



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health



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Chief Executive

Friday message

Friday 29 July 2016

Dear everyone

PHE launched the latest edition of [Health Matters](#) last week, focusing on getting every adult active every day. Currently around 1 in 4 adults in England are classed as physically inactive, meaning they do less than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per week – well below the recommended 150 minutes. This edition focuses on ways to support more adults to build physical activity, such as walking and cycling, into their daily routines. We had 170 people calling in to our launch teleconference and a lively question and answer session, and the resource has been shared extensively on social media. Please do share the infographics, slide sets, case studies and blogs with colleagues.

Also last week I chaired the Commission for Health and Social Care Integration in the North East, which looks at how the NHS, councils and other organisations, including the voluntary and community sector, can further develop the work they do together to improve health and wellbeing across the North East. Hundreds of people and organisations participated in local listening events and responded to our call for evidence, knowledge and experience about how health and wellbeing in the North East can be improved. This is a valuable contribution to an important piece of work and we are now carrying out detailed analysis of the information to inform our work as we develop our final report and recommendations.

Our annual [hepatitis C 2016 report](#) was published yesterday on World Hepatitis Day. Treatment rates increased by around 40% in 2015, which is likely to be the result of access to new hepatitis C drugs commissioned by NHS England that offer improved cure rates and fewer side effects. PHE estimates that 160,000 people in England are living with hepatitis C. The virus causes inflammation of the liver, but because our livers can still operate when damaged, many people are unaware that they have the infection. Preliminary figures show that deaths in the UK from hepatitis C-related end stage liver disease and liver cancer fell for the first time in 2015, suggesting that drugs may be having a positive impact. The World Health Assembly's Global Health Sector Strategy on viral hepatitis for 2016-2021 calls for a 10% reduction in hepatitis C deaths by 2020. If current progress continues, we should exceed this in the UK.

Unintentional injury to children is a major public health concern causing a significant cost to health, social care and education. This is recognised by the new Minister for Public Health and Innovation, Nicola Blackwood, who joined a roundtable meeting this week with PHE, local government leaders, NHS England, professional bodies, national injury prevention groups and academics. Each year approximately 60 children under the age of five die from accidents, 450,000 go to accident and emergency and 40,000 are admitted to hospital. PHE has already committed to support work to address this at national and local levels, but there is more that we will do in partnership with others to support further action at scale and pace. Making effective use of data and the evidence base, alongside strengthening the role of practitioners and parents, are just some examples of how we can help keep children safer.

I would like to thank all those who have been working flat out nationally and locally to tackle the recent E. coli outbreaks, including local health protection teams and laboratory and epidemiology colleagues based in the National Infection Service. Whole genome sequencing is at the forefront of improving the diagnosis of infectious diseases and it is great to see this being used to protect against further E.coli cases.

And finally, this week we published our third [Annual Report](#), which reflects on the health of England and some of our work over the last year. Do take a look.

With best wishes