

Public Health Bulletin 17th March 2020

Produced by NHS libraries in Thames Valley and Wessex

Please find below a list of news items from the past fortnight that may be of interest to those involved in public health. This Bulletin provides topical news and reports of relevance to public health teams, community health practitioners and anyone with an interest in health promotion. All content and links are provided for information only and we do not sponsor, endorse or otherwise approve of any mentioned website or the contents of the news items. Please refer to the terms and conditions of the relevant website should you wish to reproduce any of the information.

Details of alternative current awareness services which cover more academic/specialist sources of information can be found in the section *Other Bulletins*. Your local NHS library service can assist you in accessing other current awareness services/tailored alerts, locating peer reviewed journal articles and answer any other queries you may have regarding finding information.

The information about each news item only gives a brief overview so we recommend you view the original source by clicking on the title (or Ctrl+Click in the word document).

Please contact your local NHS library service if you no longer wish to receive this Bulletin, or if you know of anyone else who would like to join the mailing list. The Bulletins are also available on the Thames Valley Public Health Network at: <http://www.oxsph.org/bulletins.html> and the Wessex Public Health Network at: <http://www.wessexphnetwork.org.uk/resources/public-health-updates.aspx>

[Alcohol misuse](#)

[Mental health](#)

[Black and ethnic minority groups](#)

[Prison health](#)

[Children and young people](#)

[Safety](#)

[Chronic conditions](#)

[Screening](#)

[Communicable diseases](#)

[Smoking](#)

[Diet & nutrition](#)

[Social and economic issues](#)

[Disability](#)

[Statistics](#)

[Environmental health](#)

[Women's health](#)

[Health protection](#)

[Workplace health](#)

[HIV and AIDS](#)

[Local news](#)

Alcohol misuse

'I quit college to care for my alcoholic mum'

13th March 2020

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

Niamh, 18, describes how she cared for her mum who was an alcoholic.

Black and ethnic minority groups

'BAME communities' 'unequal mental health care'

13th March 2020

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

A new report by the Race Equality Foundation has found a wide range of inequalities linked to mental illness in Black, Asian and other minority ethnic communities.

'Dearing hopes to inspire BAME swimmers'

2 March 2020

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

Great Britain swimmer and Olympic Games hopeful Alice Dearing tells BBC East Midlands Today she wants to inspire BAME swimmers to get in the pool by lending her support to a new charity.

Children and young people

'Child deaths 'not properly investigated' at top hospital'

17th March 2020

Great Ormond Street Hospital failed to properly investigate child deaths, suggests evidence uncovered by the BBC.

The source of one fatal infection was never examined and in another case GOSH concealed internal doubts over care.

Amid claims GOSH put reputation above patient care, former Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt urged it to consider a possible "profound cultural problem".

'Teenage girl diagnosed with chest infection died of cancer'

16th March 2020

Source: BBC News

A 13-year-old girl who died suddenly from cancer was at first told she had a chest infection, an inquest has heard. Tanisha Baverstock, from Calne, had a persistent cough, breathlessness and weight loss when her mother took her to see her GP just over a year ago. The doctor diagnosed a chest infection and sent Tanisha for a blood test which revealed "something in her blood". Further tests then showed "a change in her lungs" and on 30 January Tanisha died at Bristol Children's Hospital.

Chronic conditions

'Bowel cancer mum 'facing death sentence' amid drugs uncertainty'

16th March 2020

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

A mother-of-two with bowel cancer said she was facing a "potential death sentence" unless the NHS agreed to fund the drug keeping her alive.

Kidney failure 'difficult for most people to comprehend'

13th March 2020

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

A man with total kidney failure wants people to donate organs while they are still alive.

Rob Wilkinson, from Llandudno Junction, Conwy county, said a kidney from a dead person may only last 10 years, but an organ from a living person could last longer.

Communicable diseases

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updates

Overview - Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Last updated 17th March 2020 Source: NHS News

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called coronavirus.

What do I need to know about the coronavirus?

Source: Department of Health and Social Care and Public Health England <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

Latest guidance and news on the coronavirus for the public

Coronavirus: US volunteers test first vaccine

17th March 2020

Source: BBC News <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/> trial of a vaccine to protect against pandemic coronavirus has started in the US. Four patients received the jab at the Kaiser Permanente research facility in Seattle, Washington, reports the Associated Press news agency. The vaccine cannot cause Covid-19 but contains a harmless genetic code copied from the virus that causes the disease.

Coronavirus: UK to unveil new financial measures to support economy

17th March 2020

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

The government will unveil more financial plans to help the economy during the coronavirus outbreak, after the prime minister announced unprecedented peacetime measures.

Coronavirus: How to protect your mental health

16th March 2020

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

Coronavirus has plunged the world into uncertainty and the constant news about the pandemic can feel relentless. All of this is taking its toll on people's mental health, particularly those already living with conditions like anxiety and OCD. So how can we protect our mental health?

