

Public Health Bulletin. 26th November 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

[New unit for 'forgotten' patients with alcohol related brain damage](#)

26 Nov 2019

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

Patients with alcohol related brain damage (ARBD) have been referred to as a forgotten group. With symptoms including memory loss, the condition is similar to dementia, according to a report by the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

[What's faith got to do with it?](#)

25 Nov 2019

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

A new study, funded by Alcohol Change UK, looks at the variety of faith-based recovery facilities, and asks some important questions.

[Introduction of 50p minimum unit price for alcohol approved in Assembly vote](#)

12 Nov 2019

Source: Welsh Government: <https://gov.wales>

The Welsh Government will introduce a minimum unit price for alcohol of 50p from 2 March 2020, with regulations today being approved by the National Assembly for Wales.

[Adfam's recommendations for change for 2020 and beyond](#)

November 2019

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

Adfam has recently launched its manifesto for 2020 outlining five ways the next government can improve support services for families affected by drugs and alcohol.

[MUP in England: myths and facts](#)

November 2019

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

Alcohol Change UK argues for the introduction of minimum unit pricing for alcohol in England following the lead of other home nations.

[Alcohol and mental health - what do we know?](#)

November 2019

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

In this blog, two researchers at the University of Liverpool's addiction research group explain the links between mental health and alcohol use, what the current gaps in research are and how we should provide appropriate treatment.

See also **Children and young people** section:

[Foetal alcohol spectrum disorder: Mum's fight for diagnosis](#)

Black and ethnic minority groups

See **Children and young people** section:

[Child abuse linked to faith and belief rises by a third, councils reveal](#)

Children and young people

[Hundreds of thousands of young people in Scotland report feeling isolated, lonely and uncertain who to turn to when experiencing mental health problems – major new report](#)

26 Nov 2019 *Source:* Mental Health Foundation: <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk>

Young adults aged 16 to 25 across Scotland feel isolated, lonely and uncertain who to turn to when experiencing mental health problems according to a major new research project carried out by the Mental Health Foundation Scotland. The research – which was supported by the Cochrane Mental Disorders Group at York University -is hoped to be repeated every three years to get a measure of the impact of societal attempts to improve mental health. The report – called State of a Generation – examined the key areas where a mental health prevention approach could be effective.

['Global epidemic' of childhood inactivity](#)

22 Nov 2019 *Source:* BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

Four in five 11- to 17-year-olds around the world are not taking enough physical exercise, according to the first such analysis. The World Health Organization says children's health is being damaged as well as their brain development and social skills. It says failing to take the recommended hour a day of exercise is a universal problem in rich and poor countries. Boys were more active than girls in all but four of the 146 countries studied.

[Foetal alcohol spectrum disorder: Mum's fight for diagnosis](#)

20 Nov 2019 *Source:* BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

An adoptive mum has spoken of her "lonely and isolating" journey to getting a diagnosis for her children's Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Just one of Wales' seven health boards has specific guidelines for diagnosis.

[Severe allergic reactions rise in children in England over past five years](#)

15 Nov 2019 *Source:* BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

The number of children being admitted to hospital in England with a severe allergic reaction has risen every year for the past five years.

[Teen Instagrammers open up on mental health chat](#)

14 Nov 2019 *Source:* BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

Two teenagers have set up an online initiative hoping to persuade more young people to talk openly about mental health.

[Child abuse linked to faith and belief rises by a third, councils reveal](#)

14 Nov 2019 *Source:* Local Government Association: <https://www.local.gov.uk>

Abuse of children based on faith or belief – which includes witchcraft, spirit possession and black magic – increased from 1,460 to 1,950 cases between 2016/17 and 2018/19, a rise of 34 per cent, with councils dealing with the equivalent of 38 such cases a week. The new figures also show that the number of children identified by councils through a social work assessment as either having or being at risk of FGM has reached a record

high – with 1,000 such cases in 2018/19, up 6 per cent on the 940 cases in the previous year.

[School-based interventions to prevent anxiety and depression in children and young people: a systematic review and network meta-analysis](#)

13 Nov 2019 Source: The Lancet Psychiatry: <https://www.thelancet.com>

Rates of anxiety and depression are increasing among children and young people. Recent policies have focused on primary prevention of mental disorders in children and young people, with schools at the forefront of implementation. There is limited information for the comparative effectiveness of the multiple interventions available.

