

Public Health Bulletin. 3rd September 2019

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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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Children and young people

[Call for HPV jab to be offered to older boys](#)

2 Sept 2019

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

The Teenage Cancer Trust wants the HPV vaccine programme to be extended to older boys and young men.

[More must be done to tackle measles and anti-vax messages, says RCGP](#)

29 Aug 2019

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

Professor Martin Marshall, Vice-Chair of the Royal College of GPs has responded to the findings by the European Regional Verification Commission for Measles and Rubella Elimination released by the World Health Organisation this morning.

[LGA responds to annual Children's Society report on childhood wellbeing](#)

28 Aug 2019

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

"Councils strive to make sure that every child gets the best start and is able to go on and live a healthy, safe and prosperous life, despite seeing more than 560 cases of children with mental health conditions every day – an increase of more than 50 per cent in just four years."

[Children's care crisis: councils forced to overspend almost £800m on children's social care](#)

27 Aug 2019

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

Councils are in a unique position of being able to make the real and effective change needed locally that will ultimately help to solve some of the biggest problems the nation is facing and changing the lives of their communities.

[An estimated 1 in 7 five years olds are not immunised against MMR](#)

20 Aug 2019

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

Parents of primary school starters urged to check immunisation records.

See also **Social & economic issues**

Chronic conditions

[Fewer cancers diagnosed as emergencies is testament to vigilance of GPs, says RCGP](#)

28 Aug 2019

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

Vice Chair of the Royal College of GPs, Professor Martin Marshall, responds to new research published in the British Journal of General Practice showing a decrease in cancers diagnosed as emergencies.

[Opioid situation in the UK is 'not simple', says RCGP](#)

27 Aug 2019

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

Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard, Chair of the Royal College of GPs, responds to a Sunday Times investigation into rising numbers of opioids prescriptions alongside increasing death rates from oxycodone and fentanyl – as well as news reports today of pharmaceutical company Johnson and Johnson who are facing legal action for their role in the 'opioid crisis' in the US.

[Fish oil pills 'no benefit' for type 2 diabetes](#)

22 Aug 2019

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

People with type 2 diabetes "should not be encouraged" to take omega-3 fish oil supplements, researchers from the University of East Anglia say. There had been some concerns omega-3 could be harmful for people with the condition.

[New drug for people who can bleed uncontrollably](#)

21 Aug 2019

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

Christopher Holmes has haemophilia A - his body lacks a protein that makes blood clot. A simple graze can mean the two-year-old bleeds uncontrollably. To avoid this he needs treatment every few days with a drug put into his bloodstream via a tube in his chest. But now, NHS England has agreed to fund a new therapy for patients like him.

Communicable diseases

[Measles: Four European nations lose eradication status](#)

29 Aug 2019

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

Measles has returned to four European nations previously seen as free of the illness, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). The disease is no longer considered eradicated in Albania, the Czech Republic, Greece and the UK.

Diet & nutrition

[The brain nutrient vegans need to know about](#)

30 Aug 2019

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

People who eat vegan or plant-based diets should ensure they are getting enough of a key, but little-known, brain nutrient, say experts.

[Alternate day fasting may help aid weight loss](#)

29 Aug 2019

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

"Extreme 'caveman' diet of fasting every other day may help overweight patients lose nearly 8lbs in just four weeks," reports the Mail Online.

[No proof red wine makes you slim or is good for your gut](#)

28 Aug 2019

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

"Lose weight and still drink wine! It's 'good for your gut and keeps you slim'," reports the Sun. Like many "too good to be true" headlines, the story is more complicated than that.

[Bake Off judge Prue Leith joins hospital food improvement review](#)

23 Aug 2019

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

Bake Off judge Prue Leith is the latest celebrity chef to be recruited in the quest to improve the food hospital patients eat. The government is launching a review of hospital food, first announced in June, to set new quality standards for the 140 million meals served annually.

[Meat producer has fine increased by £25,000 after court rejects appeal](#)

22 Aug 2019

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

Bowland Foods Limited receives increased fine of £62,000 after being convicted of public health failures in May.

Environmental health

[LGA responds ClientEarth report on council climate change plans](#)

2 Sep 2019

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

“The forthcoming Spending Round needs to ensure councils have adequate funding to protect local services next year to help improve residents’ lives, including through proactive environmental protection work.”

