

Public Health Bulletin. 17TH May 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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Alcohol misuse

Rise in 'poor, female teens' poisoning themselves

17th May 2016

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

Intentional poisonings in 16 to 17-year-old girls and alcohol poisonings in those 15-16 "both roughly doubled".

What is Alcohol-Related Brain Damage?

May 2016

Source: <http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/>

Alcohol-Related Brain Damage (ARBD), or alcohol-related brain injury (ARBI), is an umbrella term for the damage that can happen to the brain as a result of long-term heavy drinking. Over time, drinking too much alcohol can change the way the brain works, and its physical shape and structure. This can bring some very serious consequences, including changes in personality, as well problems with thinking, mood, memory and learning.

Communicable diseases

Shorter treatment 'will help tackle' drug-resistant TB

12th May 2016

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

New international guidelines aim to halve the cost and time for treating multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB). The advice from the World Health Organization (WHO) should reduce treatment to around nine months. Currently, it can take as long as two years - and many patients fail to complete what can be a burdensome course. Doctors urged countries to implement the guidelines quickly.

Zika virus 'shrinks brains' in tests

11th May 2016

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

The trio of studies provide crucial experimental evidence that backs up fears the virus is behind the surge in babies born with small heads in Brazil.

Diet & nutrition

Is a pint of beer a day good for the heart?

12th May 2016

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

"Pint of beer a day could protect you from heart attacks," The Independent reports. A new review on the alleged protective effects of moderate beer drinking has been warmly welcomed by the UK media – but nobody reported that it was funded by an Italian beer trade association.

No evidence probiotics are beneficial for healthy adults

12th May 2016

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

"Probiotic goods a 'waste of money' for healthy adults, research suggests," The Guardian reports. A new review of previously gathered data found no evidence that probiotics improved the balance of gut bacteria in healthy adults.

[What yoghurt tells us about the obesity fight](#)

9th May 2016

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

When it comes to understanding the challenge facing the nation on obesity, yoghurt is a good place to start. It's one of the most common items in our shopping basket. We spend more on it than we do on crisps and bacon. In its normal state - natural full-fat - it's pretty good for you. It can boost your immune system, is good for your bones and is great at satisfying hunger. The problem is that a great deal of the yoghurt we buy is not the natural stuff. Instead we seem to like the processed products, which are made by partly substituting yoghurt and adding a combination of other ingredients such as gelatine, sugar and flavourings. It tends to be cheaper to produce per calorie, but nowhere near as good for you.

Health promotion

[PHE hosts developers in search for new digital health tools](#)

11th May 2016

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

PHE launches new Health X Hackathon in Manchester to seek new digital innovations following success of Sugar Smart app and One You quiz.

Health protection

[Pakistan could beat polio in months, says WHO](#)

16th May 2016

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

Polio could be eradicated in Pakistan within months, health officials say, as a mass vaccination drive is launched.

Health services administration

[The Future of GP Collaborative Working](#)

16th May 2016

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

A new report showcasing how GPs are designing and leading innovative schemes to improve the integration of care in the best interests of patients, has been published by the Royal College of GPs.

[Debunking myths about patient experience surveys](#)

16th May 2016

Source: <https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/>

Patient experience surveys are commonplace in UK hospitals and care settings. Here, Marc Elliott and Rebecca Anhang Price consider seven myths about the relevance and

fairness of this practice and question how they really contribute to service improvement and patient satisfaction.

[Alan Doran appointed as Interim CEO, Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman](#)

11th May 2016

Source: <http://www.ombudsman.org.uk/>

Alan brings a wealth of experience to the organisation. Most recently he was Chief Executive at the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority where he delivered a major programme of change to prepare the organisation for the new HFE Act which came into force in 2010. He has also held senior positions at the Department of Health as Director General responsible for corporate services and, before that, Director of Operations.

HIV & AIDS

[New funding for local HIV prevention](#)

11th May 2016

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

Public Health England (PHE) announces an HIV Prevention Innovation Fund for 2016 to 2017 of up to £600,000 for local prevention initiatives.

Infant & child health

[Inside England's only gender identity clinic for children](#)

12th May 2016

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

It is England's only clinic for children experiencing difficulties in the development of their gender identity.

[Why ice cream won't help your sunburn but oatmeal will](#)

9th May 2016

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

Obviously the best way to avoid sunburn is to wear sunscreen but what if you forgot and got burnt? There's lots of advice on what to do and some of it can be a bit misleading. Newsbeat's been speaking to Dr Nisith Sheth from the British Skin Foundation who tells us what is good - and what isn't - for burnt skin.

Men's health

[Dad's age, diet and lifestyle may cause birth defects](#)

16th May 2016

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

"Men are being warned to become fathers by 40 or face a greater risk of having children with serious illnesses," the Daily Mail reports after a new review looked at some of the evidence about paternal influences on the risk of childhood diseases.

[RCGP comment on eating disorders in males](#)

9th May 2016

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

RCGP spokesperson, Dr Clare Taylor, responded to a BBC Newsbeat story on eating disorders and its prevalence in males compared to females. Dr Clare Taylor,

spokesperson for the Royal College of GPs, said: "Eating disorders can lead to dangerous consequences for our patients, their families and carers, and research suggests that they are more prevalent in women compared to men. For every 10 patients suffering with anorexia or bulimia, statistics suggest that only one will be male, but this could be considerably higher as exact and current figures are lacking – and there may be more focus on identifying women with eating disorders than men."

