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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](http://www.gov.uk/phe)

## Public health news

### Framework agreement between the Department of Health and PHE

PHE's [Framework Agreement](#) with the Department of Health has been published. The document defines the critical elements of the relationship between the two organisations. It clarifies PHE's responsibilities as the public health agency for England including supporting the work on combating communicable disease and furthering the health and wellbeing of the nation. It also sets out PHE's relationship with local authorities as they take forward their statutory responsibility for improving the health of their local populations.

### New briefing papers on obesity

PHE has published [Social and economic inequalities in diet and physical activity](#), a briefing paper that describes the inequalities associated with two of the key determinants of obesity and explores possible explanations. See [PHE's press release](#) for further information.

PHE has also produced two briefings for local action on obesity in conjunction with the Local Government Association and the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health. [Obesity and the environment briefing: increasing physical activity and active travel](#) summarises the importance of action on obesity with a focus on active travel, and outlines the regulatory and policy approaches that can be taken. [Obesity and the environment briefing: regulating the growth of fast food outlets](#) takes a similar approach with a focus on fast food takeaways.

## **PHE supporting National HIV Testing Week**

According to a new PHE [report](#), published last week in the run up to National HIV Testing Week which started on 22 November, around a fifth (21,900) of people living with HIV in the UK are unaware of their infection, and need to be tested. Further, around half of the 6,360 people newly diagnosed with HIV in 2012 were identified late. New HIV diagnoses among men who have sex with men also reached an all-time high, with 3,250 cases in 2012. For further details, see [PHE's press release](#).

Earlier this month, a report titled *HIV Prevention Needs Assessment for London* commissioned by the Association of Directors of Public Health, London, and written by Elaine Rashbrook, public health consultant in PHE, was published on the [London Councils website](#).

## **Patterns of drug use changing, but infection risks remain high**

A new report, [Shooting Up - infections among people who inject drugs in the United Kingdom 2012](#), published by PHE, found patterns of injecting drug use are changing, but infection risk for all drug users remains high. While heroin on its own or in combination with crack cocaine remains the most commonly injected drug, the number of people reporting their main injecting drug as amphetamines and amphetamine-type substances nearly tripled between 2002 and 2012. This group is also more likely to report sharing of injecting equipment and less likely to have ever had tests for HIV or hepatitis C. Anabolic steroid and tanning drug melanotan use also increased.

## **Eleven million records imported to create unified cancer registration service**

England now has a single national cancer registry following the import earlier this month of the last of the 11 million historical records from the former regional cancer registries into the new system run by PHE's National Cancer Registration Service. The new unified registration service collects near-real-time data on all tumours diagnosed in the 52 million population of England. This will allow the monitoring of cancer treatment and outcomes for the whole population, ensuring equitable access and best outcomes. In future, with genomic analyses, the front line will be able to deliver targeted therapies to patients.

## **Efforts to tackle gonorrhoea treatment resistance may be working, but threatened by ongoing transmission**

New PHE data suggests there was a slowdown in emerging gonorrhoea resistance to first-line treatments in 2012. Experts believe significant public health efforts,

coupled with a successful recent switch in prescribing guidelines, have been effective in targeting previously circulating strains that were less responsive to treatment. However, a worrying picture of ongoing gonorrhoea transmission and co-infection continues to emerge. For further details, see [PHE's press release](#) and the [Gonococcal Resistance to Antimicrobials Surveillance Programme 2012 Report](#).

### **Annual adult drug treatment statistics 2012-13**

PHE's [annual drug treatment activity statistics for 2012-13](#) show that despite overall promising progress, the rate of getting people into full recovery is beginning to flatline. The national statistics and trends are analysed in the report [Drug treatment in England 2012-13](#).

### **Report shows improvements in end of life care**

According to new report from PHE's National End of Life Care Intelligence Network, the proportion of people dying at home or in care homes increased from 38% in 2008 to 44% in 2012, reflecting the desires of many people to stay at home to die. The report, [What We Know Now](#), also found there were large variations in the proportion of deaths in hospital between 2009 and 2011 ranging from 69% in some areas to 38% in others. For more information see [PHE's press release](#).

