



Public Health  
England



Duncan Selbie  
Chief Executive

## Friday message

Friday 28 June 2013

### Dear everyone

I was in Hull on Friday last and in Buckinghamshire yesterday, meeting a remarkable cross-section of councillors, clinicians, public health teams, and academics. At first sight, the two localities seem completely different: Hull has many well documented problems in relation to length and quality of life, employment prospects and housing, while Buckinghamshire is at the opposite end of the scale. But when you look closely, you find that in fact one fifth of the population in Buckinghamshire faces very similar problems to those in Hull, with a variation in life expectancy of 14 years between the most affluent and the poorest parts of the county. So those with the responsibility for improving health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities in these two very different communities actually face quite similar challenges. Both areas are focusing on prevention and early intervention, particularly in the early years, and on those living with poor health and their commitment to making a difference was palpable. It clearly showed how important it is that we do drill down into the local data so that priorities reflect the reality, not merely the superficial impression that can be drawn from a high level sweep.

This week we held our first national conference to celebrate and support the contribution of nursing and midwifery to improving and protecting the public's health. Attended by more than 300 nurses and midwives, their energy and enthusiasm spilled over onto Twitter which was so active that the conference was trending top of the hot topics for a period. There are over 300,000 nurses and midwives providing care to people of all ages and in all settings in this country at the sharp end of the front line. They make a deep and compassionate difference to helping the vulnerable and to those whose health and wellbeing we most need to see improved. PHE will champion our nurses and midwives in every way possible.

This week also saw the launch of an appeal for applications from a second cohort of public health staff who want to join the Aspirant Director of Public Health Leadership Programme run by SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) and Public Health England. The aim is to prepare participants for the role of Director of Public Health within local authorities and the programme is designed for applicants from a variety of public health backgrounds, both medical and other professionals, who are keen to become a DPH within the next 12 months. Applications will close on 24 July 2013. Further information and details of how to apply can be found on the SOLACE [website](#).

The full programme for our first Annual Conference (10-11 September 2013) is now available [online](#). The conference, which is being held at Warwick University, will bring together those working in all areas of public health to share knowledge and learn from each other. The event also includes an extensive poster exhibition on a wide range of topics, with opportunities to discuss the work with authors, plus a keynote lecture at the end of the first day.

And finally, I was delighted to witness one of our health protection practitioners, Alison Mason, receive the Graduate of the Year Gold Medal, awarded by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, in the House of Commons on Tuesday. Well done to Alison.

With best wishes