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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

Ten point plan released on NHS Health Checks

PHE, which leads the NHS Health Check programme, has launched its [ten-point plan](#) to support local authorities in the implementation of the programme. Checking 40 to 74 year-olds' blood pressure, cholesterol, weight and lifestyle could identify problems earlier and prevent 650 deaths, 1,600 heart attacks and 4,000 cases of diabetes a year. The plan follows a [PHE review](#) of the programme. Local authorities took over responsibility for commissioning Health Checks in April. PHE's Director of Health and Wellbeing Professor Kevin Fenton said: "There is now an unparalleled opportunity for local leadership to accelerate the implementation and scale up of the programme. PHE will establish an expert clinical and scientific advisory panel to review and advise on the evidence base and we will work with partners to develop a research and analysis programme to support the delivery and evaluation of the programme at both local and national levels." Published with the implementation review and plan is a [paper on the evidence behind the checks](#), produced in conjunction with the Local Government Association, NHS England and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence.

Heat related illness figures published as hot weather continues

PHE's weekly surveillance bulletin reveals there was a small increase in reports of heat related illness from Monday 8 July to Sunday 14 July, in line with the recent warm weather. A further bulletin will be published on 25 July. The increases were predominantly noted across the East of England, South West and South East Coast regions of England, and were reported across all age groups. The Syndromic Surveillance weekly report is [published on the PHE website every Thursday at 2pm](#). See PHE's [18 July press release](#) and the [PHE Heatwave Plan for England](#).

PHE response to the Government's decision on minimum unit pricing.

PHE shares the disappointment of the public health community that the introduction of a minimum unit price (MUP) for alcohol is not being taken forward at this point, although it recognises that this remains under active consideration. It welcomes measures announced last week that include the ban on selling alcohol at below cost prices and the establishment of local action areas to develop the evidence base for the use of local powers and restrictions. PHE will work with local government and the NHS to encourage the take up of these measures. See PHE's full [response](#).

Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV)

PHE continues to review and update the information and advice on the Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV). Cases of MERS-CoV (formerly known as novel coronavirus) continue to be reported from the Middle East. However, no new cases of MERS-CoV have been detected in the UK since February 2013. The total number of laboratory confirmed cases detected by the UK remains at four. There have been three deaths, two reported in February 2013 and one in July 2013. Further details are in PHE's [press release](#). The World Health Organization (WHO) has convened an Emergency Committee under the International Health Regulations to advise the Director-General on the status of the current situation. The Emergency Committee, which comprises international experts from all WHO regions, unanimously advised that, with the information now available, and using a risk-assessment approach, the conditions for a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) have not at present been met. Professor Maria Zambon, PHE's Director of Reference Microbiology Services, is representing the UK on this committee.

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening Programme

PHE has announced the completion of the national rollout of the NHS Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening Programme for all 65 year old men. All men in England whose 65th birthday falls on or after 1 April 2013 will automatically be invited for screening while older men who have not previously been screened can arrange an appointment by contacting their local screening service. Every year about 4,000 older men die in England from ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysm – a weakening and enlargement of the main blood vessel in the body – yet most of these deaths are preventable through early detection. Those most at risk are current and former smokers and those with high blood pressure or high cholesterol and the extended screening programme will prevent around 2,000 of these deaths each year. See PHE's [press release](#) and [AAA screening service contact details](#).

Local Health updated with new indicators and an improved interface

PHE's Knowledge and Intelligence teams have developed [Local Health](#), an online tool that presents information on populations in England, including health outcomes and factors affecting health such as housing and education, at the level of upper and lower tier local authorities as well as by ward, using maps, summary charts and more detailed reports. This was developed to help councillors, local authority officers and other partners identify their local priorities for health improvement. For more information see the PHE [press release](#).

New study to give insight into public health risks of ESBL *E. coli*

A new study by PHE and funded by the Department of Health will, for the first time, establish the most significant reservoirs of a strain of antibiotic resistant bacteria known as ESBL-positive *E. coli* that cause human illness in the UK. Its findings will help to develop intervention strategies in efforts to reduce the numbers of infections such as urinary tract infections or blood poisoning, caused by these bacteria. The research is being led by PHE with key collaborators from the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency, The University of Cardiff, The University of East Anglia, The University of Glasgow, Queen Mary University of London, and Health Protection Scotland. The study will look at sewage, farm slurry and raw meat to determine whether there are any potential risks to human health in a number of different reservoirs of these bacteria. See the PHE [press release](#).

