

Public Health Bulletin. 25 August 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://phabbtv.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

Can local action prevent sales to drunks? CPH reports review impact

Friday 14th August 2015

Source: Alcohol Policy UK

<http://www.alcoholpolicy.net>

Two evaluation reports of projects attempting to reduce sales to drunks and associated problems have been released by the Centre for Public Health (CPH).

Chronic conditions

Diabetes uses 10% of NHS drugs bill

Wednesday 12th August 2015

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

Diabetes now accounts for 10% of the NHS drugs bill in England, according to official figures. The Health and Social Care Information Centre report shows £869m was spent on drugs for the disease last year.

Diabetes cases soar by 60% in past decade

Monday 17th August 2015

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

The number of people living with diabetes has soared by nearly 60% in the past decade, Diabetes UK warns. The charity said more than 3.3 million people have some form of the condition, up from 2.1 million in 2005.

Just one drink a day 'may raise breast cancer risk'

Thursday 20th August 2015

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

"Just one drink a day raises breast cancer risk," is the front page headline in the Daily Mail following the results of a new study. While the health risks of heavy drinking are well established, the effects of light drinking are less clear.

Communicable diseases

Primary school flu vaccine rollout could cut GP workload

Wednesday 12th August 2015

Source: GP Online <http://www.gponline.com>

GPs could see fewer incidences of patients with influenza-like symptoms as the national flu vaccination programme is widened to include children in school years 1 and 2 this winter, pilot schemes suggest.

Flu jab drive to address last year's 'failure'

Monday 17th August 2015

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

Ministers are urging people not to be put off by failures of the flu vaccine last year. They say those who qualify for a free jab, or spray for children, should take up the offer this winter as it offers the most effective cover against flu.

Sierra Leone discharges last Ebola patient

Monday 24th August 2015

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

Sierra Leone has released its last known Ebola patient, according to the World Health Organization. The country hasn't reported a new infection for more than two weeks, according to the National Ebola Response Centre (NERC).

Disability

Charity calls for greater recognition of 'essential tremor' as a disability

Thursday 13th August 2015

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

A charity for people who have uncontrollable shaking is calling for the condition to be given greater recognition as a disability. It is estimated that up to 6% of the population have "essential tremor" - a rhythmic trembling of the hands, head, legs, trunk and/or voice. It can appear at any age, and is four times as common as Parkinson's.

Drug Misuse

Lambeth Council bans laughing gas as recreational drug

Monday 17th August 2015

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

Lambeth Council in London has become the first in the UK to ban the use of nitrous oxide, or laughing gas, as a recreational drug. Although medically safe and not illegal, the chemical can cause a drop in blood pressure, fainting and heart attacks when used on a regular basis.

Environmental health

Catalogue of health-related fuel poverty schemes

Wednesday 5th August 2015

Source: Dept of Energy & Climate Change
<https://www.gov.uk>

The aim of the survey was to collate information on health-related fuel poverty schemes to better understand levels of activity in this area and highlight challenges to implementation, as well as successful approaches.

City grime 'breathes back out' polluting nitrogen gases

Tuesday 18th August 2015

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

Scientists say the grime which clings to urban surfaces "breathes out" nitrogen gases when hit by sunlight. The findings may explain a "missing" source of smog-producing gas in the skies of London.

Health promotion

Community engagement: improving health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities(update): draft guideline consultation

Wednesday 12th August 2015

Source: NICE <http://www.nice.org.uk>

The draft update of the Community Engagement guideline is now open for consultation. The guideline covers approaches to community engagement to help communities improve their health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities.

Health protection

Fire as a health asset? Or a health necessity?

Friday 14th August 2015 Source: NHS England <http://www.england.nhs.uk>

A new partnership has been established between NHS England and the Fire and Rescue Services (FRS), to use their collective capabilities and resources more effectively to enhance the lives of older people and those with complex conditions.

Patient safety alert – addressing antimicrobial resistance through implementation of an antimicrobial stewardship programme

Tuesday 18th August 2015 Source: NHS England <http://www.england.nhs.uk>

NHS England, Health Education England and Public Health England have issued a joint National Patient Safety Alert to all providers of NHS care in England to highlight the challenge of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and the need for antimicrobial stewardship.

