



PHE publications gateway number 2013281

28 October 2013

PHE Bulletin, Public Health England's regular update, provides news and information on PHE and the public health landscape for all those concerned with the public's health. For more information see our website: www.gov.uk/phe

Public health news

Cold Weather Plan published

PHE has published the [Cold Weather Plan for England for 2013](#) in collaboration with the Department of Health, NHS England, the Local Government Association and the Met Office. The plan aims to prevent avoidable harm to health by alerting people to the negative health effects of cold weather, and enabling them to prepare and respond appropriately. It sets out a series of actions local authorities, NHS and other agencies can take throughout the year, and in response to forecast or actual severe winter weather. It also encourages local communities to support the most vulnerable in their area. The Met Office will trigger cold weather alerts from 1 November 2013 to 31 March 2014, on the basis of either low temperatures of 2°C or less, or severe winter weather (heavy snow or widespread ice). From 7 November near real-time monitoring of influenza, norovirus, syndromic and mortality data will be brought together on a weekly basis in PHE's [Winter Health Watch bulletin](#). For more details see [PHE's press release](#).

PHE signs up to pledge on mental health, wellbeing and resilience in the workplace

PHE has signed up to the new Public Health Responsibility Deal pledge on mental health, wellbeing and resilience in the workplace. This will involve providing staff with the environment and tools to develop and maintain emotional resilience and mental wellbeing, while raising awareness and providing support for mental health in the workplace. PHE also pledged to become a [Time to Change](#) organisation. Time to Change is run by leading mental health charities Mind and Rethink Mental Illness,

and aims to challenge mental health stigma and discrimination. For more information see [PHE's press release](#).

Guidance on appointing directors of public health and on their roles

The Department of Health has published statutory and non-statutory [guidance on the roles and responsibilities](#) of directors of public health. Alongside this PHE, with the Faculty of Public Health and the Local Government Association, has published a [good practice guide](#) on the directors of public health appointment process.

Alcohol treatment system continues to perform well

The system for treating alcohol dependence among adults in England is performing well overall for those accessing services, according to the latest [annual statistics for alcohol treatment](#) released by PHE. Waiting times also continued to improve. The national statistics and trends are analysed in the report, which also shows that more people came forward for specialist treatment in 2012-13 and that the number who successfully completed their treatment continued to increase.

Screening programmes live consultations

The UK National Screening Committee, part of PHE, advises ministers and the NHS in the four UK countries about screening policy and supports implementation of screening programmes. Policies are reviewed on a rolling basis and include a three-month open consultation period before a final recommendation is made on whether or not to recommend screening. Current consultations are:

- [congenital heart disease](#)
- [coeliac disease](#)
- [blood group & RhD status and red cell alloantibodies](#)

Navigator provides easier access to data on children and young people

PHE's Child and Maternal Health Intelligence Network has updated its [JSNA Navigator – Children and Young People](#). The navigator aims to take you directly to the data needed to conduct a joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA) locally for children and young people. As well as signposting the key data about the local community, the tool places it in a wider context to allow comparison with other areas.

PHE and Chartered Institute of Environmental Health aim to increase co-operation

PHE and the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) have signed a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) designed to increase cooperation between the two organisations. For more information, see [PHE's press release](#).

Chief Medical Officer: Prevention pays – our children deserve better

Much more needs to be done to improve UK children's health, and acting early will save taxpayers' money, Professor Dame Sally Davies, the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) has said. She published the [second volume of her annual report 2012](#) last week setting out her response to the challenges to the health and wellbeing of our children and young people. CMO's report includes a series of recommendations, calling on government, the whole health service, social care and education professionals to take action and make improvements now. Professor Kevin Fenton, Director of Health and Wellbeing at PHE, said: "Children's health is one of PHE's top five priorities and we welcome the Chief Medical Officer's report. We are committed to take forward the recommendations with key partners and to ensure we engage with children, young people and their carers as part of our work". For more information see the [press release](#).

