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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

### PHE's 2013 Local Health Profiles published

PHE's [2013 Local Health Profiles](#) which give a snapshot overview of health for each local authority in England in a user-friendly format were published this week. They are a valuable tool for local government, health services and partners in helping them to understand community needs. There is a 4-page profile for each local authority in England, which includes:

- a summary of people's health in the area
- maps and charts showing how the health of the area compares to the national view and information on health inequalities within the local authority
- charts presenting changes in death rates over a 10-year period
- a health summary showing the difference in health between the area and the England average for 32 indicators

### New data and knowledge gateway

PHE has developed a new [data and knowledge gateway](#), which gives direct access from a single point to many high-quality data and analysis tools and resources for public health professionals. Over 100 tools can be accessed, covering a wide range of public health areas including:

- specific health conditions – such as cancer, mental health and cardiovascular disease
- lifestyle risk factors – such as smoking, alcohol and obesity
- wider determinants of health – such as environment, housing and deprivation
- health protection, and differences between population groups, including adults, older people and children

The tools serve a range of public health information needs, including the commissioning and planning of services, joint strategic needs assessments, health surveillance, understanding inequalities and variation, research and evidence. PHE plans to develop the gateway further as part of its overall digital programme and welcomes feedback on this. For more information contact [datagateway@phe.gov.uk](mailto:datagateway@phe.gov.uk).

### **Survey finds 27% of five year olds have tooth decay**

Despite an overall improvement in the number of children free of tooth decay, over 27% of five year olds have tooth decay, according to a survey published last week by PHE. Children with decay have on average between three and four teeth affected by decay, treated or untreated. The study [National Dental Epidemiology Programme for England, oral health survey of 5 year old children 2012](#) is the second national survey undertaken; the previous survey was in 2008. Levels of decay vary regionally with more children in northern regions with tooth decay than those in the south and eastern regions. Levels of decay ranged from 21.2% of five-year-olds in the South East to 34.8% in the North West. Decay levels are higher in the more deprived local authorities. See [PHE's press release](#) for more information.

### **Chlamydia screening intervention has increased general practice screening rates**

A chlamydia screening intervention developed by PHE has increased general practice screening tests rates by 76% and chlamydia diagnoses by 40%, according to new research published in the journal *Sexually Transmitted Infections*. Further, of the 76 practices involved, those that fully engaged with the intervention doubled their chlamydia testing. The PHE intervention focused on removing barriers to offering chlamydia testing to young adults and was trialled in the south west of England. For more information, see the [PHE press release](#).

### **PHE welcomes strategy to combat antibiotic resistance**

PHE has welcomed the launch of the Department of Health's UK [5-year Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy](#). Earlier this year the Chief Medical Officer set out the scale of the antimicrobial resistance issue and its implications for public health in her annual report. Experts at PHE have been actively engaged with combating the problem of antibiotic resistance for several years since it emerged as a healthcare issue. This includes efforts to ensure appropriate knowledge and information through surveillance; provision of genetic typing of pathogens in PHE's reference laboratory; and provision of extensive guidance and support on optimal infection prevention and control practices. In partnership with other organisations PHE

experts also contribute to the development of guidelines on how healthcare professionals can manage infections in patients caused by bacteria resistant to antibiotics and how to stop their spread to others. For further information see [PHE's press release](#).

### **Outbreak of salmonella has links to the consumption of cooked meats**

Investigations show that an outbreak of salmonella seen in England and Wales has links to the consumption of cooked ham bought from small independent butchers' shops. The results of tests carried out by environmental health officers on the product did not show the presence of salmonella although it did reveal other hygiene issues. As a result of this the supplier has withdrawn certain batches of ham. As at 18 September there have been 21 confirmed cases in Wales where the outbreak was first detected, and a further 42 confirmed cases in England (36 last reported). Twelve people have been hospitalised (five in Wales and seven in England – up from four). Other potential cases are being investigated. Experts from Public Health England (PHE) are working with Public Health Wales, the Food Standards Agency and environmental health officers from several local authorities to trace the origins of the contaminated food. See [PHE's press release](#) for more details.