Local tobacco control indicators for England now updated

The [local tobacco control profiles for England](#) have been updated by PHE's London Knowledge and Intelligence team. The web-based tool brings together a set of indicators at local and regional level, including trends over time where possible, that is hopefully useful for both commissioners and service providers. From April 2013, the tool is being updated quarterly. This release is mainly a revision of existing indicators with updated population estimates from Census 2011 and includes improved maps for upper and lower tier local authorities and former primary care trusts. More recent data (2009 to 2011) has been published for deaths from lung cancer and COPD. In addition, data for oral cancer registrations is now available. For comments or queries about the profiles, please contact: londonkit@phe.gov.uk.

New vaccine offers babies protection against rotavirus

From July 1st, around 675,000 babies a year in England will be offered a new vaccination to protect them against rotavirus. Rotavirus infection is the most common cause of gastroenteritis in children under five. Nearly every child will develop rotavirus gastroenteritis

by five years of age. Rotavirus gastroenteritis is responsible for 130,000 visits to the GP and 13,000 hospitalisations for dehydration every year. The rotavirus vaccine, Rotarix, will be given orally to babies at two and three months of age. It is hoped the vaccine will halve the number of rotavirus cases each year and lead to 70 % fewer hospital stays. The introduction of the rotavirus vaccine is one of a number of new or amended vaccination programmes being introduced by PHE this year, in partnership with the Department of Health and NHS England. For further information about the rotavirus vaccine, click [here](#)

PHE launches Clinical Excellence Awards 2013

Eligible public health consultants can send their applications for the 2013 round of the Clinical Excellence Awards to Public Health England. The Advisory Committee on Clinical Excellence Awards has now been advised that it can proceed with the 2013 round. Dr Paul Cosford, PHE's Director for Health Protection and Medical Director, said: "Applications for both the employer-based and national awards are now being accepted by PHE, and are open to public health medical and dental consultants employed directly by PHE, in local authorities and university academics." For more information see PHE's [press release](#).

MMR catch-up programme update

The MMR catch-up campaign was launched at the end of April with a plan to vaccinate 10-16 year olds who had missed out on MMR when they were younger. The plan is progressing well and almost 5,000 general practices have signed up to the service which aims to invite all children with records of receiving no MMR or only one dose to come in to the surgery and be vaccinated. The PHE screening and immunisation leads (SILs), and their teams, working within the area teams of NHS England have been supporting and coordinating this work at a local level. So far, almost 200,000 extra doses of vaccine have been ordered – the SILs and their teams have been working hard to identify those practices that have had more difficulties and offering them extra help. Data extracted from GP systems suggests that around 50,000 unvaccinated children have now been vaccinated, and plans are under way to reinforce the programme using tailored approaches over the next few months. In some areas local schools campaigns are being planned, in other areas more targeted work with low coverage groups is being undertaken. It is very encouraging that SILs, their teams, and general practice have worked together to help protect our children against these serious diseases and they deserve congratulations for being able to respond so quickly. For the latest information see the PHE [press release](#).

Whooping cough cases continue to fall

Latest figures published by PHE show a sustained fall in the numbers of whooping cough cases this year. In England a total of 380 cases were confirmed in May, compared to 410

cases the previous month and 682 in May last year. Cases of whooping cough in babies under one year also remained low. See PHE's [press release](#).

New commissioning guidance for addiction to medicines

PHE has published new [commissioning guidance](#) for the NHS and local authorities on how to respond to the needs of people who are addicted to prescription and over-the-counter medicines. The guide supports commissioners in providing an appropriate response to the problem based on a full assessment of local need. For further information, see PHE's [press release](#).

Replacement of the National Child Measurement Programme data upload tool

Delivery of the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) is now a mandatory public health function of local authorities. To support local authorities to deliver the NCMP, the Excel-based tool for validating locally collected data and submitting it to the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) is being upgraded. The new system will be available for use in the 2013 to 2014 school year. For more information see the [HSCIC website](#) and PHE's [press release](#).