Majority of London tuberculosis cases are in non-recent entrants to UK

Eight out of 10 Londoners with tuberculosis in 2012 were UK-born or had been living in the UK for at least two years prior to their diagnosis. The data, published last week in PHE's [2012 TB Annual Review for London](#), show 3,426 people were diagnosed with the disease in the capital, accounting for around 40% of all cases nationally. This is more cases than were reported in Belgium, the Netherlands, Greece, Norway and Denmark combined. According to a comment from PHE published in *The Lancet* earlier this month, a primary care based screening programme could help tackle tuberculosis in the UK. For more information, see the PHE's press releases on the [London TB data](#) and on the [screening programme](#).

Commissioning for value – a comprehensive data pack to support CCGs

PHE's Northern and Yorkshire's Knowledge and Intelligence team has been working with NHS England and NHS Right Care to create a [comprehensive data pack](#) for every clinical commissioning group (CCG) to support effective "commissioning for value". The packs are the first products CCGs will receive as part of the new planning round for commissioners and provide locally relevant information to support local prioritisation.

Insight into the social interactions of babies helps reveal how infections spread

A new collaborative study, from PHE and parenting club Bounty, found infants have little contact with adolescents and spend more time with their mothers than anyone else, providing valuable information on the best strategies to protect this age group from infections. The [study](#), published earlier this month in science journal *PLOS ONE*, is the first of its kind and focuses on contact patterns of infants to assess and predict risks of transmitting infectious diseases. For more information, see PHE's [press release](#).

CMO and health leaders urge at risk groups to fight flu this season

The Chief Medical Officer, PHE and NHS England are urging people who are offered the flu vaccine, including those who are most at risk, and all two and three year olds, as of 1 September 2013, to protect themselves from flu this winter by ensuring they get vaccinated against the virus. For the first time, a nasal spray vaccine is being offered to healthy two and three year old children. This marks the first step in an extension to the national flu vaccination programme, which will eventually include yearly vaccination of all two to 16 year olds. A study published earlier this month by PHE and the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine found children are key spreaders of the flu virus. PHE's [weekly flu report](#), which started earlier this month and will continue until May 2014, shows current flu activity is low across the UK. For further information see [PHE's press release](#).

New uterine cancer report and updated cancer profiles

PHE's National Cancer Intelligence Network (NCIN) has recently published new or updated information:

- a new report, [Outline of Uterine Cancer in the UK: Incidence, Mortality and Survival](#), which presents variation in incidence, mortality and survival for uterine cancer in the UK by former primary care trust area. It demonstrates a 43% increase in the incidence of uterine cancer since the mid-1990s, making it the most common gynaecological cancer in women
- updated urological cancer profiles, available from the [NCIN urological cancer hub website](#). The profiles present key data on mortality, incidence and survival for bladder, kidney, penile, prostate and testicular cancers, and cancers of the ureter and renal pelvis. They are given by local authority and former primary care trust areas and by the former cancer network and allow visual comparison of the distribution of urological cancers and comparison of area to regional and national averages

- four more profiles of clinical teams providing care for head and neck, sarcoma, gynaecology and oesophageo-gastric patients to support local understanding of cancer services. These are in the NCIN [Cancer Commissioning Toolkit](#) and bring together relevant indicators to provide comparative information between multidisciplinary teams

Where there's muck there's bugs: e-Bug lesson plans help children to stay safe down on the farm

A study by PHE has found that use of interactive lesson plans significantly improved pupils' knowledge of bugs and why hand hygiene is important in a farm setting with 80% of children correctly answering questions after the intervention. This research is published in the science journal *PLOS ONE*. The interactive lesson plan was devised by e-Bug, a European-wide educational resource for junior and senior students, which is led by PHE in its primary care unit in the South West and is available free for teachers at the [e-Bug website](#). For more information, see [PHE's press release](#).

Wanted: independent scientific advisors

The Rapid Review Panel, one of PHE's independent science advisory bodies, is looking for a new chairperson and three new members to assess new developments in hospital infection control. The panel provides a prompt assessment of new and novel equipment, materials and other products or protocols that may be of value to the NHS in improving hospital infection control and reducing hospital-acquired infections. For further information, see [here](#).

