



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health



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Chief Executive

Friday message

Friday 30 October 2015

Dear everyone

Without hard hitting action across the public health system to address the threats to the nation's health and wellbeing we face an increasing burden of avoidable illness which will undermine progress and the sustainability of the NHS. This time last year, the *Five Year Forward View* set out the case for a radical upgrade in prevention and public health. In January we established the NHS Prevention Programme Board to ensure we deliver on our promise to get serious about prevention. Since then we have got the NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme (DPP) under way, focused on improving the health of the NHS workforce, identified public health interventions to contribute to the NHS efficiency programme and generally moved the wider prevention debate forward. For example, the DPP is a joint commitment from the NHS, Public Health England and Diabetes UK to deliver an evidence-based behaviour change programme, at scale, to support people at risk of developing Type 2 diabetes to lose weight, be more physically active and to eat more healthily. Type 2 diabetes is one of the biggest health care challenges of our age yet the vast majority of cases are preventable. There are around 2.5m people with Type 2 diabetes and a further 5m are at risk of developing it. It results in around 22,000 deaths a year, contributes to kidney failure, heart attack and stroke, and costs the NHS £8.8 billion per year. Seven demonstrator sites around the country are informing the development of a national programme. The aim is to support up to 10,000 people at high risk of Type 2 diabetes by April 2016, and start national roll-out in 2016/17.

The partners of the London Health Board, including the Mayor, NHS, local authorities and PHE London, came together last week to publish [Better Health for London: One Year On](#). This report is a progress check on what organisations across London are doing to improve health and health care in relation to the ten shared ambitions set out a year ago in the London Health Commission report, *Better Health for London*. The ultimate aim is to make London the healthiest major global city in the world and there are some big challenges to tackle, particularly childhood obesity, as Professor Yvonne Doyle, Director of PHE London and health adviser to the Mayor, sets out in her [blog](#). Another useful insight into the progress made against the ten ambitions is a very helpful animation which you may want to view.

Each year, 110,000 people in England suffer a stroke, the country's third largest cause of death and the biggest cause of complex disability, requiring, in many cases, an intensive rehabilitation programme. Recognising the signs of stroke and acting quickly so that the person can get to hospital within the vital three-hour window following a stroke, results in a greater chance of recovery, as well as reducing the likelihood of permanent disability and the need for rehabilitation. You may have seen our TV adverts, which are part of the latest Act FAST stroke [campaign](#). They remind people of the common symptoms of stroke and the need to Act FAST if a person spots any one of the symptoms in others or experience them themselves. In partnership with the Stroke Association, we have also produced a new public awareness [film](#), which graphically illustrates how every second counts during a stroke.

This week we hosted a delegation from Anhui province in China which has a population of around 60 million people and, like us, has challenges around combating the global threat of antimicrobial resistance. The delegation, consisting of senior staff from Anhui Medical University and Anhui Health Bureau, visited our Field Epidemiology Service in Bristol and spent time with PHE staff in London. Supported by our FCO colleagues and British Embassy staff in Beijing, PHE is collaborating with the Anhui team on a pilot research project exploring the impact of an educational intervention to reduce inappropriate prescribing of antibiotics in primary care across the province.

With best wishes