

Public Health Bulletin. 5th Feb 2019

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

[Increasing number of alcohol-related deaths highlights urgent need for Government Alcohol Strategy](#)

Feb 2019

Source: Alcohol Change UK <https://alcoholchange.org.uk>

Alcohol caused nearly 6,000 deaths in England in 2017, 6% more deaths than in 2016, statistics published this week by NHS Digital have shown.

See also **Statistics**

Black and ethnic minority groups

['What my dad's dementia taught me'](#)

25 Jan 2019

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

When BBC presenter Rajan Datar learned that his father had dementia, it led him to discover that a combination of stigma, language barriers and cultural differences were stopping many in the UK's South Asian community from seeking help. This is his experience.

Children and young people

[LGA responds to Children's Commissioner report on children educated at home](#)

4 Feb 2019

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

"Placing a legal duty on parents to register home-schooled children with their local authority would also help councils to monitor how children are being educated and prevent them from disappearing from the oversight of services designed to keep them safe."

[LGA responds to Young Carers survey](#)

31 Jan 2019

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

"Good relationships between councils, schools, the NHS and other organisations are crucial to making sure that children are referred as quickly as possible and get the support they need to help them their lives to the fullest."

[Screen time linked to 'delayed development' in young children](#)

29 Jan 2019

Source: NHS Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/news/>

"Letting a toddler spend lots of time using screens may delay their development of skills such as language and sociability," BBC News reports.

[Parents' vaccine side effects fear 'fuelled by social media'](#)

24 Jan 2019

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

Fear of a vaccine's side effects is the top reason for people refusing them, a report from the Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH) suggests.

[Children and young people exposed prenatally to alcohol](#)

Jan 2019 *Source:* Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network <https://www.sign.ac.uk>

This guideline provides evidence-based recommendations on measurement of alcohol consumption in pregnancy, identification of children at risk, medical and physical assessment, and management and follow up of children and young people affected by prenatal alcohol exposure.

See also **Mental health**

See also **Obesity**

Chronic conditions

['Deadlock must end' over cystic fibrosis drug Orkambi](#)

4 Feb 2019

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

The government must use its powers to break a deadlock in making a life-extending drug available to people with cystic fibrosis, campaigners say.

[New study on effectiveness of statins 'reassuring', says RCGP](#)

31 Jan 2019

Source: RCGP <https://www.rcgp.org.uk>

Professor Martin Marshall, Vice Chair of the Royal College of GPs, has responded to a new [study](#) in The Lancet into statins therapy.

[A nagging sore throat may be an early sign of cancer](#)

30 Jan 2019

Source: NHS Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/news/>

"Sore throat that won't go away 'could be a sign of cancer' doctors warned," reports The Independent.

[Cancer cliches to avoid: I'm not 'brave'](#)

28 Jan 2019

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

Fighter, warrior, hero - some of the terms you might see used to describe people with cancer. But according to a new survey, for some with the illness the words are seen as inappropriate rather than uplifting.

[Lifestyle changes may be more important than drugs for mild hypertension](#)

25 Jan 2019

Source: National Institute for Health Research

<https://discover.dc.nihr.ac.uk>

Expert commentary notes this interesting study provides first convincing evidence, in patients at low CV risk, that drug treatment of mild hypertension (systolic 140-159 mmHg, diastolic 90-99 mmHg) confers no prognostic benefit yet is associated with significant adverse effects.

[The reality of asthma care in the UK: Annual Asthma Survey 2018 report](#)

25 Jan 2019

Source: Asthma UK <https://www.asthma.org.uk>

Report finds 3 out of 5 people are not receiving critical elements of routine asthma care in the UK, as outlined in NICE guidance. Despite current treatments, the vast majority of people do not live their lives with well-managed asthma, particularly the 18-29 age group.

[Young at higher risk of asthma attack, says charity](#)

23 Jan 2019

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

Young people are at a higher risk of having an asthma attack than any other age group living with the condition, the charity Asthma UK is warning.

[Management of asthma a 'priority' but more funding needed so that GPs can give patients more time, says RCGP](#)

23 Jan 2019

Source: RCGP <https://www.rcgp.org.uk>

Responding to an Asthma UK report on care of 'millennials' with asthma, Prof Helen Stokes-Lampard, Chair of the Royal College of GPs, said: "Asthma must never be underestimated as it is a serious condition that can claim lives in any age group..."

Communicable diseases

[Guidelines for malaria prevention in travellers from the UK 2018](#)

Jan 2019

Source: Public Health England www.gov.uk

These practical guidelines from the ACMP are updated and reissued annually. They are intended for use by healthcare workers who advise UK-based travellers to malaria-endemic areas but may also be of use to prospective travellers who wish to read about the options themselves.