[Microplastics in water pose ‘no apparent health risk’](#)

22 Aug 2019

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

Microplastics in drinking water do not appear to pose a health risk at current levels, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

[Air pollution link with mental health problems](#)

21 Aug 2019

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

"Growing up in air-polluted areas linked to mental health issues," reports The Guardian. Researchers in Denmark and the US found that people in Denmark who grew up in more polluted areas up to the age of 10 were more likely to develop depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia or personality disorder. While US counties with worse air pollution had higher rates of bipolar disorder and depression.

[Light extravaganza to raise flood awareness at Tendring](#)

21 Aug 2019

Source: Environment Agency <https://www.gov.uk>

The light show – put on by the Environment Agency and partners – aims to raise awareness of flood risk.

[Removing an invasive species to protect an Essex riverbank](#)

21 Aug 2019

Source: Environment Agency <https://www.gov.uk>

Environment Agency teams are removing the invasive Himalayan Balsam near Colchester to protect the environment and reduce flood risk.

Health protection

[More pharmacies in England to offer free heart checks](#)

2 Sept 2019

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

More pharmacies in England will start offering people free, on-the-spot heart check-ups from next month.

[No-deal Brexit: Flu vaccine delays 'likely'](#)

29 Aug 2019

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

Doctors and NHS leaders have warned that a no-deal Brexit would make it "likely" there will be a delay in flu vaccine supply this year.

[Pinterest to direct vaccine searches to health sites](#)

29 Aug 2019

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

Pinterest users searching for vaccine-related information will be directed to results from "public health organisations".

[Vaccine update](#)

23 Aug 2019

Source: Public Health England <https://www.gov.uk>

Updates on: MMR uptake, the vaccination pages on the NHS website, the vaccination of individuals with uncertain or incomplete immunisation status, inactivated influenza vaccines for 2019/20, the DTaP/IPV/Hib Booster and a revised leaflet on vaccines and porcine gelatine.

[Four-in-one pill prevents third of heart problems](#)

23 Aug 2019

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

A daily pill containing four medicines can cut the number of heart attacks and strokes by a third, a study shows. The polypill contains blood-thinning aspirin, a cholesterol-lowering statin and two drugs to lower blood pressure.

[High blood pressure in mid-30s may pose risk to brain health](#)

21 Aug 2019

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

People in their mid-30s need to watch their blood pressure to protect brain health in later life, says a study. It found the "window of opportunity" to safeguard brain health runs from then until the early-50s.

See also **Children and young people**

Health services administration

[RCGP calls for 5,000 GPs to be trained a year to meet workforce targets and safeguard patient care](#)

3 Sep 2019 Source: Royal College of General Practitioners <https://www.rcgp.org.uk>

5,000 doctors need to train to be GPs every year to meet Government targets to increase the workforce by at least 5,000 full-time equivalent GPs, the Royal College of General Practitioners has said today.

[LGA responds to Age UK report on social care](#)

31 Aug 2019

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

"The Spending Round next week is an opportunity for the Government to invest in council-run services such as social care, to improve people's lives for the better and save much more further down the line."

See also **Statistics**

Mental health

[Police 'dealing with more mental health incidents'](#)

2 Sept 2019

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

The number of mental health incidents dealt with by police has risen by more than a quarter in four years, figures obtained by BBC Radio 5 Live show.

[Samaritans criticised over Paddy Power Betfair partnership](#)

31 Aug 2019

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

The charity Samaritans has come in for criticism over its links with the betting company Paddy Power Betfair.

[Reason to be cheerful? 'Optimists live longer' study reports](#)

27 Aug 2019

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

"Optimists are more likely to live longer than those who have a more negative approach to life, a US study has found," BBC News reports. The Mail Online reports on the same study claiming that "Optimists are up to 70% more likely to live to be 85".

[Caroline Horton wins 2019 Mental Health Fringe Award](#)

23 Aug 2019 Source: The Mental Health Foundation <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk>

The Mental Health Fringe Award, now in its third year and presented by the Mental Health Foundation, has been awarded to the author of *All Of Me*, a vivid portrayal of living with depression from the creator of *Mess* and *You're Not Like The Other Girls Chrissy*, and was chosen from a long list of over 40 shows, and a final shortlist of seven.