### ***E. coli* outbreak linked to watercress – product withdrawn**

PHE is working with colleagues in the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to investigate a national outbreak of a particular strain of *E. coli* known as VTEC O157 Phage type 2 VT2. As of 10 September 2013, 13 people from all regions in England have become unwell with the same strain of *E. coli* bacteria. There are also four cases in Wales and one in Scotland. Interviews with patients using detailed food questionnaires have revealed a strong link to the consumption of watercress. Most of the people who were unwell reported buying watercress at Sainsbury's. As a precautionary measure Sainsbury's has issued a product withdrawal for its bagged watercress and other salads that contain watercress. This outbreak is being investigated by PHE and the FSA as a matter of urgency. In England 10 out of the 13 cases are female and three are male. Nine are aged over 50. Further confirmation of test results are awaited for a number of other people. For more information see [PHE's press release](#).

### **Cold Weather Plan next month**

PHE will publish the 2013 edition of the Cold Weather Plan for England in mid-October, in partnership with NHS England, the Local Government Association and the Met Office. It will set out a series of actions to be taken by the NHS, social care and other agencies throughout the year, and in response to forecast or actual severe winter weather and encourage local communities to support the most vulnerable in

their area. To support the Cold Weather Plan, the Met Office will issue cold weather alerts from 1 November 2013 to 31 March 2014.

### **UK-wide Hepatitis C look back exercise begins**

PHE health protection staff have been involved in coordinating a 'lookback' patient notification exercise, following the diagnosis of hepatitis C infection in a former healthcare worker. It has recently come to light that the healthcare worker transmitted the virus to two patients while working at Caerphilly District Miners Hospital in Wales from 1984 until the healthcare worker stopped working with patients in 2002. The healthcare worker also worked at other hospitals across the UK prior to working in Wales, including eleven hospitals in England between 1975 and 1983. Women who gave birth or had an obstetric or gynaecological operation at these hospitals during the time period specified may have come into contact with the healthcare worker. In England, a helpline and support service (0800 121 4400) is in place for any woman who is concerned. For further information see [PHE's press release](#)

### **Steroid users at risk of HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C**

Men who inject anabolic steroids and tanning drugs are at higher risk of HIV and viral hepatitis, according to a landmark study from PHE published in *BMJ Open* earlier this month. The use of image and performance enhancing drugs has grown substantially over the last 20 years, but the risk of exposure to bloodborne viruses among those who inject drugs to change their body appearance or improve their performance has rarely been studied. Researchers from PHE and Liverpool John Moores University surveyed 395 men using image and performance enhancing drugs and found that one in 18 injectors have been exposed to hepatitis C, one in 11 have been exposed to hepatitis B and one in 65 have HIV. See [PHE's press release](#) for more information.

### **PHE publishes latest statistics on NHS Health Check**

NHS Health Check data covering activity in April, May and June 2013 was published by PHE earlier this month based on returns from all 152 upper tier and unitary local authorities. It found that across England, average uptake of NHS Health Checks was 47.9%. This is the first data release on the programme since responsibility for it moved from primary care trusts to local authorities in April 2013. For more information see [PHE's press release](#) and the [NHS Health Check website](#).

### **People aged 70 to 79 years offered shingles vaccine**

People aged 70 and 79 will be offered a shingles vaccination this year, as part of a vaccination programme to reduce the incidence and severity of shingles disease in older people. Shingles, or herpes zoster, is an infection of a nerve and the area of skin around it. All people aged 70 on 1 September 2013 are eligible. A catch-up programme to protect those aged over 70 and less than 80 years will also be rolled out over several years, starting with those aged 79 years this September. For more information see [PHE's press release](#). See also a [shingles Q&A for healthcare professionals](#).

