



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health



Duncan Selbie
Chief Executive

Friday message

Friday 13 May 2016

Dear everyone

I am glad to say we have received our [remit letter](#) for the coming year from the Public Health Minister Jane Ellison and you will see from this our objectives from the Government against our four functions. This should be read alongside our [strategic plan](#), which we published in early April.

Yesterday we opened a three-day public exhibition for [PHE Harlow](#), our future integrated science campus. The event is an opportunity to get feedback from residents, the local community and the media on our proposals and initial designs for this state-of-the-art science research facility. We are taking the exhibition to present to our staff at Colindale, Porton, central London and across the country.

I also hosted the launch of the latest edition of [Health Matters](#), focusing on giving every child the best start in life, one of the Government's national priorities. What happens in pregnancy and early years affects physical and emotional health during childhood and into adulthood. A healthy start to life and positive early experiences are vital to ensure children are ready to learn, ready for school and have good life chances. Over 200 public health professionals, GPs, midwives, health visitors and health and wellbeing board members all dialled in to hear the case for investing in early years services and find out about the resources we have pulled together, including current evidence, guidance and tools. Please do share the infographics, slide sets, case studies and blogs with colleagues.

This week Liverpool City Council launched a new campaign to inform parents about how many cubes of sugar are in a range of drinks – including many well-known brands. [New figures](#) released on Tuesday showed a welcome decline in tooth decay in under-fives at national level, but there is still significant regional variation, with a third of five-year-olds suffering from tooth decay in the North West. In Liverpool, one in four children starting primary school is overweight. Liverpool is taking a bold step to help families and children develop healthy habits to prevent unnecessary poor health in the future.

On Wednesday and Thursday the PHE Health X Hackathon took place in Manchester to seek innovative digital solutions to help tackle childhood obesity. In partnership with Manchester Digital Council and local PHE colleagues, this was introduced by Health Secretary [Jeremy Hunt](#) and we were fortunate to host some of the best digital developers in the country to come up with brand new products and ideas. It was great to see university students and Year 4 and 5 coders from the local primary school also getting involved. We feel very energised about the potential outcome of this innovation, so do look out for further information coming soon.

Also on Wednesday we held our first Diversity and Staff Inclusion Awards at the House of Lords. The awards celebrated the commitment and achievements of PHE staff to help make sure our organisation is an inclusive place to work, and highlighted the value of diversity in the workplace. Congratulations to all of our winners and those who were nominated. You are all helping us to be an exemplar organisation for diversity and staff inclusion.

And finally, congratulations to Steve Ebdon-Jackson, our Head of Medical Exposure, who has been awarded the Norman Veall Medal by the British Nuclear Medicine Society. The medal is awarded annually to a clinical scientist who has made an outstanding contribution to science or the practice of nuclear medicine in the UK.

With best wishes