Universal flu vaccine comes closer, scientists say

Monday 24th August 2015 Source: BBC News <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>

Researchers say they are closer to developing a vaccine to give life-long protection against any type of flu, after promising trials in animals. Two separate US teams have found success with an approach that homes in on a stable part of the flu virus. Studies are now needed in humans.

Call for Army to stop using malaria drug mefloquine

Monday 17th August 2015 Source: BBC News <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>

A call has been made for an immediate ban on a controversial anti-malaria drug given to British soldiers. The side-effects of mefloquine, or Lariam, have been linked to severe depression and other mental illnesses.

Mefloquine was banned from being given to US Special Forces in 2013, but in the UK it remains the drug of choice for military personnel in malarial areas. It is backed by Public Health England.

Health services administration

Public Health England annual plan

Friday 31st July 2015 Source: PHE <https://www.gov.uk>

PHE's annual plan sets out how the organisation will deliver its core functions, outlining actions it will be taking over the next year to protect and improve the public's health and reduce inequalities.

Understanding the wider public health workforce in England

July 2015 Source: Centre for Workforce Intelligence <http://www.cfwi.org.uk>

This review of the wider public health workforce in England identifies the size and scope of this workforce, provides examples of its work and considers possible professional development needs for strengthening this important service. The report has found that at least 15 million people contribute to the public health agenda in England - ranging from police and fire personnel, to opticians and housing officers.

Rethinking the Public Health Workforce

Wednesday 12th August 2015

Source: Royal Society for Public Health

<https://www.rspn.org.uk>

The report identifies a number of occupations, who have already started to support public health work. It builds on the findings of a separate paper Understanding the Wider Public Health Workforce which has also been jointly published by the Centre for Workforce Intelligence (CfWI) and the RSPH.

Guidelines set to tackle over-prescribing of antibiotics

Tuesday 18th August 2015

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

"GPs face axe for handing out too many pills," the Daily Mail reports. The headline is prompted by remarks made by Professor Mark Baker, clinical practice chief at the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) which has published new guidelines on antibiotic prescribing.

Infant & child health

What is happening to children and young people's risk behaviours?

Friday 7th August 2015

Source: DoH <https://www.gov.uk>

Risk behaviours potentially expose people to harm, or significant risk of harm which will prevent them reaching their potential, or damage their health and wellbeing. The evidence suggests a slow and steady decline in risk behaviours and negative outcomes, such as drinking, drug use, smoking, youth crime, suicide, and teenage pregnancy. This publication explores the decrease in 'risky' behaviours in children and young people, possible causes and what new risks could emerge.

Ofsted publishes data for children's social care in England 2015

Thursday 13th August 2015

Source: Ofsted <https://www.gov.uk>

Ofsted has published data for children's social care in England 2015. The data incorporates the latest inspection grade for 2,787 active children's social care providers and 59 local authority children's services departments. This is the first time all Ofsted's social care inspection statistics have been published together in one bulletin.

Pregnant women's diet linked to baby heart risk

Tuesday 25th August 2015

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

Women who eat healthily before and during pregnancy may cut the risk of their baby developing a heart problem, researchers believe. The link is suggested by a study of 19,000 women in the US who were asked about their diet in the year leading up to pregnancy. A healthy diet was one with plenty of fresh fish, fruit, nuts and vegetables.

Mental health

Dementia friendly communities: guidance for councils

Tuesday 4th August 2015

Source: LGA <http://www.local.gov.uk>

This guidance produced by the LGA in collaboration with the community interest company Innovations in Dementia outlines the important role of councils in supporting people with dementia by creating local dementia friendly communities and demonstrates how councils are making this happen through numerous case study examples.

Dementia research boosted by surge in volunteers

Friday 14th August 2015

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

There has been a surge in the number of people volunteering to help with medical research into dementia. The National Institute for Health Research, the research arm of the NHS, reported a 60% jump in people signing up in the past year.

Warnings of a dementia epidemic may be unfounded

Friday 21st August 2015

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

"Dementia may not be the fast-growing epidemic it has been painted to be," The Guardian reports. Latest data from Europe shows the percentage of dementia cases have levelled off, rather than increased.

Obesity

Low-fat diet 'better' than low-carb diet for getting rid of body fat

Friday 14th August 2015

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

"Low-fat diets 'better than cutting carbs' for weight loss," says BBC News. But wait, the Mail Online says: "Low-carb 'is best for weight loss". Confused?

