

## Public Health Bulletin. **Tuesday 23 February 2016**

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://www.oxsph.org/bulletins.html> and the Wessex Public Health Network at: <http://www.wessexphnetwork.org.uk/resources/public-health-updates.aspx>

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## Black and ethnic minority groups

### [Mental health care for black men in England criticized](#)

18<sup>th</sup> February 2016      Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>

One of the most comprehensive studies of mental health care in England ever conducted has sharply criticised provision for men of African and Caribbean heritage.

## Chronic conditions

### [Life with an allergy to a preservative in everyday products](#)

21<sup>st</sup> February 2016      Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>

Methylisothiazolinone (MI) is a preservative commonly used in a range of consumer products, including cosmetics, but dermatologists have long been concerned about a rise in the number of people having allergic responses to it.

### [Before I Kick the Bucket star's letter to her cancer](#)

13<sup>th</sup> February 2016      Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>

Terminally ill Rowena Kincaid made headlines last year with her documentary investigating what she should do with the time she has left alive. As she prepares for the second installment to be aired, the Cardiff woman - who defied the doctors telling her she would never see her 40th birthday - writes a letter to her cancer, telling the disease she is not going down without a fight.

## Communicable diseases

### [Creeping paralysis: Possible link to Zika virus](#)

12<sup>th</sup> February 2016      Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>

The Zika virus, carried by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, is suspected of being the cause of thousands of birth deformities in Brazil. Now the disease has moved north to Colombia, where it is being linked by some doctors to cases of paralysis. The science behind Zika and the connection to creeping paralysis has not been scientifically proven.

### [Zika and microcephaly link confirmed "in weeks" says WHO](#)

12<sup>th</sup> February 2016      Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>

The World Health Organization (WHO) says it expects to decide within a few weeks if there is a link between the Zika virus and birth defects.

### [Zika virus: your questions answered](#)

10<sup>th</sup> February 2016      Source: <http://www.nhs.uk/news/>

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that the Zika virus has now spread through both South and Central America and expects 3-4 million people to be infected in 2016. So what is the Zika virus and what steps can you take to protect yourself?

## Diet & nutrition

### [Organic milk 'is healthier' than conventional milk, study says](#)

18<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

The news is the conclusion of two reviews looking at the available evidence on the potential benefits of organic meat and milk compared to their conventionally-farmed counterparts.

### [The five 'most sugar-laden hot drinks'](#)

17<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

Would you buy a hot drink containing the equivalent of 25 teaspoons of sugar? Many people do without even realising. The campaign group Action on Sugar has published a list of the drinks it says contain the most.

### [Scientists look at what puts the 'junk' into junk foods](#)

11<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

A small study suggests that processed foods that are high in "PAMPs" – pathogen-associated molecular patterns – may trigger inflammation inside the body.

## Disability

### [Learning disabilities treatment care is 'shocking'](#)

22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016

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

Treatment of some people with learning disabilities in hospitals and care homes is "intolerable", a review of the sector in England has found.

## Environmental health

### [UK air pollution 'linked to 40,000 early deaths a year'](#)

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016

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

Outdoor air pollution is contributing to about 40,000 early deaths a year in the UK, say the Royal Colleges of Physicians and of Paediatrics and Child Health. They say diesel emissions have been poorly controlled. And indoor air pollution has been overlooked. Tobacco still poses the biggest indoor threat, but wood-burning stoves, cleaning products and air fresheners can contribute. Mould and mildew in poorly ventilated rooms can also cause illness.

### [New NICE guidelines on sun exposure warn 'tanning is unsafe'](#)

10<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

"No safe way to suntan, new NICE guidance warns," BBC News reports. The guidelines, produced by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), also stresses

the benefits of moderate sun exposure. This will help prevent vitamin D deficiency; which is more common in the UK than many people realise. It is estimated that around one in five adults and older children (aged between 11 and 18) have low vitamin D status. The figure is around one in seven for younger children.

## Health promotion

### Successful Be Clear on Cancer campaign returns for a second time to highlight blood in pee as a key symptom for bladder and kidney cancers.

16<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/>

Around 17,450 people in England are diagnosed with bladder or kidney cancer every year and around 7,600 people die annually. Blood in pee is a symptom in over half of bladder cancers and almost a fifth of kidney cancers, so being aware of this is crucial.