### **Surviving the cold and flu season without antibiotics**

PHE and Royal College of General Practitioners have advised that sore throats, runny noses, ear ache, colds and flu-like illness produce a range of symptoms that can usually be managed using over-the-counter medicines and don't need antibiotics. For details see PHE's [colds and flu season press release](#) and PHE's [European Antibiotics Awareness Day press release](#).

### **Prison healthcare services**

A National [Partnership Agreement](#) between PHE, NHS England, and the National Offender Management Service has been developed. It sets out the shared strategic intent and joint commitment in the commissioning, enabling and delivery of healthcare services in adult prisons in England.

### **Winter health watch summary**

The latest winter health surveillance bulletin from PHE can be found [here](#). Published weekly, it contains near real-time monitoring of influenza, norovirus, syndromic and mortality data.

### **Response to consultation on alcohol indicator published**

PHE has published a summary of the responses to the 2012 consultation on measuring alcohol-related admissions to hospital. One [report](#) conclusion is that a new indicator for alcohol-related hospital admissions will give a more reliable measure of trends. For further details see [local alcohol profiles for England](#) and [PHE's press release](#).

### **Consultant and public health specialist workforce survey**

In partnership with Health Education England and the Department of Health, PHE has commissioned a workforce [survey](#) of those recorded on the General Medical Council, the General Dental Council and the specialist register of the UK Public Health Register as public health specialists. The survey, which closes on 6 December, is looking very specifically at career intentions of this group. Further details of the survey conducted by the Centre for Workforce Intelligence can be found [here](#) and a full report will be available from April 2014.

### **Public health outcomes framework tool updated**

PHE has published the latest update to the [Public Health Outcomes Framework](#) data tool. This quarterly [update](#) contains new baseline information for 11 indicators as well as more recent data for 12 indicators. In addition it includes lower tier local authority data for four indicators, inequalities breakdowns for three indicators and changes to three indicators to take account of population and data revisions. For more information, see [PHE's press release](#).

### **£1.1 million grant awarded to ground-breaking PHE vaccine research for developing countries**

PHE has been awarded a £1.1 million (US \$1.7million) research grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to develop an innovative point of care test to assess childhood immunity to measles and tetanus, using oral fluid samples. The research could deliver a universal approach for monitoring population immunity and vaccine coverage in the future. For details, see [PHE's press release](#).

### **Shingles vaccine update**

PHE is subject to a temporary delay with the supply of the shingles vaccine, Zostavax into the UK. The disruption to supply will continue until normal supplies are restored by the manufacturer, Sanofi Pasteur MSD, likely to be in December. PHE

does not expect this temporary delay to impact the overall programme to immunise 70 and 79 year olds. See [PHE's press release](#) for more information.

### **Shale gas extraction emissions report published**

PHE has published a [review](#) of the potential public health impacts of exposures to chemical and radioactive pollutants as a result of shale gas extraction. The draft report is based on the examination of literature and data from countries with commercial scale shale gas extraction operations. For more details see [PHE's press release](#).

### **Report on dementia services for people with learning disabilities**

Improving Health and Lives, PHE's Learning Disabilities Observatory, has published a new report titled [Making Reasonable Adjustments to Dementia Services for People with Learning Disabilities](#). It contains sources of guidance and information on support for people with learning disabilities who require dementia services and forms part of a series on how services can make specific areas of healthcare better and easier for people with learning disabilities to use.

## **News from other organisations**

### **Health gaps by socioeconomic position of occupations in England, Wales, English regions and local authorities, 2011**

The Office for National Statistics has published [a 2011 census analysis](#) of those who say their health is "not good" broken down by gender, region, local authority area, and socioeconomic classification of occupation. This shows a North-South divide in "not good" health rates with rates generally higher in the North for all socioeconomic classes grouped by their occupation.

### **Community pharmacy and local government health services**

The Local Government Association has published a [public health resource sheet](#) on the contribution of community pharmacy to local public health services. It includes information on local government statutory responsibilities for community pharmacy and several case studies that illustrate the potential of community pharmacy as a key public health resource.

## Events news

### **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 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 Newcastle on 12 December and at the University of Liverpool on 16 January. For more information and to register for the events see [NDIS Masterclasses](#)