### **New data collection system for National Child Measurement programme available**

A new secure data collection tool is now available to support local authorities running the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP). The Health & Social Care Information Centre has upgraded the Excel-based tool used in previous years for validating and submitting NCMP data. The new system is available for use in the 2013 to 2014 school year. Collecting data for the NCMP is now a statutory public health function of local authorities. Please see [PHE's press release](#) and the [HSCIC website](#) for more information.

### **Feedback sought for Local Authority Child Health Profiles 2014**

Earlier this year, Local Authority [Child Health Profiles 2013](#) were published for each top tier local authority in England. PHE is currently reviewing the content of last year's profiles and inviting stakeholders to complete a short [survey](#) on the priorities they would like to see reflected next year.

### **Quarter of the population have experience of violence and abuse**

A study presented at PHE's inaugural annual conference by NatGen Social Research found that three-quarters of the English population had relatively little experience of violence and abuse, but that the remaining quarter consisted of people who had some level of experience of violence and abuse. People who have experienced extensive sexual and physical abuse in their lives are five times more likely to have a common mental disorder like clinical anxiety or depression, and 15 times more likely to have made a suicide attempt. For more details see [PHE's press release](#).

### **"Public health matters" blog**

PHE launched its new blog [Public health matters](#) last week with posts from Professor David Heymann, Chair of PHE's Advisory Board and Professor Kevin Fenton, PHE's

Director of Health and Wellbeing. PHE's leaders and other guest authors will regularly contribute posts, giving their thoughts on a variety of public health issues relating to PHE's priorities and other hot topics in the field. The blog should be of great interest to anyone with an interest in public health, especially colleagues in the public health community and local government, and we're looking forward to hearing everyone's thoughts on the topics under discussion. The blog can be found at [www.publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk](http://www.publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk).

### **PHE annual conference presentations available online**

Around 1,400 participants representing 400 organisations from the UK and all over the world attended PHE's first annual conference in Warwick earlier this month. Many of the conference presentations and posters covering health inequalities, health improvement, health protection, healthcare public health, global health, emergency preparedness and public health workforce can be viewed online or downloaded from the [programme page](#) of the conference website.

## **Public health news catch-up**

Below are brief details of PHE's news items in late July and August you may have missed.

### **Public Health Outcomes Framework data tool: August 2013 update**

The Public Health Outcomes Framework data tool has been updated by PHE's knowledge and intelligence teams. The quarterly [August release](#) contains new baseline information for 11 indicators, more recent data for 10 indicators, additional trend data for three indicators and changes to seven indicators to take account of population revisions. For comments or queries about the profiles, please contact [phof.enquiries@phe.gov.uk](mailto:phof.enquiries@phe.gov.uk).

### **Hepatitis C diagnoses rise by a third in England**

Laboratory confirmed new diagnoses of hepatitis C infection (HCV) reported in England have risen by more than one-third to 10,873 cases in 2012. The figures are in the annual hepatitis C report published by PHE in late July. For more information see [PHE's press release](#)

### **Breastfeeding initiation high in London**

A new report, [Progress in Breastfeeding in London](#), published in August by PHE, shows that breastfeeding rates in London are higher than England and have risen since 2005. In London, women from black ethnic backgrounds and mothers born outside of the UK are significantly more likely to breastfeed despite many living in deprived circumstances.

### **Poisons service issues “legal highs” alert**

Fresh warnings about so-called “legal highs” are sounded by the National Poisons Information Service (NPIS) in its [annual review](#) published in August. NPIS, which is commissioned by PHE, is a poisons advisory service for healthcare professionals working in the NHS in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. For more information see [PHE’s press release](#).

### **Tuberculosis rates remain among highest in Western Europe**

Figures published last month in PHE’s annual [TB in the UK: 2013 report](#) show that rates of tuberculosis have stabilised at around 14 cases per 100,000 since the mid-2000s, following the increase in incidence seen in the previous two decades. However, despite considerable efforts to improve prevention, treatment and control, tuberculosis incidence in the UK remains high compared to most other Western European countries.