See also **Sexual Health**

Diet & nutrition

[Which countries eat the most meat?](#)

4 Feb 2019

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

You may have heard an increasing number of people vow to reduce their meat eating lately - or cut it out altogether. This often forms part of a bid to become healthier, reduce their environmental impact, or consider animal welfare.

[Latest Public Attitudes Tracker survey results published](#)

31 Jan 2019

Source: FSA <https://www.food.gov.uk>

The FSA's biannual tracker survey monitors changes in consumer attitudes to food-related issues. We survey consumers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

[Is breakfast always a good idea?](#)

31 Jan 2019

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

Breakfast may be the most important meal of the day, but eating it won't help you lose weight, research suggests.

[Tinned food - healthy enough?](#)

30 Jan 2019

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

Retailers are warning that a no-deal Brexit could lead to [temporary food shortages](#), and some people have begun [stockpiling tins of food](#) in preparation for just such a scenario.

[Social norms help sway food choices](#)

25 Jan 2019

Source: ESRC <https://esrc.ukri.org>

One method for encouraging healthy food choices is to inform people about their friends' healthy eating habits, says new research from the University of Birmingham.

[How diet is changing - the good and the bad](#)

23 Jan 2019

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

Children are turning their backs on sugary drinks, with the numbers drinking them falling by a third over the past nine years, a survey suggests.

Environmental health

[Air pollution: 'Our children are suffocating'](#)

5 Feb 2019

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

In the UK, more children suffer from respiratory conditions than anywhere else in Europe.

[Tinnitus: 'Hearing condition makes me feel trapped'](#)

5 Feb 2019

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

A music fan is urging people to wear ear plugs at gigs because she believes loud concerts caused her to develop the hearing condition tinnitus.

[Thousands of green taxis to benefit from new chargepoints](#)

5 Feb 2019

Source: Department for Transport <https://www.gov.uk>

Today the government has awarded more than £6 million to support ultra-low emission taxis right across the country, furthering its ambition for a zero emission future.

[New £3.5 million research network to support UK transition to a low-carbon economy](#)

1 Feb 2019

Source: ESRC <https://esrc.ukri.org>

The Minister for Energy and Clean Growth, Claire Perry launched an initiative to create a network of new and extended city climate commissions in Edinburgh, Belfast and Leeds on Thursday 31 January. The project aims to help the UK meet the requirements of the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change and the UK Climate Change Act by building local capacities and stimulating the flow of green finance into cities across the UK.

[Strengthened protection for Poole Harbour's unique range of wildlife](#)

23 Jan 2019

Source: Dept for Env, Food and Rural Affairs www.gov.uk/gov

The extension of the Poole Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) will see a further 1,800 hectares (ha) of land and sea brought within the site to help protect the entire harbour - an increase of 40 per cent.

Health protection

[Food allergies: Tougher labelling law to prevent deaths](#)

25 Jan 2019

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

Stronger food labelling laws are being proposed to prevent further deaths of people with allergies.

[Antibiotic resistance plan to fight 'urgent' global threat](#)

24 Jan 2019

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

Drug-resistant superbugs are as big a threat as climate change, the health secretary will say as he unveils a new five-year plan to tackle the problem.

[College welcomes national action plan in the fight against antibiotic resistance](#)

24 Jan 2019

Source: RCGP <https://www.rcgp.org.uk>

Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard, Chair of the Royal College of GPs, has responded to the launch of a Government action plan to tackle antibiotic resistance.

['Super poo donors' wanted](#)

24 Jan 2019

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

Claudia Campanella, 31, works as a student support administrator at a UK university, and in her spare time she is a poo donor.

[Aspirin bleeding risk 'balances out' lower heart attack risk in 'worried well'](#)

23 Jan 2019

Source: NHS Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/news/>

"Daily dose of aspirin 'not worth risk' as study warns of bleeding side-effects," reports The Daily Telegraph.

Health services administration

[Pharmacists call for regular reviews of medicines](#)

1 Feb 2019

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

Patients are being encouraged to have regular medicine reviews with their pharmacist or GP. The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) says this could improve patient care, cut waste and save the NHS money.

[Clinical pharmacists vital to patient care in five-year GP deal.](#)

1 Feb 2019

Source: NHS England <https://www.england.nhs.uk>

Pharmacists will take on an expanded role at the heart of local primary care networks across the country, NHS England has confirmed. Following the new GP contract published yesterday, patients across England will be able to get faster expert advice about their prescriptions and other treatment, with clinical pharmacists part of core practice teams.

