



Public Health  
England



Duncan Selbie  
Chief Executive

## Friday message

Friday 6 September 2013

### Dear everyone

This week we had our annual review with the Health and Safety Executive. The HSE warmly praised the work of the former Health Protection Agency and although there had been issues which had needed addressing, their overall conclusion was that Public Health England had inherited laboratory services that were a sector leader well able to demonstrate continual improvement. Congratulations to Kishor Mistry, our Head of Health and Safety, and his team and to all our staff in Microbiology Services.

Received with equal pleasure was yesterday's announcement that our Head of Respiratory Diseases at PHE Colindale, Professor John Watson, had been appointed by Chief Medical Officer Professor Dame Sally Davies, as her Deputy CMO. PHE has a leading role in academic public health sciences and John is a hugely gifted and influential figure in the field who will bring considerable scientific expertise to the Department of Health. We work very closely with Dame Sally and her team, not least in the latest call for health protection research currently underway through the National Institute of Health Research. PHE has a unique national role in the science of health protection and this is at the heart of our national contribution and our offer of expertise and knowledge to local government, the NHS and our many other partners.

I am also delighted to say that Melanie Sirotkin, currently Director of Public Health and Infection Control in Salford, has been [appointed](#) as our Centre Director for Cheshire and Merseyside following the retirement last week of Professor Qutub Syed. We are very much looking forward to her joining the team.

Screening and Immunisation have arguably had the most complex of transitions with relationships being put to the test through multiple changes in structure and accountability. The UK is regarded as a world leader in both screening and immunisation and we had much to lose by getting this wrong. I am profoundly grateful to all those involved in making sure that this is not what happened. To learn more and to express my thanks, last Friday I met our Merseyside Screening and Immunisation Team in Liverpool and was most encouraged to hear of the strong partnership being built with co-located colleagues in the NHS England Area Team. People and relationships always transcend structures and everyone I met had their eye on improving even further their service to the people of Merseyside. For example, in Quarter One of this year, the Knowsley team achieved 96 per cent on MMR uptake, by any measure a magnificent achievement.

And finally, we have our first annual conference in Warwick over Tuesday and Wednesday next week. Over 1300 colleagues and partners from home (PHE scientists and professionals, Local Government, the NHS and the voluntary and community sector) and abroad (from the WHO, ECDC and the EU) will be joining us for a packed programme covering all three domains of public health science and practice.

With best wishes