See also **Smoking** section:

[Vaping linked to teen's 'popcorn lung' type injury](#)

See also **Social and economic issues** section:

[30 years of Children's Act: next government needs to invest in children's services](#)

Chronic conditions

[Cancer survivors 'have higher heart risk'](#)

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

More than one in 10 cancer patients die from heart and blood vessel problems, rather than their initial illness, a study says. The European Heart Journal looked at three million US patients, with 28 different cancers, over 40 years. The researchers say the increase in the numbers surviving cancer means more attention should be focused on cardiovascular risk.

[Cancer immunotherapy drug 'less toxic and prolongs life'](#)

23 Nov 2019 Source: BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

An immunotherapy drug that could save some cancer patients from the ordeal of extreme chemotherapy may also help them live longer, researchers say.

[Cancer: One in five cancer diagnoses 'in Emergency Departments'](#)

22 Nov 2019 Source: BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

One in five people in Northern Ireland receive their cancer diagnosis while attending an emergency department (ED), according to research by the NI Cancer Registry.

[NHS staff shortages put 'cancer survival rates at risk'](#)

18 Nov 2019 Source: BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

Progress on treating cancer has stalled in Scotland because of staff shortages and a lack of funding, according to a parliamentary report.

Complementary cancer therapies 'do more harm than good'

14 Nov 2019

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

Cancer patients should tell their doctors if they are taking herbal products because some of the ingredients could stop their treatment working, a cancer conference has heard.

Losing weight following type 2 diabetes diagnosis boosts chance of remission

21 Nov 2019

Source: National Institute for Health Research:

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

People who lose at least 10% of their body weight in the first year after being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes increase their chances of being in remission after five years, compared with those whose weight remains stable. Losing this achievable amount of weight over the next four years also makes remission more likely.

Telephone-delivered CBT can provide lasting benefits for people with IBS

21 Nov 2019

Source: National Institute for Health Research:

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

People with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) who receive cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) continue to have lower levels of symptoms over the following two years. Telephone-delivered CBT is particularly effective, with 71% of study participants experiencing a clinically significant improvement in their IBS symptoms.

Patients, in theory, might prefer GP-led care to self-management for high blood pressure

19 Nov 2019

Source: National Institute for Health Research:

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

Patients offered the pros and cons of different monitoring options appear reluctant to self-manage high blood pressure, and prefer frequent monitoring by a GP, pharmacist or via telehealth (where readings are sent to health professionals and medicines managed remotely). The small online survey, completed by 167 patients, was used to explore how patients might feel about moving away from GP-led care to other care models not currently routinely offered in the UK.

Fear of statin links to memory problems 'unfounded'

20 Nov 2019

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

"Statins do NOT cause memory loss despite fears they could harm cognitive health," reports the Mail Online. This study tested the memory and overall cognitive function of 1,037 people aged 70 to 90 at several points over a 6-year period. At the end of the study, researchers did not find any differences in memory and thinking ability between participants who took statins and those who did not.

See also **Smoking** section:

Smokers who switch to vaping could soon 'have healthier hearts'

Communicable diseases

[Lassa fever 'at risk' Britons sent home from Sierra Leone](#)

25 Nov 2019

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

Three British nationals have been brought back to the UK from Sierra Leone for medical assessment after coming into close contact with two people diagnosed with Lassa fever.

[Bacterial allies make dengue fever cases dive](#)

22 Nov 2019

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

Recruiting a bacterial ally that infects mosquitoes has led to huge reductions in cases of dengue fever, trials around the world show.

[DR Congo measles: Nearly 5,000 dead in major outbreak](#)

21 Nov 2019

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

Measles has killed nearly 5,000 people in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2019, authorities said, after the disease spread to all the provinces in the country. Close to a quarter of a million people have been infected this year alone. The World Health Organization (WHO) says this is the world's largest and fastest-moving epidemic.

[Worcester University student in meningitis warning after collapse](#)

15 Nov 2019

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

A student rushed to hospital after being found collapsed by his father has warned about the dangers of bacterial meningitis.

