential risk factors for male breast cancer. This is a much rarer cancer compared to female breast cancer – an estimated 350-400 UK cases per year for men compared to 50,000 cases in women.

Mental health

#DoSomethingNew for Dementia Awareness Week

Tuesday, 19th May 2015

Source: Care Quality Commission

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

The CQC is showing support for this year's Dementia Awareness Week as part of its priority to inspire improvement in the care of people living with dementia. Life doesn't end when dementia begins, and this year's campaign organised by The Alzheimer's Society, is all about encouraging people to mark the week by 'doing something new' and sharing the results on social media to help people living with dementia.

Mentally ill patients sent home unsupported, experts warn

Tuesday 19th May 2015

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

Pressure to free up mental health beds may be leaving vulnerable people at risk, says a watchdog. Healthwatch England put in a Freedom of Information request and found psychiatric patients now spend six fewer days in hospital than in 2012-13.

Obesity

UK children becoming obese at younger ages

Wednesday, 20th May 2015

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

The average age at which people in the UK first become obese is decreasing, figures show.

Overweight diabetics 'live longer' than slimmer diabetics

Monday 11th May 2015

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

“Overweight diabetics are 13 per cent less likely to die prematurely than those of a normal weight or those who are obese,” the Mail Online reports.

Older people

Too many people dying without dignity, Ombudsman service report finds

Wednesday, 20th May 2015

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

End of life care could be improved for up to 355,000 people a year in England, according to a report published today by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman. The report highlights tragic cases where people's suffering could have been avoided or lessened with the right care and treatment, as they approached the end of their lives.

How dance classes are helping people with dementia

Monday 11th May 2015

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

As dementia becomes more prevalent in ageing populations, scientists are increasingly looking at preventing and treating the condition without drugs. Music and dancing appear to have a protective effect and researchers from the University of Canterbury are working with a dance company to analyse their benefits.

Physical activity

Elderly people who exercise 'live five years longer'

Friday, 15th May 2015

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

Regular exercise in old age has as powerful an effect on life expectancy as giving up smoking, researchers say. The analysis of 5,700 elderly men in Norway showed those doing three hours of exercise a week lived around five years longer than the sedentary.

Screening

Germanwings: Should there be screening for mental illness at work?

Monday, 18th May 2015

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

The deaths of 150 people aboard Germanwings flight 9525 was tragic enough, but the possibility that the co-pilot deliberately crashed the plane brought a new level of disbelief. There has been a huge focus on the psychiatric history of the pilot and calls for greater screening for psychiatric disorders at work. But what is screening, can psychiatric disorders be screened for, and is this the best response to the tragedy of Flight 9525?

Statistics

Strokes rising among people of working age, warns charity

Tuesday, 12th May 2015

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

There has been a worrying rise in the number of working-age men and women having strokes, a charity has warned. In England in 2014 there were 6,221 hospital admissions for men aged 40-54 - a rise of 1,961 on 14 years earlier, a Stroke Association study shows.

Women's health

Single mothers have 'worse health in later life'

Friday, 15th May 2015

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

The Daily Telegraph today tells us that: "Single mothers in England [are] more likely to suffer ill health because their families 'do not support them'." This is a half-truth. The large international study – involving 25,000 people from England, the US and 13 other European countries – behind the headline found a link between single motherhood between the ages of 16 and 49 and worse health in later life. But it did not find this was because families do not support them.

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/>