

Public Health Bulletin. 6th June 2017

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>

[Alcohol misuse](#)

[Chronic conditions](#)

[Communicable diseases](#)

[Diet & nutrition](#)

[Environmental health](#)

[Health protection](#)

[Health Services administration](#)

[Infant and child health](#)

[Men's health](#)

[Mental health](#)

[Obesity](#)

[Obesity](#)

[Older people](#)

[Physical activity](#)

[Sexual Health](#)

[Smoking](#)

[Social and economic issues](#)

[Statistics](#)

[Women's health](#)

[Workplace health](#)

[Local news](#)

Alcohol misuse

[Alcohol advertising is linked to consumption](#)

Source: Alcohol Concern

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

Alcohol advertising is linked to consumption, particularly in under-18s, and serves to normalise drinking. That's why the UK alcohol industry spends over £800 million each year on marketing. Children aged 10-15 years old in the UK see 11% more alcohol adverts than adults 25 years and older. Given that self-regulation has failed to adequately protect children, regulation of alcohol marketing should be made statutory, independent of the alcohol and advertising industries.

Chronic conditions

[Doctor in the House: How to manage back pain](#)

29 May 2017

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

Nearly 10 million working days are lost each year for adults aged 25-64 due to back pain - and around 80% of us will suffer from back pain at some point in our lives. The financial cost to the UK economy is estimated to be around £12bn per year, plus there are huge personal and emotional costs.

Communicable diseases

[Avian influenza \(bird flu\) in winter 2016 to 2017](#)

3 June 2017

Source: Public Health

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

The latest situation on avian influenza (bird flu) in the UK and advice on how to reduce the risks.

[Ultra-tough antibiotic to fight superbugs](#)

30 May 2017

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

US scientists have re-engineered a vital antibiotic in a bid to wipe out one of the world's most threatening superbugs. Their new version of vancomycin is designed to be ultra-tough and appears to be a thousand times more potent than the old drug, PNAS journal reports.

Diet & nutrition

[Why Greek mountain villagers have healthy hearts](#)

26 May 2017

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

Scientists have pinpointed one reason why people living in isolated villages in Greece may enjoy long and healthy lives. They found a new genetic variant, common among villagers, which appears to protect the heart by lowering levels of "bad" fats and cholesterol.

'Chocolate good for the heart' claims sadly too good to be true

24 May 2017

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

"Regularly tucking into a bar of chocolate may actually be good for us," reports the Mail Online. Researchers in Denmark say people who eat chocolate one to six times a week are less likely to get a heart condition called atrial fibrillation than those who eat it hardly at all (less than once a month). However, as is often the case with health news that sounds too good to be true, the research is not particularly persuasive. People who ate chocolate less than once a month were also more likely to have diabetes, high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease; all of which are risk factors for atrial fibrillation. So they may have been avoiding chocolate for health reasons. There is also no evidence from this study that eating chocolate will help with symptoms of atrial fibrillation if you already have it.

Just half a glass of wine a day may increase breast cancer risk

23 May 2017

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

"Just half a glass of wine a day ups the risk of breast cancer by nine per cent, experts warn," The Sun reports. A major report looking at global evidence found that drinking just 10g of alcohol a day – 1.25 units – was linked to an increased risk of breast cancer.

Environmental health

'Everyday chemicals' linked to cancer

2 June 2017

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

"Chemicals in everyday items like cosmetics linked to cancer," The Independent reports. Research involving genetically engineered human cells found that a class of chemical called aldehydes damaged a gene that prevents cancer from developing.

Health protection

Measles outbreak at Lliswerry High School, Newport

5 June 2017

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

A measles outbreak has been declared at a school in Newport. Public Health Wales said four people with links to Lliswerry High School had been diagnosed with the illness. Vaccinations are being carried out at the school and parents have been sent letters to alert them to the risk.

Cold water 'just as good as hot' for handwashing

1 June 2017

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

"Antibacterial handwash is NO better than soap – and cold water kills as many germs as hot, experts claim," The Sun reports. These were the main findings of a study looking at various methods of handwashing.

