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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**Chronic conditions**

**People with type 2 diabetes should 'save carbs for last', study claims**

A small study found that people with [type 2 diabetes](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/type-2-diabetes/) who saved their carbohydrates until the end of their meal were less likely to experience a sudden rise in their blood sugar (glucose) levels……..This study included just 16 people who ate the foods of their meal in different orders to test which order was most effective at lowering blood sugar and related hormones. They either ate carbohydrates first, carbohydrates last, or all nutrients together at the same time….While the results are interesting, the study was far too small to form the basis of any firm medical guidance.

**New evidence confirms three-yearly surveillance interval for people at intermediate risk of bowel cancer**
03 October 2017  Source: NIHR [https://discover.dc.nihr.ac.uk](https://discover.dc.nihr.ac.uk)

People with benign growths (adenomas), who are at intermediate risk of bowel cancer, benefit from follow-up colonoscopy. However, some people at the lower end of risk in this intermediate category may not benefit from this further follow-up. At higher risk, a three-yearly colonoscopy is thought to be sufficient.

**Many new cancer drugs show 'no clear benefit', argues review**

"Over half of new cancer drugs 'show no benefits' for survival or wellbeing," The Guardian reports. That was the finding of a study looking at the evidence supporting new cancer drugs approved between 2009 and 2013 by the European Medicine Agency (EMA). The study found only half of drug approvals had clear evidence showing they either prolonged people's lives, or improved their quality of life. That's not the same as saying these drugs would not help anyone. But research presented at the time of the drugs' approval, and gathered in the three to eight following years, did not show that they worked better than existing treatments in terms of prolonging or improving quality of life.

**Vitamin D may prevent asthma worsening for some**

Vitamin D supplements protect against severe asthma attacks," The Daily Telegraph reports. The headline was prompted by a review that pooled data from seven trials comparing taking vitamin D supplements with a placebo in people with asthma. The researchers wanted to see whether vitamin D reduced the risk of severe asthma episodes that needed hospitalisation or treatment with oral steroids, referred to as "asthma exacerbations". Overall, the researchers found vitamin D supplements reduced the risk of asthma exacerbations by 26%. Further analysis found the protective effect was only seen in people who were vitamin D deficient to start with.
### Communicable diseases

**Has measles really been 'eliminated' in the UK?**

26 September 2017  
Source: NHS Choices  

"Measles eliminated in the UK for the first time," reports The Telegraph. This and other stories in the media are based on a new World Health Organization (WHO) report confirming the UK is now one of 33 countries in Europe to have "eliminated" measles. "Elimination" is the official term used once a country has reduced the number of cases of a disease to a low enough level to stop it spreading through the general population for at least three years. It doesn't mean that measles has been wiped out or eradicated in the UK. In 2016 there were more than 500 cases in England and Wales. However, the disease wasn't able to spread more widely.

### Environmental health

**WWF - Over eating animal products is devastating wildlife**

05 October 2017  
Source: World Wildlife Fund  
[https://www.wwf.org.uk/](https://www.wwf.org.uk/)

Diets rich in animal protein are having dire effects on the environment, with the largest impact from producing crops, such as soy, to feed livestock. This puts an enormous strain on natural resources and drives wide scale wildlife loss. A new WWF report ‘Appetite for Destruction’, launched yesterday at the Extinction and Livestock Conference, highlights the vast amount of land that is needed to grow the crops used for animal feed, including in some of the planet’s most vulnerable areas such as the Amazon, Congo Basin and the Himalayas.

**Three quarters of honey samples contain pesticide traces**

06 October 2017  
Source: NHS Choices  

"Honey from across the world is contaminated with potent pesticides known to harm bees," The Guardian reports. This is based on a study that analysed nearly 200 samples of honey, collected from diverse regions worldwide, and found that 75% contained traces of a group of pesticides called neonicotinoids.