[More 'social prescribers' to ease pressure on GPs](#)

28 Jan 2019

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

The number of workers trained to prescribe social activities, like exercise groups and art classes, to GP patients who don't need pills, is set to rise, under NHS England plans.

[NHS App promises to be a constructive step forward - but safeguards needed, says College](#)

23 Jan 2019

Source: RCGP <https://www.rcgp.org.uk>

Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard, Chair of the Royal College of GPs, has responded to the launch of the [NHS App](#). "The new NHS App promises to be a significant and constructive step forward in using technology to support patients to manage their own care and wellbeing..."

HIV & AIDS

[FPA backs pledge for zero new HIV transmissions in 2030](#)

31 Jan 2019

Source: FPA <https://www.fpa.org.uk>

FPA welcome the Health Minister Matt Hancock's pledge for zero new HIV transmissions in England by 2030, and encourage his plans to double the number of places on the PrEP trial. This goal is only achievable with proper funding and investment into sexual health care, including an extension of PrEP across the country, and greater funding for sexual health clinics.

[Health Secretary announces goal to end HIV transmissions by 2030](#)

31 Jan 2019

Source: Department of Health and Social Care www.gov.uk

Matt Hancock said it is possible to end new transmissions of HIV in England within 10 years through better prevention, detection and treatment

Mental health

[Women's brains 'may age slower' than men's](#)

5 Feb 2019

Source: NHS Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/news/>

"Women's brains are nearly four years younger than men's, at least in how they burn fuel, according to scans performed by US researchers," The Guardian reports.

[One of the largest mental health trials launches in schools](#)

4 Feb 2019

Source: Department for Education <https://www.gov.uk>

Hundreds of children and young people will learn how to use a range of innovative techniques to promote good mental health through one of the largest studies in the world

of its kind.

[Mental Health Foundation response to the Challenging Behaviour Foundation report on restraint and seclusion in schools](#)

31 Jan 2019 Source: Mental Health Foundation <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk>

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation and Positive Active Behaviour Support Scotland (PABSS), [report](#) which was covered in compelling coverage by BBC Breakfast today, highlights the shocking frequency of the use of restriction and seclusion to control the behaviour of some of the most vulnerable children in school. These practices disproportionately affect those with learning disabilities including autism.

[Chicken therapy helps 'to calm' autistic children](#)

26 Jan 2019 Source: BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk>

A charity which uses chickens to help educate children with autism said it also allows them to build up trust with animals.

[First ever cross-government suicide prevention plan published](#)

23 Jan 2019 Source: Department of Health and Social Care <https://www.gov.uk>

The plan for reducing deaths from suicide in England has a focus on how social media and the latest technology can identify those most at risk.

Obesity

[Funding for councils to develop local solutions to childhood obesity](#)

28 Jan 2019 Source: Department of Health and Social Care <https://www.gov.uk>

13 local authorities will receive funding and support to develop innovative plans to reduce childhood obesity that can be shared across the country.

[Skinny genes the 'secret to staying slim'](#)

25 Jan 2019 Source: BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk>

Scientists say they have discovered the secret behind why some people are skinny while others pile on the pounds easily.

Older people

[Self-harm in older people: incidence, management and risk of suicide](#)

1 Feb 2019 Source: NICE <https://www.nice.org.uk>

A large UK observational [study](#) in people aged 65 years and over, found that the risk of suicide was markedly increased in people who had a previous self-harm episode compared with those who did not.

[More over-75s should take statins, experts say](#)

1 Feb 2019 Source: BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk>

More people over the age of 75 should be taking statins, scientists have said, following a review of research.

Oral health

Dentist 'unfair' fines investigated by watchdog

31 Jan 2019

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

The public spending watchdog is to investigate whether hundreds of thousands of people going to the dentist have been unfairly fined.

Physical activity

Fitness trackers 'overestimate' calorie burning

28 Jan 2019

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

Popular brands of fitness trackers can overestimate the number of calories burned while walking by more than 50%, tests have found.

Prison health

Making rehabilitation work for ex-prisoners

28 Jan 2019

Source: ESRC <https://esrc.ukri.org>

Prison and probation services have traditionally focused on personal rehabilitation, but this focus cannot resolve problems that are social rather than individual. A new rehabilitation model includes three additional aspects beyond personal rehabilitation – expanding to relations in the wider society.