[UK doctor on recovering from 'grim' coronavirus](#)

14th March 2020

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

A former chair of the Royal College of GPs has told Radio 5 Live Breakfast about how she's getting through a "grim" coronavirus experience.

Doctor Clare Gerada believes she contracted the virus in New York but says she is now on the mend.

[Coronavirus: How can AI help fight the pandemic?](#)

12th March 2020

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

Executives from Amazon, Google, Microsoft, Apple and Facebook met officials at Downing Street on Wednesday to discuss their role in the coronavirus crisis.

One of the things discussed was their role in "modelling and tracking data".

In similar meetings at the White House, meanwhile, companies were asked how they could use artificial intelligence.

A World Health Organization report last month said AI and big data were a key part of China's response to the virus

Diet & nutrition

[Eating an egg a day does not raise risk of heart attack or stroke](#)

5th March 2020

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

While we know eggs contain many nutrients, they are also quite high in cholesterol. Because of the link between cholesterol and heart disease, doctors once thought eggs might raise heart disease risk. Later research showed that cholesterol in the diet is not such a problem. Studies into eggs and heart disease have had conflicting results, perhaps because people who eat a lot of eggs might have a less healthy diet overall.

In a new study, researchers used dietary information from 215,618 people in the US, dating back to 1980. They found no evidence that people eating an egg a day had a higher risk of heart attack or stroke than people who rarely or never ate eggs, once their overall diet and lifestyle was taken into account. The researchers pooled their study results with those of 27 other studies from around the world. The pooled results also found no increased risk of heart attack or stroke for people eating eggs.

["No evidence" that full-fat milk and dairy products lead to overweight children](#)

4th March 2020

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

NHS guidelines on diet say that young children benefit from the calories and essential vitamins in milk. But they add: "For older children and adults, it's a good idea to go for lower-fat milks because having too much fat in your diet can result in you becoming overweight."

In a new review, researchers summarised the results from 29 studies in young people aged 2 to 18 years looking at how full-fat or reduced-fat milk or dairy products affect children's weight. They also considered effects on markers of heart disease and diabetes risk, such as cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugar.

Disability

[The TikTok stars giving diabetes the needle](#)

6th March 2020

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

When best friends Ellen Watson and Beth McDaniel posted a TikTok video of themselves getting glammed up for a night out, they had no idea they were about to become a viral sensation. Overnight, a video of them dancing around racked up 500,000 views - not because of their outfits or before-and-after hair and make-up transformation, but because the Northern Irish students happily showed off their wearable blood glucose scanners which help them manage their type 1 diabetes.

Environmental health

[Global rescue plan for nature 'overlooks genetic diversity'](#)

5th March 2020

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

A global plan to halt the loss of nature is "weak" in one key area, say scientists.

The new 10-year strategy to stop extinction must aim to protect the gene pools of all life on earth, according to conservation experts.

The action agenda must explicitly refer to the genetic diversity of all species not just those regarded as of value to humans, they say.

[Pause For Thought: 'Taking a moment to notice nature will help both us and the planet.'](#)

4th March 10, 2020

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

Sheridan Voysey on the benefits of getting out in to nature.

Health protection

[The vaccine that saved millions](#)

12th March 2020

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

In 1955, a group of US scientists led by Dr Jonas Salk announced the discovery of the first polio vaccine. It would go on to save millions from death and disability. His son, Dr Peter Salk, spoke to Witness History about his father's extraordinary achievement.

HIV & AIDS

[PrEP: Preventative HIV drug available in England from April](#)

15th March 2020

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

A drug that prevents the transmission of the HIV virus will be available in England from April, the Department of Health has confirmed.

[Second patient cured of HIV, say doctors](#)

10th March 2020

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

A man from London has become the second person in the world to be cured of HIV, doctors say.

Adam Castillejo is still free of the virus more than 30 months after stopping anti-retroviral therapy.

He was not cured by the HIV drugs, however, but by a stem-cell treatment he received for a cancer he also had, the Lancet HIV journal reports.

[NHS is 'failing' patients living with HIV](#)

5th March 2020

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

The failure to address the mental-health needs of people with HIV could lead to an increase in infections, a cross-party group of MPs suggests.

People with HIV are twice as likely to experience mental-health difficulties.

And in those with depression, support raises adherence to medication by 83%.

Mental health

[Mental health placements: Ayla Haines 'petrified' over move](#)

12th March 2020

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

The family of a west Wales woman in an English secure mental health unit fear she could be moved to a high-secure unit with dangerous offenders.

Ayla Haines, 27, is currently at St Andrew's Healthcare, in Northampton, which has some Welsh patients, but NHS Wales has suspended placements there.

['My anti-depressant withdrawal was worse than depression'](#)

12th March 2020

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

The mental health charity Mind says it is signposting people to street drug charities to help them withdraw from antidepressants because of the lack of alternatives available. Those affected can experience debilitating symptoms.