### Health promotion

**Sepsis awareness**

28 September 2017  
Source: Scottish Government  
[https://news.gov.scot/](https://news.gov.scot/)

A new Scotland-wide awareness-raising campaign on the dangers of sepsis has been announced by Health Secretary Shona Robison. Health Secretary Shona Robison made the announcement following a meeting with the sepsis awareness charity Fiona Elizabeth Agnew Trust (FEAT). The campaign will raise awareness amongst Scots of the often-silent symptoms of the condition, which can be fatal if not caught in time.

**Early discharge ‘hospital-at-home’ gives similar outcomes to in-patient care**

03 October 2017  
Source: NIHR  
[https://discover.dc.nihr.ac.uk](https://discover.dc.nihr.ac.uk)
Supported early discharge, where patients receive on-going hospital-level treatment in their own home, had no effect on mortality compared with standard in-patient care. Patients had shorter hospital stays, were more likely to be satisfied and less likely to end up in residential care. This updated Cochrane review identified 32 international trials comparing early discharge hospital-at-home with hospital in-patient care. Most evidence related to people recovering from a stroke, where NICE already recommends supported discharge if this is appropriate.

**Health protection**

**Bedbugs thought to 'hitchhike' on dirty holiday laundry**
29 September 2017  

"Dirty laundry a powerful magnet for bedbugs, study finds……. The number of bedbugs has soared across the globe recently, with cheap air flights believed to play a role in their spread. But until now, it hasn’t been clear how or why these tiny wingless bugs manage to travel great distances. The authors of this latest study now think they have the answer: dirty laundry left lying around in hotel rooms, regardless of the presence of a human host.

**Health services administration**

**Further progress required at Stockport NHS Foundation Trust**
03 October 2017  
Source: Care Quality Commission [http://www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has told Stockport NHS Foundation Trust that it must make further improvements following two inspections in March and June 2017. During the first inspection of Stepping Hill Hospital in March inspectors visited the urgent and emergency department and medical care, to follow up on concerns identified in the trust's previous inspection.

**Paddington urgent care centre rated Inadequate**
05 October 2017  
Source: Care Quality Commission [http://www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

St Mary’s Urgent Care Centre, which is run by Vocare Limited, was rated Inadequate for being safe, effective and well-led. It was rated Requires Improvement for being caring and Good for being responsive to people’s needs, after the inspection in July 2017. The service is located within St Mary’s Hospital, Paddington. The hospital is run by Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust. The urgent care centre premises are owned by the hospital trust.

**CQC recommends Royal Cornwall Hospitals should go into special measures**
05 October 2017  
Source: Care Quality Commission [http://www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

England’s Chief Inspector of Hospitals has recommended that Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust should be placed into special measures after its latest inspection by the Care Quality Commission. The Royal Cornwall Hospital at Treliske has been rated Inadequate overall - with surgery, maternity and gynaecology, end of life and outpatient services also rated as Inadequate. Critical care and children and young people’s services have been rated as Good.
**Chief Inspector of Hospitals recommends South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust remains in special measures**

05 October 2017    Source: Care Quality Commission    [http://www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

England’s Chief Inspector of Hospitals has told South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust that it must continue to make significant improvements to its services, following its latest inspection by the Care Quality Commission. Professor Ted Baker has recommended that the South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust remains in special measures. Following CQC’s recommendation, NHS Improvement placed the trust into special measures in September last year.

**Deadline approaching for people to claim for their care**


People who believe their care should have been funded by the NHS are being encouraged by the Welsh Government to register their intent to make a claim. Continuing NHS Healthcare is a package of care provided free-of-charge by the NHS for people with complex and primarily health-based needs. This can be provided in a care home or an individual’s own home.....Potential claimants have until October 31st 2017 to register their intent to make a claim for continuing healthcare costs which were incurred between 1 October 2015 and 31 October 2016.