Understanding your health assets

A free web-based application for local authorities and the NHS to support the planning of services has been updated. Strategic Health Asset Planning and Evaluation (SHAPE) produced by PHE maps a comprehensive list of all NHS sites and facilities in England. The types of assets that can be mapped include GP practices, hospitals and health clinics as well as dentists, pharmacies and opticians. For further information email shape@phe.gov.uk or visit <http://shape.dh.gov.uk>.

PHE campaign news

Next “Be Clear on Cancer” campaign launching in October

PHE, in partnership with DH and NHS England, has announced details of the next national “Be Clear On Cancer” campaign launching in October. Highlighting the key symptom of kidney and bladder cancer, the campaign tells people to go and see their GP if they see blood in their urine. The campaign was successfully tested in the North of England earlier this year and further details are available [here](#).

New phase of Change4 Life in late August

Following on from Change 4 Life's Get Going campaign, Smart Restart will be launched on 28 August, as children prepare for the return to school in September. Smart Restart will encourage them to adopt healthier habits, such as walking to school and having a healthy lunch, as the new school year begins. Families will be asked to make healthy pledges by signing up to an activity plan, which if maintained throughout the campaign will earn them fun and healthy rewards.

News from other organisations

Report on standardised packaging of tobacco products consultation

The Department of Health has published the [outcome of the responses](#) to the public consultation on standardised packaging of tobacco products.

School food plan

The [School Food Plan](#), a new resource to help teachers, catering managers and those who work with children to ensure children are properly nourished during the day has been launched.

Adapting to climate change

PHE has contributed to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs recently published [National Adaptation Programme](#) which aims to promote climate resilience within the NHS, public health and social care to ensure services are not disrupted and there is sufficient resilience to deal with the increased demand for services associated with extreme heat or cold.

New proposals to improve care for vulnerable older people

The Department of Health is seeking views from public health, NHS and social care staff and from carers and patients on a [set of proposals](#) to radically improve care for vulnerable older people.

People with learning disabilities still face unacceptable inequalities in healthcare, reports show

Two new publications from the Department of Health, the [response to the Confidential Inquiry into premature deaths of people with learning disabilities](#) and the [Six Lives Progress Report on Healthcare for People with Learning Disabilities](#) show that while some improvements have been made, people with learning disabilities are still experiencing poor care and face unacceptable inequalities in health and social care.

NICE guidance on body mass index for black, Asian and other minority ethnic groups

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is urging healthcare workers to follow its new guidance which aims to reduce the risks to people from minority ethnic groups of diseases linked to lifestyle and weight. The guidance indicates that members of black, Asian and other minority ethnic groups are at an increased risk of long-term health conditions at a lower body mass index (BMI) than the white population (below BMI 25 kg/m²). In particular, the guidance highlights that lower BMI thresholds (23 kg/m² to indicate increased risk and 27.5 kg/m² to indicate high risk) should be used to trigger action to prevent type 2 diabetes for members of black African, African Caribbean, south Asian and Chinese populations. For further information please see the [NICE guidance](#).

Queen's Birthday Honours

The Department of Health has started the Honours process for the Queen's Birthday Honours 2014. The Department is keen to receive nominations of worthy candidates who have made a valuable contribution in the health and care system to people's health and wellbeing. In particular, the Department is looking for candidates to be considered for the British Empire Medal award for people who provide very hands-on services. Deadline for submitting honour nominations is Wednesday 4 September. Details and nomination forms are [here](#).

Events news

PHE Advisory Board open meeting

Board papers for the first PHE Advisory Board meeting held in public on 22 July can be found [here](#).

Public Health England Annual Conference

Full details and booking arrangements for the first Public Health England Annual Conference which runs from 10 to 11 September at Warwick University can be found on the [conference website](#).

Diabetes data and intelligence masterclasses

The National Diabetes Information Service (NDIS) are running a series of free masterclasses across 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. For information or to register for the events see [NDIS Masterclasses](#).

Environmental health and public health conference

Duncan Selbie and PHE's Midlands and East of England Director Rashmi Shukla will be speaking at the [East Midlands 2013 regional conference](#) of the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health on 17 October in Newark, Nottinghamshire. Online booking details can be found [here](#).