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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

Small decrease, but TB rates remain too high

A total of 7,892 cases of tuberculosis (TB) were notified in the UK in 2013, a decrease on the 8,729 cases reported in 2012. The figures are published in the PHE annual [TB in the UK Report](#). Latest figures give an incidence of 12 cases per every 100,000 people in the UK, one of the highest rates of TB in Western Europe. As in previous years, London accounted for the highest proportion of cases in the UK. The report includes a full breakdown by PHE region and centre. For more information see PHE's [press release](#).

New PHE survey finds 12% of 3 year olds have tooth decay

The first national survey of the oral health of 3 year old children in England, published today by PHE, found that those children affected had an average of three decayed teeth due to the disease. According to the [survey](#), there was a dramatic variation of tooth decay prevalence ranging from 2% to 34% across the country. However 88% of children in this age group have no decay at all. This reflects trends of significant improvements in dental health since the introduction of fluoride toothpaste in 1976. For more information see PHE's [press release](#).

Local action on health inequalities: evidence papers

PHE has published a [series of papers](#) showing the evidence for interventions on social issues that lead to poor health, including ways to deal with health

inequalities. They also provide examples from local areas showing interventions that have been used to improve health. The series includes eight evidence reviews and 14 short briefing papers.

Commissioners must collaborate, co-operate and co-ordinate to make it work, says new guide

PHE has launched a new guide to the commissioning of sexual health, reproductive health and HIV services. The goal of [Making it work: a guide to whole system commissioning for sexual health, reproductive health and HIV](#) is to help commissioners ensure that service users experience integrated, responsive services that deliver the best outcomes. Production of the guide, which sets out 12 key principles for best practice commissioning, was supported by NHS England, the Local Government Association, the Association of Directors of Public Health and Department of Health. For more information see PHE's [press release](#).

First-of-its-kind sickle cell educational resource for science teachers

The NHS Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia Screening Programme has produced a set of resources for GCSE science teachers to use when [teaching genetic inheritance](#). The free resource supports the teaching of GCSE science and uses sickle cell and thalassaemia as models to demonstrate how serious conditions can be inherited. For more information see PHE's [news story](#).

PHE publishes global health strategy

PHE has launched its [Global Health Strategy](#) outlining its global health priorities for the next five years and providing a framework for international engagement. This links to the [PHE business plan](#) and [knowledge strategy](#), and will connect with PHE's emerging research and academic strategy, commercial strategy and infectious diseases strategy.

Latest health and travel advice for Hajj and Umrah

PHE and the National Travel Health Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) strongly urge everyone travelling for Hajj and Umrah to familiarise themselves with all the latest health and travel advice and information for these pilgrimages, which is available on the NaTHNaC website. For more information see PHE's [press release](#).

Rugby players: do you really want to share your mate's towel?

An investigation at a rugby club into a serious infection that usually causes boils, abscesses and carbuncles found that some spread among the players may have been caused by the sharing of towels and razors or the same ice bath. The skin condition is called PVL-MSSA. Most active infections present as recurrent boils and abscesses but it can lead to serious infections that can cause the skin and tissues to die and may be life-threatening. For more information see PHE's [press release](#).

Impact of measles infections in England revealed

Measles causes significant absence from school or work and has a much larger impact on people's daily lives than illnesses like flu or chicken pox, according to a new study by researchers from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) and PHE. The study, published in the scientific journal [PLOS ONE](#), is the first of its kind to look at the short-term impact of measles on individuals' health-related quality of life. For more information see the LSHTM [press release](#).

Improving palliative care data

NHS England and PHE have announced in a joint statement that they are working with the National Council for Palliative Care, Help the Hospices and the Cicely Saunders Institute to explore the feasibility, options and costs of the collection of individual level palliative care data. For more information see the [joint statement](#).

Chief Medical Officer annual report recommends improvements to public mental health services

Chief Medical Officer Professor Dame Sally Davies has made 14 recommendations to improve public mental health services in her annual report 2013 published earlier this month. The report, [Public Mental Health Priorities: Investing in the Evidence](#), looks at the epidemiology of public mental health, the quality of evidence, possible future innovations in science and technology, and the economic case for good mental health. It outlines the importance of treating mental health as equal to physical health and of focusing on the needs and safety of people with mental illness. For more details, see the [press release](#).

PHE Ebola updates

PHE is providing [epidemiological updates](#) on the Ebola virus disease outbreak in West Africa and updated [clinical management and guidance](#) on the Ebola disease for professionals. PHE continues to work across government, with the World Health Organization and a wide range of partners including UNICEF and Médecins Sans Frontières to provide support to the affected countries.

Antibiotic Guardian campaign launched

PHE has launched [Antibiotic Guardian](#), a pledge campaign as part of European Antibiotics Awareness Day (EAAD) that is also supported by NHS England and the Chief Medical Officer, to help tackle the overuse and misuse of antibiotics that is resulting in many bacteria becoming resistant to these medicines. For more information on EAAD see the [joint letter](#) from PHE, NHS England and the Department of Health to the NHS and local health and wellbeing boards.