### **Sedentary lifestyles and too much screen time affect children’s wellbeing**

Too much time in front of screens – including TV and computer games – combined with a sedentary lifestyle, is taking its toll on our children’s wellbeing and increasing their anxiety, according to a new Public Health England briefing paper. The paper, entitled [How healthy behaviour supports children’s wellbeing](#), identifies a link between children’s screen time and lower levels of wellbeing.

### **New guidance on reducing the risk of illness when open water swimming**

PHE has published a [swim healthy leaflet](#) about open water swimming following a report into an outbreak of gastrointestinal illness that followed a mass-participation swim in the River Thames. For more information see [PHE’s press release](#).

### **Revised guidelines for malaria prevention in travellers from the UK**

The PHE Advisory Committee on Malaria Prevention has revised the [guidelines](#) for malaria prevention in travellers from the UK.



### **PHE supports new tattooing and body piercing guidance**

Improper or unsanitary methods used in tattooing and body piercing can carry health risks including infections, in particular the risk of transmission of blood-borne viruses like hepatitis B, C and HIV. A [Tattooing and body piercing guidance toolkit](#) provides local authorities and businesses with information on good standards of practice, and promotes safety and consistency across the industry nationally. The guidance has been endorsed by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, PHE, the Health and Safety Laboratory, and the Tattoo and Piercing Industry Union. For more information see [PHE's press release](#).

### **PHE publishes new National Child Measurement Programme guidance for 2013 to 2014**

PHE has published [new guidance on the National Child Measurement Programme](#) (NCMP) for implementation in the 2013 to 2014 school year. The guidance supports local authorities to meet their new statutory duty to deliver the NCMP, which measures the height and weight of children in reception and Year 6 annually.

### **Letter on children's flu vaccine plan for the 2013 to 2014 year**

PHE, the Department of Health and NHS England have published [a joint letter](#) providing additional information about the extension of the 2013 to 2014 flu immunisation programme to healthy children.

### **Flu plan for winter 2013 to 2014 published**

This year's flu plan has been published jointly on behalf of PHE, the Department of Health and NHS England. [Flu plan: Winter 2013 to 2014](#) sets out a co-ordinated and evidence-based approach to planning for and responding to the demands of flu across England.



## PHE campaign news

### Stoptober 2013 campaign to build on last year's successes

Stoptober 2013 marks the second year of the ground breaking campaign to encourage people to give up smoking for 28 days in October. The campaign is launched by PHE as new research shows the extra years of life that can be gained by giving up smoking and staying smokefree. It is being supported through TV, radio and outdoor advertising, digital activity, national media partnerships, PR, posters, information cards, in-pharmacy assets and nationwide corporate, public sector and charity partnerships. Last year over 160,000 people were successful in stopping smoking during Stoptober. For more details, see the [PHE press release](#).

### National campaign to raise awareness of blood in urine as a symptom of bladder and kidney cancers

A Be Clear on Cancer five-week campaign highlighting the key symptom of kidney and bladder cancer will launch on 15 October. With the key message "If you notice blood in your pee, even if it's 'just the once', tell your doctor", the PHE run campaign aims to improve early diagnosis of cancer. Targeting men and women over 50 from lower socioeconomic groups, the campaign will use national TV, radio and press and include events and direct mail. For more information and materials visit [beclearoncancer/bloodinpee](#). See also [kidney and bladder cancer statistics](#) for your area, alongside the England average.

### Be Clear on Cancer campaigns for early 2014

PHE, in partnership with the Department of Health and NHS England, has announced further Be Clear on Cancer campaigns for February to March 2014. A campaign to raise awareness of breast cancer in women over 70 will launch in February 2014 and run from early February to mid-March 2014. It will feature TV ads to reinforce the message that one in three women who get breast cancer is over 70. PHE will also be running two regional awareness campaigns on ovarian cancer and oesophago-gastric cancers between February and March 2014. Both regional campaigns will feature TV ads during the same period, with the ovarian cancer campaign running in the North West and Border TV regions, and the oesophago-gastric cancers campaign in the North East TV region. A [letter from Public Health England, NHS England and Department of Health, announcing these campaigns](#) is available from the NHS England website.