## Health protection

### Meningitis B: NI Private hospitals see vaccine inquiries rise

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016

Private hospitals in Northern Ireland are reporting an increase in the number of inquiries from the public about getting the Meningitis B vaccine.

## Health services administration

### Council tax rises 'will not cover' social care shortfall

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016

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

Planned council tax rises will not bring in enough money to cover the rising cost of social care, local authorities in England have warned. A Local Government Association (LGA) survey found nine out of 10 councils expect to increase bills by 2% from April, under new powers.

### NHS trusts may hit £2.3bn deficit, report warns

18<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

NHS trusts in England are on course to be £2.3bn in the red by the end of the financial year, according to a leading health think tank. Based on data from about one in three trusts, the King's Fund said the financial position was getting worse and performance was deteriorating.

## HIV & AIDS

### 'Charlie Sheen effect' on HIV

22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016

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

Google searches for HIV hit a record high in the US in the hours after actor Charlie Sheen announced that he was HIV positive, research reveals. Investigators found 2.75m more Google searches than expected, based on previous trends, shortly after Sheen

had appeared on US TV in November. Web searches for condoms, HIV symptoms and HIV testing also rocketed. The researchers say the 'Sheen effect' should be capitalised on, to further raise HIV awareness.

## **Infant & child health**

### **How children cope with 'tough times'**

15<sup>th</sup> February 2016      Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>

Pupils at Marton Primary Academy in Blackpool have lessons on how to handle what they refer to as "tough times", to build their resilience in the face of challenges to their mental health. BBC News asked some of them to share their thoughts on how they cope when life gets tough.

### **Paracetamol use in pregnancy and infancy linked to child asthma**

10<sup>th</sup> February 2016      Source: <http://www.nhs.uk/news/>

"Babies given paracetamol are nearly a third more likely to develop asthma," the Mail Online reports. The study the news is based on also found a link between maternal use of the painkiller in pregnancy, and childhood asthma.

## **Men's health**

### **Mobile phone use 'linked to poor sperm quality'**

22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016      Source: <http://www.nhs.uk/news/>

Is the use of smartphones damaging men's sperm? The quick answer, based on the results of this study, is we don't know.

### **Middle-aged men rate their health as more important than their money or career**

9<sup>th</sup> February 2016      Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/>

National Heart Month 2016: new research shows a discrepancy between how much men value their health, and what they do to look after it.

## **Mental health**

### **The PTSD brains of children and soldiers**

18<sup>th</sup> February 2016      Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>

Scientists have discovered that the brain structures of traumatised soldiers and children change in the same way. The research reveals that coping mechanisms to deal with extreme stress and abuse actually cause physical changes to the brain.

### **RCGP response to Mental Health Taskforce report**

15<sup>th</sup> February 2016      Source: <http://www.rcgp.org.uk/news/>

Dr Maureen Baker, Chair of the Royal College of GPs, said: "The aspirations set out in this report are encouraging, ambitious and admirable. "We are particularly encouraged by the proposals to expand child mental health services and provide better support for women with perinatal mental health problems – a clinical priority for the College. "It is very reassuring that these plans are backed up by the commitment to spend an additional £1bn pounds a year on mental health services by 2020/21.

### [Alzheimer's disease 'wonder drug' claims are premature](#)

15<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

"Millions could be offered wonder drug to prevent Alzheimer's before symptoms appear," is the overhyped headline in the Daily Express. The "wonder drug" in question, bexarotene, has only been tested in worms as part of this latest Alzheimer's research.

### [Virtual therapy 'helps with depression', researchers say](#)

15<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

A new therapy which involves a patient embodying themselves in a virtual reality avatar of a crying child could help with depression, research has suggested.

### [NHS mental health funding falls in England - FoI figures](#)

14<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

Funding levels for NHS mental health care in England have fallen in recent years, the BBC has learned. Figures obtained through a Freedom of Information request showed the budgets for mental health trusts fell by 2% from 2013/14 to 2014/15. This compares to a rise of 2.6% in hospital trusts' operating budgets, according to analysis by the Health Foundation think-tank. The Department of Health said mental health care funding overall was rising.