Mental health

Immune system 'plays a role in dementia'

13th May 2016

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

"Scientists have identified a new cause of devastating neurological conditions," the Mail Online reports – but this is entirely inaccurate. A review of existing evidence makes the case that the innate immune system may be involved in neurodegenerative conditions, which are associated with progressive damage to brain cells, like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. However, no new evidence was provided.

Magic mushrooms 'promising' in depression

17th May 2016

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

A hallucinogenic chemical in magic mushrooms shows promise for people with untreatable depression, a short study on just 12 people hints.

Paranoia 'reduced with virtual reality'

5th May 2016

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

Virtual reality has been used to help treat severe paranoia. Patients who suffered persecutory delusions were encouraged to step into a computer-generated Underground train carriage and a lift. The simulations allowed the study's 30 patients to learn social situations they feared were actually safe. The research at Oxford University, published in the British Journal of Psychiatry, was funded by the Medical Research Council.

Obesity

BMI categories may need adjusting, argue researchers

11th May 2016

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

New research has found a body mass index (BMI) of 27 is linked to the lowest rate of death – but someone with a BMI of 27 is currently classed as being overweight.

Being overweight 'may be less unhealthy'

10th May 2016

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

Being overweight may not be as unhealthy as it was 40 years ago, Danish research suggests. The study found the "moderately" overweight now had lower rates of early death than those who were normal weight, underweight or obese. The work, published in JAMA, looked at many thousands of people's height, weight and death rates at three

different time periods since the 1970s. A UK doctor said it did not mean being overweight was healthy or desirable. And advice about preventing obesity should remain.

Can you really 'catch' obesity?

5th May 2016

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

"Obesity could be contagious like superbug C diff, suggest scientists," The Daily Telegraph reports. This rather alarming headline follows a study that explored characteristics of bacteria living in the human gut. The study did not, however, look at any link to obesity. There's no reason to think that you can "catch" obesity from spending time with people who are overweight.

Oral health

Tooth decay among 5 year olds continues significant decline

10th May 2016

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

The number of 5 year olds with tooth decay has dropped to its lowest level in almost a decade, according to a PHE oral health survey.

Physical activity

Exercise benefits you - even in polluted city air

6th May 2016

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

"Why walking is good for you ... even in the smog. Health benefits of a stroll found to outweigh harm caused by chemicals and dust pumped out by traffic," says the Mail Online. The report in question was carried out to see whether the harm caused by exposure to air pollution outweighs the benefit of doing exercise.

Safety & accident prevention

A Guide to Manual Handling and Lifting Techniques

4th May 2016

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

If you lift a heavy object carelessly you can end up pulling muscles or even worse, suffer long-term damage to your back or upper limbs. So it's vital that if your job involves lifting, you know how to do it properly. Many employers have short training sessions for this but if not, they should at least be able to give you a leaflet with the main rules for manual handling.

Sexual health

Record amount of fake Viagra seized

12th May 2016

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

More unlicensed erectile dysfunction drugs were seized in the UK by the authorities last year than ever before - worth more than £11m. The Victoria Derbyshire programme joined a raid to find out why they are a problem.

Smoking

[E-cigarette ban lifted by Nottingham hospital trust](#)

12th May 2016

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

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, which runs Queen Medical Centre and City Hospital, is one of the first trusts in England to allow restricted use of the devices. It said it had reversed its ban in light of evidence they are less dangerous than smoking tobacco. E-cigarette use is still banned inside the hospitals and smoking remain banned inside and outside.

Social & economic issues

[Are we sleepwalking into a 'global sleep crisis'?](#)

9th May 2016

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

a global sleep crisis because we don't go to bed early enough, say scientists," the Mail Online reports. The warning comes from a study produced by a research team using a smartphone app (Entrain) to track sleep patterns from around the world.

Statistics

[NHS 'has busiest year in its history'](#)

12th May 2016

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

The NHS in England has had the busiest year in its history with more patients than ever seeking help, official figures show. Nearly 23m people visited A&E in the 12 months to March 2016 - a rise of more than 500,000 from the previous year.

[Study finds no link between mobile phones and brain cancer](#)

9th May 2016

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

"Mobile phones don't increase the risk of brain cancer, 30-year study concludes," the Mail Online reports. The Australian study found the massive increase in mobile phone use over the past 30 years was not matched by a similar rise in brain cancer cases.

Women's health

['I was too embarrassed to talk about my periods'](#)

9th May 2016

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

Womb cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women in the UK, with around 9,000 cases diagnosed each year, but it is rarely mentioned or talked about - even among women. Daloni Carlisle, from Kent, is passionate about encouraging women to talk

about their bodies so that they recognise the symptoms of a cancer which is affecting more and more women, particularly the over-50s.

Workplace health

How Many Breaks am I Entitled to?

8th May 2016

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

How many breaks should be given in a twelve hour shift and how long should the breaks be?

Local news: []

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Other Bulletins
<p>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/</p>
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<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>



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