## People News

### Deputy Director of Nursing appointed at PHE

Joanne Bosanquet MBE has been appointed the Deputy Director of Nursing at PHE. The role will lead on developing the nursing workforce within PHE and with local partners. See [here](#) for further details.

### PHE's head of respiratory diseases appointed Deputy CMO

Professor John Watson, head of respiratory diseases at PHE's national centre at Colindale, has been [appointed](#) by Chief Medical Officer for England, Professor Dame Sally Davies, as a second Deputy Chief Medical Officer. Professor Watson will take up this position at the beginning of October. His portfolio will have a major focus on health protection including antimicrobial resistance.

### Centre director for Cheshire and Merseyside

Melanie Sirotkin, currently Director of Public Health and Infection Control in Salford, has been appointed as PHE's centre director for Cheshire and Merseyside, replacing Professor Qutub Syed who has retired. Melanie's biography can be found [here](#).

### National Cancer Intelligence Network's transitional governance

PHE's National Cancer Intelligence Network (NCIN) is putting transitional governance arrangements in place until Spring 2014. Chris Carrigan will remain as director of NCIN, but will spend limited time on NCIN business, taking a more strategic oversight for the development of the other health intelligence networks. Di Riley, who was integral in the establishment of NCIN, will be acting as the head of NCIN until the end of March 2014. For more information please contact [driley@nhs.net](mailto:driley@nhs.net) or [chris.carrigan@phe.gov.uk](mailto:chris.carrigan@phe.gov.uk)

## News from other organisations

### Zoonoses 2012 report

The [2012 Zoonoses report](#), published earlier this month by the Department of Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs brings together animal and human data from across the UK and includes a summary of reported cases of zoonotic infection in humans and animals during 2012. The production of this year's report was led by PHE's Gastrointestinal, Emerging and Zoonotic Infections department, collaborating

with 11 other organisations. A full list of zoonotic infections occurring in both humans and animals can be found in the report. This year, human and veterinary data for England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland is reported separately in the appendices.

### **Declaration on tobacco control**

A [Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control](#) developed by Newcastle City Council, which covers action to reduce smoking prevalence and narrow inequalities, has been adopted by a number of councils. Those who have also endorsed it include PHE, the Association of Directors of Public Health, the Faculty of Public Health, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Chief Medical Officer. The declaration is a whole council political commitment to tackling the early death and misery smoking brings to their communities.

### **Deaths from drugs misuse fall**

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) released last month the latest statistics on deaths due to drug-related poisoning in England and Wales. [The 2013 ONS report](#) covers deaths from drug-related poisoning in 2012 and previous years, including legal as well as illegal drugs, and due to accidental poisoning and suicide, as well as drug misuse. It shows that between 2011 and 2012, the number of deaths from drug misuse fell by 7% in England.

### **New resource looks at trends in young people's lives**

The Association for Young People's Health has published online [Key Data on Adolescence 2013](#), which includes the latest statistics on young people's health, education, employment and demographics and examines trends over time. This latest edition focuses on the social determinants of health and includes new sections on mortality, accidents and deprivation. The publication was produced with the support of PHE's Child and Maternal Health Intelligence Network.

## **Events news**

### **PHE Advisory Board second open meeting**

Details and board papers for the second meeting of the PHE Advisory Board, which was held in public on Wednesday 25 September 2013 from 10am to 1pm in the Conference Room at PHE's London Headquarters, can be found [here](#).

### **Lyme disease conference**

PHE's conference on Lyme disease in London on 9 October will provide an opportunity to discuss the latest research and developments in the field of Lyme disease, an infectious disease that can lead to very serious health problems if left untreated. See [here](#) for details and to book.

### **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](#).

### **Healthy People Healthy Places: Building a Healthy Future event**

PHE will launch its Healthy People Healthy Places (HPHP) 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 [HPHP event](#)

### **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. For information or to register for the events see [NDIS Masterclasses](#)