## **Obesity**

### [Sugary drinks tax 'would stop millions becoming obese'](#)

19<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

A 20% tax on sugary drinks in the UK would prevent 3.7 million people becoming obese over the next decade, a report predicts. Cancer Research UK and the UK Health Forum worked out the likely impact of the tax on eating habits and, ultimately, the nation's waistlines.

## **Older people**

### [Over-65s in England 'living longer than ever before'](#)

12<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

Older people in England are living longer than ever before, a report from Public Health England says. Figures show that for those aged 65, men can expect to live for another 19 years and women a further 21 years.

## Physical activity

### Exercise in middle-age 'stops your brain shrinking'

11<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

A study found people with good fitness levels in their 40s had larger brains than their unfit peers when measured 20 years later. The concern is that people with smaller brains may be more likely to develop dementia.

## Screening

### New blood test can detect a range of inherited heart conditions

19<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

"A new blood test could help diagnose people with inherited heart conditions," BBC News reports. Inherited heart conditions affect around 1% of the population, and can disrupt the normal functioning of the heart – sometimes with fatal results. It is hoped this new test will allow for a more efficient diagnostic protocol for people who are thought to have these conditions. If a condition is present, this should lead to better and earlier management.

## Social & economic issues

### Brain scans used to see if Facebook is addictive

18<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

"Facebook has a similar effect on your brain as cocaine," the Daily Mail reports. Brain scans found that students exposed to images associated with Facebook had patterns of neural activity also seen in people with substance addictions or gambling addictions.

### Sheltered housing developments 'shelved due to benefit cuts'

16<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

Hundreds of planned new sheltered accommodation units have been delayed or scrapped owing to proposed cuts to housing benefit, the BBC has learned.

## Statistics

### Transgender patients in England face 'long waits' for appointments

21<sup>st</sup> February 2016

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

Transgender people face waits of up to 18 months or more for consultation at specialist NHS gender identity clinics. Those seeking gender reassignment at one of England's eight centres face a further wait of more than three years.

### NHS Wales 'no better or worse' than rest of UK, says OECD

12<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

The NHS in Wales appears to be performing no better or worse than the rest of the UK, a major international review has found. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) looked into UK health service quality, as a political row raged over Tory claims of a "second class" NHS Wales.

### [RCGP response to British Social Attitudes survey results](#)

9<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Source: <http://www.rcgp.org.uk/news/>

Dr Maureen Baker, Chair of the Royal College of GPs, has responded to the results of the latest British Social Attitudes survey, published by the King's Fund.

She said: "It is testament to the hard work and dedication of GPs and their teams across the country that at a time of such intense resource and workforce pressures, patient satisfaction with our service is the highest in the NHS."

## **Women's health**

### [Women to be offered their own £3,000 'birth budgets'](#)

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016

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

The NHS in England is to offer pregnant women their own "personal budgets", worth at least £3,000, so they can pick and choose the care they receive.

### [Breast cancer: 'Dramatic rise' in diagnoses of NI cases over last 20 years](#)

12<sup>th</sup> February 2016

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

New figures from the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry show there has been a dramatic rise in the numbers of women being diagnosed with breast cancer. They show that there has been an overall increase of 53% in the number of women being treated for the disease in the last 20 years.

## **Workplace health**

### [Health and safety lecture: the journey back to common sense and personal responsibility](#)

Source: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/>

Date and location

Tuesday 15 March 2016, 6:00pm - 9:00pm

Prince Philip House, 3 Carlton House terrace, London SW1Y 5DG

The View from the top series feature leading engineers and industrialists giving their personal perspectives on key engineering issues. Academy Fellow, Dame Judith Hackitt DBE FREng, will deliver the next lecture.

## **Local news: []**

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## Other Bulletins

### Super Six Bulletin

This is a weekly Bulletin that details original articles in the BMJ, JAMA, New England Journal of Medicine and The Lancet, Annals of Internal Medicine and Annals of Emergency Medicine  
<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 Evidence Awareness Bulletin

This is a monthly update highlighting national public health news and information from NICE.  
<http://www.nice.org.uk/News/NICE-newsletters-and-alerts>

### 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.kpho.org.uk/library-services/keeping-up-to-date/e-bulletin-archive>



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