Beta-blockers 'useless' for many heart attack patients, study reports

30 May 2017

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

"Many patients given beta blockers after a heart attack may not benefit from being on the drugs, suggesting they may be being overprescribed," The Guardian reports. Beta-blockers are drugs used to regulate the heart by making it beat more slowly and with less force. They are often used in people who have heart failure or are thought to be at risk of heart failure.

Germany vaccination: Fines plan as measles cases rise

26 May 2017

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

Parents in Germany who fail to seek medical advice on vaccinating their children could face fines of up to €2,500 (£2,175; \$2,800). Health Minister Hermann Gröhe said it was necessary to tighten the law because of a measles epidemic.

Health services administration

London attack: Goodwill and planning got NHS through

5 June 2017

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

The NHS puts lots of effort into planning for a major incident - whether it is a terrorist attack, a cyber-attack, an outbreak of infectious disease or simply a major power cut. But what the past few months have shown is that the dedication and goodwill of staff play a vital role.

Infant & child health

TV in bedroom 'risk factor' for child obesity

5 June 2017

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

"Children who have TVs in their bedrooms are more likely to be overweight than those who do not," BBC News reports. A UK study found a link between children having a TV in their room and an increased risk of obesity.

Hundreds of Welsh children treated for sleep problems

2 June 2017

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

Hundreds of children are being treated for sleep problems in Wales every year. In some cases, babies, infants and teenagers have been admitted to hospital while in north Wales alone, the number being prescribed medication rose by 20% in the last three years.

Charlie Gard parents to 'keep fighting'

1 June 2017

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

The parents of nine-month-old Charlie Gard say they will keep fighting to get him experimental treatment in the US. Supreme Court judges have ruled Charlie will be kept on life support until his parents' appeal can be considered.

Autism diagnoses 'could be reduced under NHS plan'

27 May 2017

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

Proposals to reduce the number of children being diagnosed with autism are being considered by NHS commissioners in south-west London.

Men's health

[Prostate cancer treatment 'could help more patients'](#)

3 June 2017

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

One of the largest clinical trials for prostate cancer has given "powerful results", say UK researchers. A drug for treating prostate cancer that has spread was found to save lives when offered earlier, a study found. The trial looked at abiraterone as an additional treatment in patients with prostate cancer who were about to start long-term hormone therapy. Abiraterone improved survival, according to results published in the New England Journal of Medicine.

Mental health

[Does meditation carry a risk of harmful side effects?](#)

26 May 2017

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

"Meditation can leave you feeling even more stressed," the Daily Mail reports. The claim is prompted by a study of 60 practitioners of Buddhist meditation in the US which found they'd had a range of "challenging or difficult" experiences associated with the practice. However, it's not clear how relevant the results are to the majority of people who use meditation apps or take mindfulness classes.

[Dementia saliva testing 'shows early promise'](#)

22 May 2017

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

"Simple saliva test for dementia 'shows promise' in bid to diagnose the disease early," the Daily Mirror reports. This news is based on a laboratory study that took saliva samples from 12 healthy adults, nine adults with Alzheimer's disease, and eight with mild cognitive impairment (MCI), which is often seen as the stage just before dementia.

Obesity

[Expanding waistline linked to an increased risk of cancer](#)

25 May 2017

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

"A pot belly is a red flag for cancer," reports the Mail Online after a new study found an increase in waist circumference carries similar risks for developing cancer as raised body mass index (BMI). The study used data from several European studies of more than 43,000 adults aged around 63, who were then followed up for 12 years.

Older people

[All of our patients' deserve high quality mental health care at every stage of their life, says RCGP](#)

5 June 2017

Source: Royal College of General Practitioners <http://www.rcgp.org.uk/news/>

Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard, Chair of the RCGP, has responded to a BJGP study published today on older patients' mental health care.