Safety

Housing Minister tightens up rules on electrical safety to better protect renters

29 Jan 2019

Source: Min of Housing, Communities & Local Gov www.gov.uk

Renters will receive better protection thanks to new measures designed to ensure mandatory electrical inspections are carried out by competent and qualified inspectors, Housing Minister Heather Wheeler MP has announced today.

Screening

Investigation into the management of health screening

1 Feb 2019

Source: National Audit Office <https://www.nao.org.uk/>

The National Audit Office (NAO) has found that the proportion of eligible adults receiving health screening is inconsistent across different areas in England and that services are not operating to the 'agreed standards'.

NHS to offer paid-for DNA tests if patients share data

23 Jan 2019

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

People in England will be able to pay the NHS to sequence their genes on condition they share their data.

Sexual health

[FGM 'increasingly performed on UK babies'](#)

4 Feb 2019

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

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is increasingly being performed on babies and infants in the UK, the Victoria Derbyshire programme has been told.

See also **HIV & AIDS**

Smoking

[E-cigs 'twice as effective' than nicotine patches, gum or sprays for quitting](#)

31 Jan 2019

Source: NHS Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/news/>

"E-cigarettes are almost twice as effective at helping smokers give up tobacco than other alternatives such as nicotine patches or gum," Sky News reports.

Social & economic issues

[Carers quitting jobs from pressure](#)

5 Feb 2019

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

More than 600 people a day leave their jobs because of the demands of being a carer, says research from a charity.

[Celebrity ads for diet aids should be banned, says top doctor](#)

2 Feb 2019

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

Social media companies should ban "damaging" celebrity-endorsed social media ads promoting weight loss aids, England's top doctor has said.

[James Brokenshire announces overhaul of broken housing complaints system](#)

24 January 2019

Source: Min of Housing, Communities & Local Gov www.gov.uk

A new Housing Complaints Resolution Service is announced for the entire housing market.

[The age divide](#)

1 Feb 2019

Source: ESRC <https://esrc.ukri.org>

Housing debates have almost entirely ignored residential age segregation as one of the potential consequences of the ongoing housing affordability crisis. Is age segregation something we should be worried about?

[Global health research money reaches 'record high'](#)

23 Jan 2019

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

Funding to tackle 33 significant diseases has reached its highest level since figures were taken, says a survey which has tracked this for 11 years.

Statistics

[338,000 admitted to hospital in 2017/18 as a result of alcohol](#)

5 Feb 2019

Source: NHS Digital www.gov.uk

The figures, which have been published as part of Statistics on Alcohol, England 2019 reveal that this was similar to 2016/17 and 15% higher than a decade ago. Alcohol related admissions still account for a similar percentage of overall hospital admissions (2.1% in 2017/18, 2.1% in 2016/17 and 2.3% in 2007/08).

[Statistics on Alcohol, England, 2019](#)

[Local Alcohol Profiles for England, 2019](#)

[HPV vaccine: Thousands of girls did not get full dose](#)

25 Jan 2019

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

One in three girls in some parts of the UK did not have their full vaccination at school against HPV, the virus that can cause cervical cancer, in 2017-18.

['High' survival for many cancers diagnosed at stages 1-3](#)

24 Jan 2019

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

Adults diagnosed with stage-1 skin, prostate or breast cancer have the same chance of still being alive a year later as the general population, data from the Office for National Statistics and Public Health England suggests.

Women's health

[Provide sanitary products free in all hospitals, says doctors' union](#)

2 Feb 2019

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

Two out of five hospital trusts and health boards in the UK do not give sanitary products to patients who need them, or only in emergencies, an investigation by the BMA has found.

[Breastfeeding guilt experienced by half of mothers - BBC survey](#)

29 Jan 2019

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

Half of mothers who responded to a new survey said they felt they let their baby down when they struggled to breastfeed.

[PMS sufferer, 29, says women 'shouldn't be embarrassed'](#)

27 Jan 2019

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

"I'm out for a week sometimes because I feel so low". Emily Fazah has suffered from intense symptoms ever since she started her periods - from anxiety and fatigue, to mood swings and cramps. The 29-year-old says she "suffered in silence" for years, but is determined to no longer be embarrassed.

Workplace health

[Mental health at work: We agree with Prince William's message](#)

24 Jan 2019

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

Prince William says employers should provide more support for people whose mental health is causing them problems at work.

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/subject-a-z/m/medicine/major-research/>

Daily Health News

The Daily Health Bulletin is produced by the Knowledge Service from the EMBED Health Consortium
<http://cash.libraryservices.nhs.uk/subject-a-z/d/daily-health-news/>

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>

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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