**The King’s Fund warns against further hospital bed cuts**

29 September 2017    Source: The Kings Fund    [https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/](https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/)

With hospitals full to capacity, NHS plans in some areas to cut hospital beds are undesirable and unachievable, warns The King’s Fund in a new report. New analysis for the report finds that the total number of NHS hospital beds† in England has more than halved over the past 30 years, from around 299,000 to 142,000, as more people with mental illness and learning disabilities are cared for in the community and medical advances have reduced the time many patients spend in hospital. Although it finds that most advanced nations have reduced hospital bed numbers in recent years, the report shows that the NHS now has fewer acute hospital beds per person than almost any other comparable health system.

**Health Secretary announces nursing workforce reforms**

03 October 2017    Source: Dept. of Health    [https://www.gov.uk/](https://www.gov.uk/)

Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt has announced wide-ranging reforms to increase nurse training places and retain staff. A 25% increase in training posts for nurses is part of a range of measures to; ensure the NHS meets current and future nursing workforce needs; improve working conditions; provide new routes into the profession. The government will provide funding for the clinical placements required for an additional 5,170 pre-registration nurse degrees from 2018. This builds on the commitment to 10,000 more training places for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals announced in August this year.
Government announces consultation on organ donation opt-out system
06 October 2017 Source: HM Government https://www.gov.uk/

The Prime Minister has announced the intention to launch a public consultation on increasing rates of organ donation. The proposals will include a new opt-out system for organ donation for England. The consultation will be launched by the end of the year.

Most people still getting good care – but health and care system is 'straining at the seams’, making future quality precarious
10 October 2017 Source: Care Quality Commission http://www.cqc.org.uk

This year’s State of Care shows that, thanks to the efforts of staff and leaders, the quality of health and social care has been maintained despite very real challenges and the majority of people are getting good, safe care. But future quality is precarious as the system struggles with complex new types of demand, access and cost.

HIV & AIDS

Rates of newly diagnosed HIV increasing in over-50s

"HIV rises among over-50s as they neglect safe sex" is the headline from The Times. The news is based on a European study that found more over-50s are being diagnosed with HIV compared with 12 years ago. The study collected data on more than 360,000 people who had been newly diagnosed with HIV between 2004 and 2015 in Europe. The researchers looked at infection rates over time according to age, route of transmission and country. They found a number of differences between the patterns of infection and diagnosis in those aged 15 to 49 and in those aged 50 and over.

New PHE figures show decline in HIV diagnosis rates
04 October 2017 Source: Public Health England https://www.gov.uk/

Public Health England (PHE) figures show there has been a significant decline in new diagnoses of HIV in the UK in gay and bisexual men.

Infant & child health

Test children’s urine before prescribing antibiotics for UTIs, says NICE
27 September 2017 Source: NICE https://www.nice.org.uk/

NICE – the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence – has updated its guidance for diagnosing and managing UTIs in children. The new recommendations give clear advice to GPs and healthcare professionals about how they can accurately test children’s urine for an infection. This will help to give them a better indication of whether the child needs antibiotics or not.

Allow underweight children to be ‘messy’ with their food, says NICE.
27 September 2017 Source: NICE https://www.nice.org.uk/
Slow weight gain in early childhood, also known as faltering growth, may be associated with persisting problems with appetite and feeding, says NICE, in new guidance published today……Professor Gillian Leng, deputy chief executive and director of health and social care at NICE, said: “Having a child with faltering growth can be distressing for parents and carers. However, simple things such as encouraging relaxed and enjoyable feeding and mealtimes, eating together as a family or even allowing young children to be ‘messy’ with their food can help encourage them to eat.

**Simple preventive actions by parents linked to fewer child injuries**
03 October 2017 Source: NIHR [https://discover.dc.nihr.ac.uk](https://discover.dc.nihr.ac.uk)

Education is promoted as a way to tackle the scale of avoidable injuries to young children. Children have two to five times the risk of an accident leading to injury if a parent leaves them on a raised surface, places hot drinks within reach, or does not put medicines away straight after use. For example, children are also more than twice as likely to attend hospital for falling on stairs if their parent leaves stair gates open or does not use them.