[Sepsis digital alert 'led to faster treatment with antibiotics'](#)

20 Nov 2019

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

Digital alerts to notify doctors and nurses of patients with sepsis led to faster treatment with antibiotics and a fall in deaths, a study found.

Environmental health

[LGA and Health Foundation launch 'Shaping Places for Healthier Lives'](#)

25 Nov 2019

Source: Local Government Association: <https://www.local.gov.uk>

The Local Government Association (LGA) and the Health Foundation are inviting local authorities to bid for the new 'Shaping Places for Healthier Lives' scheme, which will look to support and promote innovative ways of tackling health inequalities by improving the conditions of where people are born, grow, live, and age in their local areas.

[Living near busy road can stunt children's lung growth, study says](#)

25 Nov 2019

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

Children exposed to roadside air pollution could have their lung growth stunted by up to 14%, a study suggests. Living within 50m of a major road could increase the risk of lung cancer by up to 10%, the paper also found.

Cold weather alert issued by PHE

18 Nov 2019 *Source:* Public Health England:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

Public Health England (PHE) issues cold weather alert following the arrival of colder weather in some parts of England.

Health promotion

Rugby fan urges people to be on the ball when it comes to knowing their pulse

16 Nov 19 *Source:* Innovation Agency: <https://www.innovationagencynwc.nhs.uk>

A rugby fan from Widnes is urging people to be on the ball and “know their pulse” during Global AF Aware Week 2019. Launching on Monday November 18, GAFAW19 is dedicated to raising awareness of atrial fibrillation (AF), an irregular pulse that affects millions of people worldwide and, if left untreated, can lead to stroke.

Health protection

PHE and NHS England urge eligible people to get free flu vaccine

25 Nov 2019 *Source:* Public Health England:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

Primary school flu vaccination programme resumes following temporary delay of nasal spray vaccine from the manufacturer.

'Flu nearly killed me last winter'

21 Nov 2019 *Source:* BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

A father who almost died a week before his son's first birthday is urging people to get immunised against flu this winter.

New blood test could lead to better treatment for sepsis

14 Nov 2019 *Source:* NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk>

"Blood test for sepsis could save lives of thousands of children," reports the Mail Online. Researchers in the US have developed a test for 5 proteins, which they say allows them to identify people with sepsis who have a high, medium or low risk of dying from the condition. They hope this will eventually help doctors identify the best treatments for individual patients

Ebola vaccine approved as second jab trialled

13 Nov 2019 *Source:* BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

A second Ebola vaccine is to be offered to around 50,000 people in the Democratic Republic of Congo, as part of a major clinical trial.

[Polio in Nigeria: 'I opposed vaccinations until my son caught polio'](#)

13 Nov 2019

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

Adamu Misa used to chase health workers away from his home in northern Nigeria but now campaigns for vaccines after his son contracted polio.

Health services administration

[GPs vote to reduce patient home visits](#)

23 Nov 2019

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

GPs have voted to reduce visits to patients' homes, saying they "no longer have the capacity" to offer them.

[Why can't I get a doctor's appointment? Solving the complex issue of GP access](#)

21 Nov 2019

Source: The King's Fund: <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/>

Public satisfaction with general practice is lower now than it has ever been, while the number of people reporting difficulties in booking appointments continues to grow...Here we run through the proposed solutions and assess their potential effectiveness.

[Britain's 'unprecedented' drug shortage](#)

19 Nov 2019

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

File on 4 looks at the impact Britain's medicine shortage crisis is having on patients.

[NHS to pay tax bills to get doctors back to work](#)

18 Nov 2019

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

Doctors in England have been promised their tax bills will be covered by the NHS in an attempt to get them back doing overtime shifts.

[Acting on wellbeing solutions could make UK health services a model for the world](#)

15 Nov 2019

Source: General Medical Council: <https://www.gmc-uk.org>

UK health services could be world leaders in creating workplaces which support doctors' wellbeing and patient safety if existing good practice were applied more widely, a report for the General Medical Council (GMC) has found.