Older people

New research finds sight loss related to low income and poor quality of life in older people

Wednesday 19th August 2015

Source: Thomas Pocklington Trust
<http://www.pocklington-trust.org.uk>

The study showed that older people in the poorest fifth of the population had an almost 80% higher risk of developing severe visual impairment than those from the wealthiest fifth. This is compounded by the finding that deterioration in vision over a two year period was related to decreases in income, quality of life and social activity.

Many white English and Irish pensioners 'drinking to excess'

Monday 24th August 2015

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

"One in five people over 65 who drink is consuming an "unsafe" level of alcohol, say researchers," BBC News reports. Their research also found that "unsafe drinking was far more common among the white British and Irish population".

Oral health

Water fluoridation 'a safe way of stopping tooth decay'

Thursday 20th August 2015

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

"Adding fluoride to tap water could save the NHS millions and dramatically improve children's dental health," the Mail Online reports. A new UK study concluded that water fluoridation is a "safe and effective" way of preventing tooth decay in children.

Prison health

The NHS must manage the unmet mental health needs in prison

Tuesday 18th August 2015

Source: Health Service Journal <http://www.hsj.co.uk>

Mentally ill prisoners have complex needs and have to be managed in accordance of the law to avoid violating their human rights.

Health needs assessment: prison examples

Friday 21st August 2015

Source: PHE <https://www.gov.uk>

Examples of completed health needs assessments using the health and justice health needs assessment toolkit for prescribed places of detention.

Sexual health

'Female Viagra' - a closer look at flibanserin

Wednesday 19th August 2015

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

The first drug to treat low sexual desire in women has received US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval. But the little pink tablets, to be sold under the brand name Addyi, have proven controversial.

Smoking

Nicotine "no more harmful to health than caffeine"

Thursday 13th August 2015

Source: Royal Society for Public Health
<https://www.rspph.org.uk>

The Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) is calling for public confusion over nicotine to be addressed as a way of encouraging smokers to use safer forms of the substance. Among the measures which are being called for in its report, "Smoking cessation: taking a harm reduction approach" is the introduction of a smoking exclusion zone around pubs, bars and schools – allowing use of e-cigarettes but not allowing cigarette smoking.

E-cigarettes around 95% less harmful than tobacco estimates landmark review

Wednesday 19th August 2015

Source: Public Health England <https://www.gov.uk>

An expert independent evidence review published today by Public Health England (PHE) concludes that e-cigarettes are significantly less harmful to health than tobacco and have the potential to help smokers quit smoking.

Social & economic issues

Gap in life expectancy between rich and poor shrinks, new report finds

Tuesday 11th August 2015

Source: The King's Fund <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/>

The gap in life expectancy between the richest 10 per cent and the poorest 10 per cent shrank by 2.5 years between 1999 and 2010, finds a new report by The King's Fund published today. The report, which builds on Professor Sir Michael Marmot's groundbreaking research into health inequalities, is the first time that the relationship between life expectancy and income has been analysed over time at this level of detail.

Workplace health

Checking emails out of work 'can reduce wellbeing'

Wednesday 12th August 2015

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

"Checking your emails outside of work really IS bad for your health," the Mail Online reports. A German study recruited a sample of 132 workers and aimed to look at how extended working outside normal hours influenced people's mood the next day.

Physical environments and employee wellbeing: topic overview

Monday 17th August 2015

Source: Public Health England <https://www.gov.uk>

The report provides an overview of the literature around the impact of particular elements of the physical work environment on employee wellbeing, specifically the office layout, office furniture, workplace lighting and temperature and employee control over their work environment.

Employee productivity: topic overview

Monday 17th August 2015

Source: Public Health England <https://www.gov.uk>

The report explores priority issues around health, work and unemployment. It includes information on, measuring productivity, presenteeism (attending work whilst sick), productivity and wellbeing.

Working long hours 'increases stroke risk'

Friday 21st August 2015

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

"People working long hours are more likely to have a stroke, according to analysis of more than half a million people," BBC News reports.

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/>

Healthcare Public Health

Monthly bulletin containing news and information about key public health issues including health service commissioning, updates from Public Health England, local authorities, Faculty of Public Health and others agencies, resources and good practice.

<http://www.healthcarepublichealth.net/newsletters.php>

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/>



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