**Parents urged to join fight against flu**

Parents of 2-5 year olds are encouraged to join the fight against flu this winter, by ensuring their children get their flu vaccination. GP practices across Scotland are providing the free nasal flu vaccine in a bid to ensure young children are protected. Primary school children will receive their vaccination at school.

**Men’s health**

**High-precision radiotherapy for prostate cancer 'shows promise'**

"Targeted radiotherapy 'cures' prostate cancer that kills thousands," reports The Times. The news is based on a UK study of the use of high-precision radiotherapy to treat men with advanced localised prostate cancer. Researchers wanted to see if they could safely target cancer cells that had spread outside the prostate to nearby lymph nodes without damaging nearby healthy cells, and reduce treatment side effects.

**Mental health**

**World Mental Health Day**

£500,000 to improve first response mental health services. Patients experiencing mental health problems will be better supported – thanks to a half million pound increase in funding. NHS24 will use the development funding to improve the services it offers to people experiencing low mood, depression and anxiety, supporting those who need unscheduled care but do not require to contact emergency services.

**DLR gets customers suffering from mental illness ‘Back on Track’**
Today is World Mental Health Day and people across London will be wearing green ribbons to raise awareness. To mark the day, MetroTravel finds out more about DLR's Back on Track scheme that helps passengers with their journeys. Any customers experiencing a wide variety of issues including claustrophobia, anxiety or depression can contact the DLR's small team of community ambassadors who will give support and guidance on how to travel comfortably on the network.

**LGA responds to report on lack of responsible gambling measures by operators**

Responding to a report published today by GambleAware which shows gambling operators are not giving staff suitable training in how to promote safe gambling among customers, Cllr Simon Blackburn, Chair of the Local Government Association’s Safer and Stronger Communities Board, said: “It’s encouraging that the gambling industry commissioned this research and has taken an honest look at the shortcomings in its work to promote responsible gambling.

**Prime Minister announces review to tackle detention of those with mental ill health**
04 October 2017  Source: HM Government  [https://www.gov.uk/](https://www.gov.uk/)

Prime Minister Theresa May has announced plans for an independent review of mental health legislation and practice to tackle the issue of mental health detention. There have been concerns that detention rates under the Mental Health Act – passed more than 3 decades ago – are too high. The number of detentions has been rising year on year. Last year on average there were 180 cases a day where people were sectioned under the terms of the act.

**Our response to the prime minister’s party conference speech**
04 October 2017  Source: Mental Health Foundation  [https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/)

Early this year, prime minister Theresa May pledged that a re-elected Conservative government would replace “in its entirety, the flawed Mental Health Act” and today, May has reiterated the Conservative Party's commitment. Commenting, Jenny Edwards, Chief Executive of the Mental Health Foundation, said: "We welcome prime minister May’s announcement of a much-needed independent review of the Mental Health Act and are encouraged to see recognition of unjustifiably high detention rates and unacceptable discrimination against people from black and minority ethnic (BAME) populations being noted in the speech.

**38% of Brits fear revealing a mental health problem at work would jeopardise their career**
10 October 2017  Source: Mental Health Foundation  [https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/)

A new survey of 2,000 workers which was commissioned by the Mental Health Foundation for World Mental Health Day (Tuesday 10th October) has revealed that 38%
of British workers wouldn’t talk openly about a mental health problem for fear it would affect their job prospects or job security.

**Shocking new poll reveals mental health stigma in the workplace**  
10 October 2017  
Source: Mental Health Foundation  
https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/

40% of Scots fear revealing a mental health problem at work would jeopardise their career. A new survey of 2,000 workers which was commissioned by the Mental Health Foundation for World Mental Health Day (Tuesday 10th October) has revealed that 40% of Scottish workers wouldn’t talk openly about a mental health problem for fear it would affect their job prospects or job security.