See also **Chronic conditions** section:

[NHS staff shortages put 'cancer survival rates at risk'](#)

HIV & AIDS

[HIV Outcomes Beyond Viral Suppression](#)

25 Nov 2019

Source: The Lancet HIV: <https://www.thelancet.com/>

In the era of modern antiretroviral therapy people living with HIV can expect to live a normal lifespan. However substantial barriers to accessing non-HIV related care exist and impact the wellbeing of this population. Current targets for the HIV response focus

on testing, treatment and viral suppression. This Series explores wider aims, beyond viral suppression, and argues for an additional measure focusing on health-related quality of life. The role patient-reported outcomes could play in measuring progress and how stigma undermines health-related quality of life are also examined.

[Duke of Sussex and Gareth Thomas tackle HIV stigma in a new film to mark National HIV Testing Week](#)

16 Nov 2019 Source: Terrence Higgins Trust: <https://www.tht.org.uk>

Former Wales rugby captain Gareth Thomas has spoken to The Duke of Sussex about what it felt like to receive his HIV diagnosis in a powerful new film.

Men's health

[Male breast cancer: Men warned to check for symptoms](#)

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

A man who noticed a lump "the size of a frozen pea" has urged men to check for breast cancer symptoms. Breast cancer is very rare in men, with 390 diagnosed each year compared to 54,800 women, according to Cancer Research UK.

Mental health

['I used to pull sickies every few months because of stress'](#)

22 Nov 2019 Source: BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

Amy says she used to need to "pull sickies" once every couple of months because she couldn't face going into work. "I'd have a few days prior arguing with myself to get up, and go in," she tells the BBC. But recently she realised she was doing this because of her mental health issues, so now she calls in sick and says she needs to take "a mental health day".

[Mental Health Foundation announces new prevention strategy and new President](#)

21 Nov 2019 Source: Mental Health Foundation: <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk>

The Mental Health Foundation today launched a [new strategy](#) to make the organisation the only UK charity with a specific focus on mental health and prevention.

[Emma Brown: My daughter's anorexia was a 'descent into hell'](#)

13 Nov 2019 Source: BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

Emma Brown battled anorexia for more than half her life, spending years in and out of hospital until she died from complications of the disorder at 27. Her father, Simon, describes the pain of watching his eldest child's struggle - and why he is working with those who handled her care.

See also **Alcohol Misuse** section:

[Alcohol and mental health - what do we know?](#)

[New unit for 'forgotten' patients with alcohol related brain damage](#)

See also **Children and young people** section:

[Hundreds of thousands of young people in Scotland report feeling isolated, lonely and uncertain who to turn to when experiencing mental health problems – major new report](#)

[School-based interventions to prevent anxiety and depression in children and young people: a systematic review and network meta-analysis](#)

[Teen Instagrammers open up on mental health chat](#)

See also **Chronic conditions** section:

[Telephone-delivered CBT can provide lasting benefits for people with IBS](#)

Obesity

[Number of people with obesity almost doubles in 20 years](#)

14 Nov 2019

Source: Diabetes UK: <https://www.diabetes.org.uk>

The number of people who are obese in England has almost doubled in the last 20 years from 6.9 to 13 million, according to new analysis we are releasing today. The figures from the Health Survey for England (1997-2017)* estimate that there are now 13 million people over the age of 16 with a BMI of 30 or above which classifies as obese, an increase of more than 6 million since 1997.

See also **Chronic conditions** section:

[Losing weight following type 2 diabetes diagnosis boosts chance of remission](#)

Older people

[Old age: Why 70 may be the new 65](#)

19 Nov 2019

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

It may be time to rethink how we measure and define old age in the UK because more people are surviving into their late 80s and beyond, say experts.

See also **Social and economic issues** section:

[Mortality and life expectancy trends in the UK](#)

Oral health

[Millions 'missing out' on NHS dentistry](#)

20 Nov 2019

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

More than 2 million adults in England are unable to see an NHS dentist, BBC analysis suggests. They include an estimated 1.45 million who have tried and failed to get an NHS appointment in two years with the rest on waiting lists or put off by cost. Another 2 million assume they cannot get care where they live, suggesting nearly one in 10 miss out overall.

Physical activity

[A workplace voucher reward scheme failed to boost physical activity](#)

19 Nov 2019 Source: National Institute for Health Research:
<https://discover.dc.nihr.ac.uk>

Staff enrolled on a workplace reward scheme to encourage them to become more physically active took fewer steps per day than their colleagues in the control group after six months.

