



Public Health  
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health



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Chief Executive

## Friday message

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**Dear everyone**

This week the Public Health England Board considered the findings of two external reviews, the first of them on global health. Public health is a global affair and our work in the UK is in an international context. PHE plays a wide range of roles on the global stage advising, researching and responding to public health concerns and events all over the world. We act for the UK as the focal point for the World Health Organization international health regulations and contribute to UK work on global health security. We also have contracts with the Department for International Development to provide support on the ground to Pakistan and Sierra Leone as part of the UK Global Health Strategy and we support work on antimicrobial resistance in different parts of the world. This review points the way towards PHE seizing these opportunities by making sure we understand all of our various global health activities through a new central knowledge management system and clear and unambiguous leadership, and both are in hand.

The second external review considered the long term vision for our Centre for Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Hazards (CRCE). It is clear from the feedback of the high level of appreciation there is for the services and authoritative advice CRCE provides. It is vital that these talents are, as the report recommends, drawn into a clear overarching PHE environmental public health strategy. CRCE will play a leading role in this and, again, we will optimise our approach to environmental public health by better co-ordinating all of our efforts across PHE. With the environment becoming an increasingly obvious public health concern, for example air quality and climate change, we have an opportunity to redefine our role in this sphere while tackling some of the biggest issues of our age.

Earlier this week the joint NHS/PHE Sustainable Development Unit published its latest assessment of the progress we are making in the [Sustainable Development in Health and Care Report – Health Check 2016](#). This report spells out what work has been done to reduce carbon emissions from the NHS and social care. And the good news is that these efforts are working, with a 13% reduction in carbon emissions from the health and care sector between 2007 and 2015. This is good progress especially when considering health and care activity has increased by 18% over the same period. However, more will need to be done to reach the Climate Change Act target of 80% by 2050. The report also identifies, as others have recently, that positive public health action will also have positive carbon impacts. For example, by helping people make changes in their life that prevent or delay ill health, we can collectively reduce the burden on NHS and local authority services, cut waste and find alternatives for harmful gases used in some medical devices and procedures. Initiatives such as these will improve public health, save money and reduce carbon emissions. It is important to remember we can all make a difference by making changes in our own lives too; see the One Small Step pages on the NHS sustainability day website for more.

And finally, I recently attended the e-Bug international partner meeting held in London to discuss new developments and to share information and resources between partner countries. [e-Bug](#) is an educational resource that teaches children and young people about microbes, the spread of infection and antibiotics. It works with partners in 26 countries across the world and our resources are available in 22 different languages.

**With best wishes**