**Is schizophrenia risk 'around 80% genetic'?**  
09 October 2017  
Source: NHS Choices  
http://www.nhs.uk/news/

"Genetics account for almost 80 per cent of a person’s risk of developing schizophrenia, according to new research," the Mail Online reports. That is the main finding of a study looking at how often schizophrenia affected both twins of a pair, looking at identical and non-identical twins. Schizophrenia is a serious mental health condition that can cause delusions and hallucinations. There is no single "cause" of schizophrenia. It is thought to result from a complex combination of both genetic and environmental factors.

**Mental Health Service Models for Young People**  
06 October 2017  
Source: POST - Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology  
http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/

This POSTnote describes some of the new models of Children and Young People Mental Health Services (CYPMHS) and examines the challenges to their effective implementation.

**Older people**

22 September 2017  
Source Campaign to end loneliness.  
https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/

There are an estimated one million, one hundred thousand people 65 and over who are chronically lonely. They are difficult to find.....The Practical Guide has two main sections. One on how to successfully identify loneliness and the second on how to better understand and engage with older people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing loneliness.

**The Missing Million: In Search of the Loneliest in our Communities**  
22 September 2017  
Source Campaign to end loneliness.  
https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/
There are an estimated one million, one hundred thousand people 65 and over who are chronically lonely. They are difficult to find..... The report is made up of three sections: Identifying Loneliness, Applying the Methods and Talking About Loneliness. It outlines methods of identifying lonely older people including heat maps and different data sources available. There are case studies which show how those methods are being put into practice. There is also guidance on how to talk to someone who is lonely or at risk of being lonely.

**Investment to get older people active**
05 October 2017  Source: Sport England
[https://www.sportengland.org/](https://www.sportengland.org/)

We’re investing up to £10 million of National Lottery money into 20 projects across England to reduce the number of inactive older adults. The projects we’re funding will use sport and activity to help tackle problems such as poor mental health, dementia, loneliness caused by bereavement, and addiction.

**LGA responds to CQC ‘State of Care’ report**
10 October 2017  Source: Local Government Assoc.
[http://www.local.gov.uk/](http://www.local.gov.uk/)

Responding to the Care Quality Commission’s (CQC) annual assessment of the quality of health and social care in England, *State of Care*, Cllr Izzi Seccombe, Chairman of the Local Government Association’s Community Wellbeing Board, said: “It is encouraging that the vast majority of adult social care services were rated good, and that services have improved on last year, which is a massive achievement given the unprecedented pressures across the system.

**Physical activity**

**Women and Girls in Sport Week**

The five fastest growing sports for girls in Scotland have been revealed in new statistics to mark the start of Women and Girls in Sport Week. The sports with the biggest increase in participant sessions between 2011/12 to 2016/17 are: Karate – more than quadrupled; Dodgeball – more than quadrupled; Cross Country – more than doubled; Tennis – almost doubled; Rugby Union – almost doubled. The top three sports by total participation sessions are netball, football and gymnastics, according to data collected from the Active Schools programme.

**Should you wipe down your gym yoga mat to avoid germs?**
27 September 2017  Source: BBC [http://www.bbc.co.uk/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)

Any polite gym-goer will wipe down a spinning bike or weight machine after a sweaty workout to stop the spread of germs, so should people do the same for communal yoga mats?
Safety & accident prevention

New bill to improve patient safety
29 September 2017 Source: HM Government https://www.gov.uk/

Proposals will give the Health Service Safety Investigations Body power to investigate serious patient safety incidents. A safety organisation drawing on lessons from the airline industry will have new legal powers to investigate serious patient safety incidents in the NHS in England, under plans laid before parliament today (14 September 2017). The draft Health Service Safety Investigations Bill will establish and enshrine in law the powers of the Health Service Safety Investigations Body (HSSIB).

