



Public Health  
England



Duncan Selbie  
Chief Executive

## Friday message

Friday 25 April 2014

**Dear everyone**

People leave organisations for two principal reasons, and they are often interdependent: the first is for personal or professional development to gain additional experience in a different setting; and the second is because of a poor relationship with their immediate line manager. As much as I may hope to set the tone for what is and isn't acceptable behaviour within PHE, I do recognise the limitations of just how relevant and meaningful my contribution can be and that our staff's day to day experiences in their place of work are much more relevant to them. In that context, the best workforce adjustment that an organisation can make to retain, get the best out of, and develop its people is to ensure they have a decent line manager. Again, often this is thought to be about levels of management – junior, middle and senior – but my view is that the level is irrelevant; what matters is that whoever is responsible for another, whether one individual or many, has the skills and behaviours that result in high performing, happy staff. We have Marcus Safadi, our new Registrar, adopting the John Lewis model of an independent voice to ensure the leadership adheres to the behaviours that we say matter, and I hope that over the course of this year, many of you will get the opportunity to meet him. In addition I am asking every manager, from every professional background, to talk to their staff about how they can be better supported and feel more closely engaged, not only in their own work but with the whole organisation. I have also asked our HR Director, Tony Vickers-Byrne, to think about how we can best incorporate this into our training and development programmes about what it means to be a decent manager, and how we can ensure this reaches every manager over the course of this year and next. Happy and successful organisations cherish their staff, welcome difference and diversity, and operate to standards, particularly of behaviour, that are consistent and, where these are breached, fair and timely action is taken to get back on course. This is something that I want PHE to be known for.

Local Government can leave the rest of the world standing when it comes to creating innovative partnerships across communities. For example, in Derbyshire there are 102 GP practices, of which 98 have a weekly clinic operated by the Citizens Advice Bureau to ensure people have access to help which can resolve stressful issues such as housing, employment and benefits problems or any other matter getting in the way of their good health. This initiative has been led by Derbyshire County Council and entirely supported by their CCG partners. We know that not having enough money to live on, or somewhere decent to live are barriers to people's good health and wellbeing and here we have the voluntary sector, council and CCGs working together in a way which means people have support through early intervention advice services and avoiding the potential need for expensive health care later on.

And finally, in partnership with the Sierra Leone Ministry of Health and Sanitation and the International Association of National Public Health Institutes, PHE is next week hosting a two-day workshop in Freetown, which will focus on assessing public health capacity in Sierra Leone and provide a framework for them to establish a PHE-equivalent body. In addition, in conjunction with the Commonwealth Dental Association and others we are concurrently undertaking an oral health survey in Sierra Leone. Poor dental health is among the world's leading burden of diseases.

**With best wishes**