Physical activity

[Fitness trackers' calorie measurements are prone to error](#)

26 May 2017

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

"Fitness trackers out of step when measuring calories, research shows," The Guardian reports. An independent analysis of a number of leading brands found they were all prone to inaccurate recording of energy expenditure. Researchers recruited 60 participants to take part in a range of exercises while having their heart rate and number of calories burned measured by fitness trackers, as well as by clinically-approved medical devices used in a clinical setting. Seven fitness trackers were tested, including the Apple Watch, Fitbit Surge and the Samsung Gear S2.

Sexual health

[Family Planning Association's response to study on teenage pregnancy and spending cuts](#)

31 May 2017

Source: Family Planning Association <http://www.fpa.org.uk/news/>

A study titled 'The effect of spending cuts on teen pregnancy' has been published in the Journal of Health Economics by David Paton (Nottingham University Business School) and Liam Wright (University of Sheffield).

Smoking

[Scientists find that smoking harms livers of unborn babies](#)

29 May 2017

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

The impact of cigarette damage to unborn babies has been revealed in a new stem cell study. Scientists found that the cocktail of chemicals in cigarettes is particularly harmful to developing liver cells.

Social & economic issues

[Parents' phone addiction may lead to child behavioural problems](#)

31 May 2017

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

US, involved more than 300 parents who reported on their use of digital technology, to see if they felt it affected interactions with their children and actual child behaviours. A range of technology devices were studied, including computers, television and tablets – not just smartphones. It found half of parents reported that their use of technology disrupted interactions with their child three or more times a day. Behavioural problems in children were linked to these disruptions, but only for mother-child relationships, not for fathers. The authors suggest this could be because in the sample, children spent more time with their mothers, so the number of "technoferences" were greater, but the true reason is unknown.

Statistics

[Long waits for surgery 'have tripled in four years'](#)

2 June 2017

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

The number of patients waiting six months or more for surgery has tripled over the past four years in England, the Royal College of Surgeons has said. In March, nearly 130,000 people had been waiting for operations after being referred to a consultant, compared with 45,000 in March 2013. But nine out of 10 patients were still treated within 18 weeks, data shows.

[Global diarrhoea deaths down by a third](#)

2 June 2017

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

The number of children dying worldwide of diarrhoea fell by a third between 2005 and 2015, researchers have found. The study says better access to clean water and sanitation is key, with fewer weak and malnourished children becoming infected. New vaccines have also had a positive impact.

Women's health

[RCGP announces new support for women's health](#)

5 June 2017

Source: Royal College of General Practitioners

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

The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) is pleased to announce the launch of the Women's Health Educational Framework. This is a new library of resources for women's health, relevant for continuous professional development (CPD) for GPs and other primary healthcare professionals.

[Link between stress in pregnancy and ADHD unfounded](#)

31 May 2017

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

"Stressed mothers-to-be face an increased risk of giving birth to a child who will develop ADHD or heart disease later in life," the Mail Online reports. However, the new study it is reporting on did not look at long-term outcomes in children, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), only at stress hormone levels during pregnancy.

Workplace health

[Getting people thriving with good mental health in the workplace](#)

9 May 2017

Source: Mental Health Foundation

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

New research by the Mental Health Foundation shows that most of us experience something we'd describe as a mental health problem at some time. Research also showed that just 13% of the UK population has a high level of good mental health – that's too low and it's time we recognised and addressed the barriers that prevent some people from thriving.

HSE Business Plan 2017/18

Source: Health & Safety Executive <http://www.hse.gov.uk/>

Great Britain has a health and safety record we can all be proud of. We are one of the safest places in the world to work in. Nonetheless, the plateaus we see in our health and safety statistics are also a stark reminder of the challenges we face in continuing to improve Britain's performance while we adapt to the rapidly changing world around us.

Public sector employees 'more anxious', charity says

1 June 2017

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

Public sector staff are more likely to feel anxious at work and take sick days for their mental health than those in the private sector, research suggests. The charity Mind asked 12,000 UK employees about their mental health. It found 48% in the public sector took time off for their well-being, compared with 32% in the private sector.

Local news: []

*This bulletin contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v2.0

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>
<p>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/</p>
<p>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</p>
<p>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</p>
<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>



Public Health Bulletin by NHS Libraries in Thames Valley and Wessex is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).