Prison health

[Charlotte Nokes death: Peterborough Prison mental health 'concerns'](#)

5th March 2020

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

A prison where an inmate died has been told to avoid housing mentally ill inmates in segregation and to tackle the issue of illicit drugs.

Charlotte Nokes, 38, who had been on suicide watch, was found dead in a cell at HMP Peterborough in July 2016.

She was more than eight years into an indefinite prison term.

An inquest ruled she died of natural causes, but an ombudsman raised concerns about her "long periods" on a segregation unit.

Safety

[East Kent baby deaths: 'Hospital did not learn from mistakes'](#)

5th March 2020

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

The parents of a baby who nearly died after a series of failings during his birth said they were "heartbroken" mistakes continued to be made

East Kent Hospitals told Harry Halligan's parents they would learn lessons from his delivery in 2012.

But similar failings recently came to light after the death of Harry Richford in 2017 and the trust is now being probed over up to 15 baby deaths.

The trust said it made "many changes to the maternity service" after 2012.

[Emerade adrenaline pens recalled over activation fault](#)

4th March 2020

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

Allergy patients are being urged to return Emerade 150-microgram adrenaline pens to pharmacists because of a potential fault.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) said some users had reported difficulty activating the needles.

The defect also affects 300- and 500-microgram pens but there are currently insufficient stocks to replace them.

Patients should keep these until the expiry date but always carry two pens.

[Hartlepool NHS whistleblower nurse wins dismissal case](#)

4th March 2020

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

A whistleblower nurse who was sacked after raising concerns about workloads contributing to a patient's death has won an unfair dismissal claim.

Manager Linda Fairhall made 13 complaints to North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust about her district nurses being dangerously stretched.

Days after launching the whistleblower process she was suspended amid allegations of bullying.

A tribunal found the trust's actions "unjustified". The trust will appeal.

Screening

[New smear test in Scotland to screen for HPV](#)

15th March 2020

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

A new smear test being introduced in Scotland from Monday will now also screen for the human papillomavirus (HPV) - the main cause of cervical cancer.

Smoking

[Young people who vape may be more likely to start smoking](#)

12th March 2020

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

There are fears that young people might start smoking after experimenting with e-cigarettes. This could be because e-cigarettes get them addicted to nicotine, or getting into similar habits to smoking. This is sometimes called the "gateway" effect. Alternatively, it could be that young people who are more inclined to take risks are more likely to try both vaping and smoking. This is known as the "common causes" effect.

Social & economic issues

[UK interest rates cut in emergency move](#)

11th March 2020

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

The Bank of England has announced an emergency cut in interest rates to shore up the economy amid the coronavirus outbreak.

Policymakers reduced rates from 0.75% to 0.25%, taking borrowing costs back down to the lowest level in history. The Bank said it would also free up billions of pounds of extra lending power to help banks support firms.

[Transgender man Freddy McConnell appeals decision not to be named father](#)

4th March 2020

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

A transgender man who has given birth to a child has begun an appeal to be legally registered as the "father" or "parent", rather than the "mother".

Freddy McConnell is fighting a decision made by a High Court judge last year that a person who carries and gives birth to a baby is legally a mother.

Mr McConnell, a single parent from Kent, lives as a man following surgery, having been assigned female at birth.

Three Appeal Court judges sitting in London are considering the case.

Women's health

Perimenopause: 'I went from triathlon training to needing naps'

13th March 2020

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

At 39, Emily Barclay was hit with irregular periods, crushing fatigue and mood swings. It took four years before she was diagnosed with perimenopause - a phase that can last for 10 years before the menopause itself, with similar debilitating symptoms.

Sweden abortion: Nurses fail in European court case

13th March 2020

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

Two nurses denied jobs as midwives in Sweden because of their refusal to perform abortions have lost their legal action against Sweden at the European Court of Human Rights.

Menstrual cup misuse 'can cause pelvic organ prolapse'

11th March 2020

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

Incorrect use of menstrual cups could be resulting in some women suffering pelvic organ prolapse, the Victoria Derbyshire programme has been told.

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy wants some manufacturers to include better safety advice.

Menstrual cups fit into the vagina and collect period blood. They are not currently regulated in the UK, and there is no safety testing.

The government said the NHS was improving pelvic health clinic access.

Women in labour refused epidurals, government finds

4th March 2020

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

Women in labour are being refused epidurals, the Department of Health and Social Care has found. Official guidelines say all women should have the option, but some claim that stretched resources and a lack of information mean it is being denied.

One woman said her "traumatic" experience had left her with post-natal depression and anxiety.

The Royal College of Midwives said "every woman who wants an epidural should be given one if it is safe".

Workplace health

International Women's Day: Personalised scrub caps for women surgeons

8th March 2020

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

A group of female surgeons are heading up a new initiative to stop them being mistaken for non-surgical staff.

To mark International Women's Day they have produced personalised theatre scrub caps to promote women in surgery.

Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital (RJAH) in Oswestry, Shropshire, said approximately 12% of surgeons across the UK were female.

Local news: []

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

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/>



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