Infected blood scheme reform
29 September 2017 Source: HM Government https://www.gov.uk/

The Department of Health published its response to the recent consultation on infected blood support and the special category mechanism on 28 September. As part of this response, the government announced new payment ‘uplifts’ and a new special category mechanism (SCM) to improve financial support for those affected by the infected blood tragedy of the 1970s and 1980s. At least 2,400 people died and thousands more were exposed to Hepatitis C and HIV, with life-changing consequences, as a result of receiving infected blood.

Smoking

Highest smoking quit success rates on record

New data published in a University College of London (UCL) report shows quitting success rates at their highest for at least a decade, up to 19.8% for the first 6 months of this year, significantly higher than the average for the last 10 years (15.7%). Success rates among the less well-off have for years remained consistently low, but in a major turnaround the sharp increase in success rates is being seen entirely among this group. For the first time, smokers in manual occupational groups have virtually the same chances of quitting as those in white collar jobs. The report coincides with the launch of Stoptober quit smoking challenge, which has inspired over one and a half million quit attempts since 2012.

Social & economic issues

The impact on health of homelessness: a guide for local authorities

The information and ideas in this briefing aim to support local authorities in protecting and improving their population’s health and wellbeing, and reducing health inequalities, by tackling homelessness and its causes.

LGA responds to Which? care home research
Responding to research by Which? showing almost nine in 10 council areas across England could face a shortfall in care home places by 2022, Cllr Izzi Seccombe, Chairman of the Local Government Association’s Community Wellbeing Board, said: “These findings reinforce our warning about the urgent need to reform adult social care and deliver a long-term sustainable solution that delivers a range of high quality care and support for the growing numbers of people who will need it.

**Statistics**

**Hospital admissions report published**

A report providing details of all hospital inpatient, day case and adult critical care episodes in England for the 2016/17 financial year has been published by NHS Digital.

**Sexual and reproductive health services statistics published**

The report, Statistics on Sexual and Reproductive Health Services, England 2016-17, provides information about activity taking place at dedicated sexual and reproductive health services, including some non-NHS services. This includes family planning clinics, community contraception clinics and some young people’s services, such as Brook advisory centres.

**NHS Indicators: England, October 2017**

A summary of performance indicators and demand levels for NHS services in England. Covers areas such as: A&E statistics, waiting lists, ambulance data, delayed charges, and staffing levels including doctors and nurses.

**Women’s health**

**Is female genital mutilation a problem for the EU?**

Yes it is. It is estimated that 180,000 girls and women are at risk of female genital mutilation in the EU each year. This harmful practice leaves many long-lasting consequences for the victim and in some cases, can be fatal. However, we do not have a full picture of the phenomenon because of underreporting and not enough comparable data.

**UK breast cancer progress 'stalling' as NHS continues to miss opportunities to prevent more deaths, landmark new report finds**

**Scared, stigmatised and alone: Irish women navigate the abortion trail with little support**
05 October 2017 Source: ESRC [http://www.esrc.ac.uk/](http://www.esrc.ac.uk/)

The struggle to give Northern Irish women access to abortions on the NHS in mainland Britain may finally have been won this summer, but for those women and others from the Republic of Ireland where abortion is illegal, there are still many obstacles to overcome. Research led by Dr Deirdre Duffy of Manchester Metropolitan University found that many Irish Women seeking an abortion are not receiving good enough pre and post abortion care.

**Study links vegetarian diet in pregnancy to substance abuse in offspring**

"Pregnant vegetarians are three times more likely to have kids who abuse drugs and alcohol," reports the Mail Online. Researchers claim to have found a link between substance abuse at age 15, and diet of the child's mother during pregnancy. But it is far from clear that avoiding meat in pregnancy "causes" substance abuse in teenagers.

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