PHE knowledge strategy for open review

PHE is consulting on its [Knowledge strategy: Harnessing the power of information to improve the public's health](#). The draft strategy has been written to support the whole public health system to ensure that decisions we make about our health and the health of the population are based on the best information available and will deliver the best outcomes. Delivery of this strategy will directly impact on how PHE implements services, tools and knowledge to the wider public health system. The [consultation](#) is open until 8 November.

PHE supports FSA warnings over deadly weight loss supplement

PHE supports the [advice](#) issued by the Food Standards Agency about the dangers of a weight loss supplement called 2,4-Dinitrophenol (DNP), which was deemed unfit for human consumption in 1938 but it is still being used by people. The latest available figures show that the PHE-commissioned National Poisons Information

Service received 21 enquiries about people with toxicity from DNP use between January 2012 and mid-August 2013, four of which ended in death. PHE is working with other agencies to raise awareness of this issue amongst healthcare professionals and the public. For further information, see [PHE's press release](#).

People news

Disaster reduction senior role for PHE's Professor Virginia Murray

Professor Virginia Murray, who leads PHE's Extreme Events Team, has been asked to be the vice-chair of the United Nations Office for Disaster Reduction Scientific and Technical Advisory Group.

News from other organisations

Self-help reading scheme

[Reading Well](#), the first national Books on Prescription scheme for England which launched earlier this year, is providing expert endorsed self-help reading to help people understand and manage a range of common mental health conditions including anxiety and depression. The scheme is being delivered by independent charity, The Reading Agency, working in partnership with the Society of Chief Librarians and local library services.

NICE seeks Commissioning Reference Panel members

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is inviting members of health and wellbeing boards and others working in health and wellbeing to join its [commissioning reference panel](#). The role of the panel is to provide NICE with formal and informal feedback and support around commissioning public health and health and social care services. Panel members will help NICE develop [support for commissioning](#) resources to ensure that they meet the needs of commissioners.

BINOCAR annual report on congenital anomalies

The annual [report on congenital anomalies](#) has been published by the British Isles Network of Congenital Anomaly Registers (BINOCAR). This report contains information on the number and prevalence of congenital anomalies, trends over time, timing of diagnosis and outcome, rates of terminations of pregnancy, prenatal detection rates of fetal anomalies, infant mortality, maternal age, geographical

variations and a spotlight on congenital diaphragmatic hernia. PHE has welcomed the report.

Builders urged to get in shape

Britain's builders are being urged to get into shape in a new health push as the government launched the Responsibility Deal Construction Pledge earlier this month. The new pledge outlines how the construction industry will further help its workforce to lead healthier lives. There is a range of actions that firms can take, such as regular health checks, stop-smoking clubs and healthier staff canteens. For more information see the [press release](#).

NICE guidance on addressing obesity in youngsters

NICE has called on local authorities and health professionals to do more to help families address the obesity time-bomb in children and young people. In the new [guidance](#), NICE recommends that families should be encouraged to eat healthily and be physically active by taking up activities that children enjoy such as active play and dancing, as well as reducing the amount of time spent playing computer games and watching television.

Events news

Healthy People Healthy Places: Building a Healthy Future event

PHE will launch its Healthy People Healthy Places (HPPH) programme at an event hosted by Professor Kevin Fenton, PHE's Director of Health and Wellbeing, in London on 13 November. For information or to register for the free event see [HPPH event](#).

PHE's Advisory Board third open meeting

PHE's Advisory Board will hold its third public board meeting from 10am to 1.30pm on 27 November 2013 at Wellington House, PHE's headquarters in Waterloo, London. Further details can be seen [here](#).

Diabetes data and intelligence masterclasses

The National Diabetes Information Service (NDIS) is running a series of free regional masterclasses in England for health professionals who are interested in finding out more about using diabetes data and intelligence to inform their service planning and

improve quality of care and outcomes. The next classes are in Manchester on 21 November and Newcastle on 12 December. For more information and to register for the events see [NDIS Masterclasses](#).

Health economics for public health practice and research course

Bangor University is holding a three-day short course from 16-18 April 2014 for those wishing to gain an appreciation of public health economics. For further information, contact Mrs Ann Lawton at cheme@bangor.ac.uk, telephone 01248 382153.