See also **Statistics**

Older people

['Multiple medicines' side-effect risk for over-65s](#)

22 Aug 2019

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

Two million older people are risking side-effects from taking multiple medications, a charity has warned. Age UK says more than one in 10 over-65s in England take at least eight prescribed medications each week.

See also **Physical activity**

Oral health

[Athletes have poor teeth despite brushing](#)

24 Aug 2019

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

Elite athletes have bad teeth despite putting more effort into looking after them than other people, a study shows.

Physical activity

[LGA responds to 'We are Undefeatable' campaign](#)

29 Aug 2019

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

"Across the country, councils are developing exciting and innovative programmes to encourage older people, including those with long-term conditions and disabilities, to access physical activity."

['Sit less, move more' may be key advice for living longer](#)

22 Aug 2019

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

"Older adults can boost longevity 'with just a little exercise'," reports The Guardian. It's long been known that being more physically active is linked to being healthy and living longer.

Screening

[Doctors tackle CMV deafness virus in children](#)

31 Aug 2019

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

Babies in the east of England are being screened for a virus which can cause development defects, including deafness.

Sexual health

[Accessing sexual health testing online](#)

21 Aug 2019

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

Londoners can now access sexual health testing online, through the new Sexual Health London (SHL) service, which was introduced in 2018.

[The role of community pharmacies in sexual health services](#)

22 Aug 2019

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

A central component of Umbrella Sexual Health in Birmingham is the work being undertaken by a formally contracted network of 174 community pharmacies.

See also **Statistics**

Social & economic issues

[Life-saving organ transplant opportunities being missed](#)

3 Sept 2019

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

As many as 2,500 more organs could be made available for transplant in the UK if families spoke more openly about donating after death, says the NHS Blood and Transplant organisation.

[LGA responds to Children's Commissioner Report on homeless children](#)

21 Aug 2019

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

With homelessness services facing a £159 million funding gap next year (2020/21), the Government needs to use the upcoming Spending Round to ensure councils have long-term sustainable funding to prevent homelessness, and give councils the tools they need to resume their historic role of building homes with the right infrastructure that the country needs.

Statistics

[Cancer 'biggest middle-age killer in rich nations'](#)

3 Sept 2019

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

Cancer now causes more deaths among the middle-aged in higher-income countries than cardiovascular disease, a study suggests.

[LGA responds to latest suicide statistics](#)

3 Sep 2019

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

Cllr Ian Hudspeth, Chairman of the Local Government Association's Community Wellbeing Board, responds to the latest official suicides statistics, for 2018.

[LGA responds to latest HIV statistics](#)

3 Sep 2019

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

The LGA's response to Public Health England's annual HIV statistics for 2018, which show a 28 per cent decline in new HIV diagnoses since 2015.

[Latest workforce figures 'reflect the harsh reality' of working in NHS general practice](#)

29 Aug 2019 Source: Royal College of General Practitioners: <https://www.rcgp.org.uk>

Professor Martin Marshall, Vice Chair of the Royal College of GPs, has responded to the latest GP workforce figures released by NHS Digital earlier today.

See also **Children and young people**

Women's health

[Study suggests HRT carries higher risk of breast cancer than thought](#)

03 Sept 2019

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

"Breast cancer: Menopausal hormone therapy risks 'bigger than thought'," BBC News reports.

[How tracking menstrual cycles helps women in sport](#)

3 Sept 2019

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

In July 2019, the US women's football team won the World Cup. Their success was, in part, attributed to having tracked each player's menstrual cycle and adapted individual training loads and diet accordingly. It is an approach which many think is long overdue. In recent years, a number of top sportswomen have talked about the impact of their menstrual cycle on their training and performance.

[Football grounds to pubs: Our fight for free tampons](#)

22 Aug 2019

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

A little over a year ago, Celtic fans Erin, Orlaith and Mikaela started a campaign to get free sanitary products into football grounds. Their own club Celtic were the first to sign up and then other clubs followed - but the reaction from other fans wasn't totally positive.

Local news: []

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Other Bulletins
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