See **Children and young people** section:
['Global epidemic' of childhood inactivity](#)

Safety

[Health secretary to make statement on crisis-hit Glasgow NHS board](#)

20 Nov 2019 Source: BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

Scotland's health secretary will address MSPs later amid mounting concerns about a Glasgow "super hospital". Jeane Freeman is facing calls to put the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHSGGC) in "special measures". It follows speculation about the deaths of two children treated on a ward affected by water contamination at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital.

[RoSPA launches unintentional product-injuries survey](#)

20 Nov 2019 Source: RoSPA: <https://www.rospa.com>

RoSPA has launched a survey to find out more about the causes of the hundreds of thousands of unintentional injuries that happen in the UK every year.

[Coroner urges first aid training for chiropractors](#)

18 Nov 2019 Source: BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

First aid training should be mandatory for chiropractors, a coroner said at the end of the case of a man whose neck broke during chiropractic treatment.

Smoking

[Vaping linked to teen's 'popcorn lung' type injury](#)

22 Nov 2019 Source: BBC News: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

A Canadian teenager has developed a vaping-related lung injury similar to "popcorn lung", his doctors say. The condition was previously seen in workers who were exposed to the chemical flavouring diacetyl as they packaged microwave popcorn.

[Smokers who switch to vaping could soon 'have healthier hearts'](#)

18 Nov 2019 Source: NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk>

"Smokers can improve the health of their hearts within weeks of switching to e-cigarettes, the largest trial of its kind shows," BBC News reports.

Social & economic issues

['Half of women will be carers by the age of 46'](#)

21 Nov 2019

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

Women can expect to take on caring responsibilities for an older, sick or disabled relative more than a decade earlier than men, a report concludes.

[30 years of Children's Act: next government needs to invest in children's services](#)

20 Nov 2019

Source: Local Government Association: <https://www.local.gov.uk>

The next government needs to invest in children's services so councils can fulfil the ambitions of the Children's Act, the Local Government Association says as it marks the 30th anniversary of the landmark legislation.

[Why more people are talking about the issue of social care](#)

18 Nov 2019

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

The care system helps older and disabled people with day-to-day tasks like washing, dressing, eating and medication. It is under pressure across the UK after past governments failed to reform or fund the council-run system properly.

[Mortality and life expectancy trends in the UK](#)

November 2019

Source: Health Foundation: <https://www.health.org.uk>

Since 2011 improvements in life expectancy in the UK have stalled, and for certain groups of the population, gone into reverse. This report presents new analysis of mortality data, exploring what has happened, who is affected and what is driving current trends. The analysis uncovers worrying trends, including a rising number of avoidable deaths among the under 50s and a widening gap in life expectancy between the richest and poorest. There is no single cause of the slowdown, and no single solution: instead actions must be taken on the wider factors that shape the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age.

Women's health

[Inducing birth at 41 weeks 'may reduce risk of stillbirth'](#)

21 Nov 2019

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

"Induction recommended for women still pregnant at 41 weeks," reports The Guardian. Most international guidelines recommend inducing labour somewhere between 41 and 42 weeks of pregnancy, but there has been no clear agreement on specifically when.

[Planned earlier delivery for late pre-eclampsia may be better for mothers](#)

19 Nov 2019

Source: National Institute for Health Research:

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

This trial found that in women with late preterm pre-eclampsia, planned delivery reduces the chance of complications such as hypertension for the mother (65% versus 75% in the expectant management group). While their babies are more likely (42% versus 34%) to be admitted to the neonatal unit, there was not a significantly greater risk of morbidity.

See also **Social and economic issues** section:
['Half of women will be carers by the age of 46'](#)

Workplace health

[UK workers 'pull sickies to avoid going to work'](#)

21 Nov 2019

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

Two in five adults would fake a sick day if they needed a day off, a Com Res survey for the BBC suggests.

See also **Health services administration** section:

[Acting on wellbeing solutions could make UK health services a model for the world](#)

See also **Mental health** section:

['I used to pull sickies every few months because of stress'](#)

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

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