Public health funding allocations for 2015 to 2016

The Department of Health has announced that local authorities' public health funding is expected to remain the same as last year, at £2.79 billion. The funding will remain ring-fenced. A further £5 million of funding has also been announced as part of the Health Premium Incentive Scheme. Under the scheme, which will be piloted during 2015 and 2016, local authorities will be rewarded for meeting one mandatory national public health target, related to improving drug and alcohol services, and one local target of their choice. For more information see the [press release](#).

New tool for local authorities on outcomes and expenditure

PHE has published its [spend and outcome tool \(SPOT\): local authorities](#), which gives local authorities in England an overview of spend and outcomes across key areas of public health. The tool is an interactive spreadsheet that allows the data to be explored. A factsheet is also available for each local authority containing the information from the tool.

Recent PHE blogs

[A burning platform – maximising the nursing contribution to the antimicrobial resistance challenge](#) by Joanne Bosanquet and Susie Singleton (18 September 2014). The authors argue that nurses and midwives are a vital resource for tackling this huge public health challenge.

[Why we must all become antibiotic guardians](#) by Diane Ashiru-Oredope and Paul Cosford (16 September 2014). Everyone has a role in the fight against antibiotic resistance – Diane Ashiru-Oredope and Paul Cosford urge health professionals and the public to become Antibiotic Guardians.

[Stoptober's back – bigger, better and with added humour](#) by Kevin Fenton (11 September 2014). Kevin Fenton discusses Stoptober – now in its third year and the UK's biggest mass quit attempt.

[Data blog: Teenage conceptions heading in the right direction](#) by Julian Flowers (4 September 2014). Julian Flowers lets data tell the story of reductions in teenage pregnancy.

[Taking a user first approach to health protection web content](#) by Mahesh Patel (2 September 2014). PHE is moving all its legacy websites and content onto GOV.UK or NHS Choices.

People news

PHE appoints new director

Professor Derrick Crook joins PHE as Director of Microbiology on 1 January 2015. He is currently Professor of Microbiology in the Nuffield Department of Medicine at Oxford University and is a practising clinical microbiologist and infectious diseases physician at the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust. In his new role, his particular focus will be to lead the translation of genomic technologies to transform microbiology practice across England in full partnership between PHE and universities hosting National Institute for Health Research health protection units. For more information see PHE's [news story](#).

Campaigns news

Smokers encouraged to swap fags for gags

PHE has enrolled top comedians to help smokers get through the 28-day quitting challenge for its Stoptober stop smoking campaign, which starts on 1 October. Last year's Stoptober campaign saw 250,000 people take part and 65% of those who took part successfully quit for 28 days; PHE is hoping even more will get involved this year. For more information see PHE's [press release](#).

'Blood in pee' campaign dates

The Be Clear on Cancer national "blood in pee" reminder campaign will run from 13 October to 23 November, targeting men and women aged over 50. It will use TV, radio, digital and out-of-home media, and there will also be roadshow events. The key message of the campaign is: "If you notice blood in your pee, even if it's just the once, tell your doctor." For more information visit the [Cancer Research UK website](#).

Prostate cancer pilot

A local pilot campaign on prostate cancer will run from 20 October to 23 November in the London boroughs of Hackney, Haringey and Newham in north London and Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark in south London, aimed at African and African-Caribbean men aged 45 and over.

Winter flu campaign

PHE is working with the NHS to plan and implement the national flu immunisation programme. A four week flu marketing campaign begins on 6 October which aims to encourage those at risk to have the flu vaccination "because they need it". It targets under 65 year olds with long-term health conditions, including pregnant women who are at risk of complications and healthy children aged 2-4 years. The campaign will run nationally on radio and in print media with a test TV campaign in the North East.

News from other organisations

Alcohol-related liver disease: new map highlights regional hotspots

The Health and Social Care Information Centre has published a [regional map](#) that highlights regional hotspots of emergency hospital admissions for alcohol-related liver disease in the country alongside [new data](#) at national, area team and clinical commissioning group level.

NHS England publishes annual review

NHS England has published its first [Annual Review](#). The review takes a look at some of NHS England's highlights over the last year.

ONS figures for deaths related to drug poisoning and misuse for 2013 released

Annual statistics on [Deaths Related to Drug Poisoning](#) for 2013 in England and Wales released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) earlier this month show increases in drug misuse and drug poisoning deaths compared with 2012.

NICE consultation for draft guideline on leading a healthy lifestyle

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has begun a consultation on a [draft guideline](#) that aims to help adults and children maintain a healthy weight. The draft guideline identifies changes that adults and children can make to help them maintain a healthy weight or prevent further weight gain if they are already overweight.

Institute of Health Equity publishes updated figures on Marmot indicators

New figures last week from the Institute of Health Equity show some of the social determinants of health have improved, notably GCSE attainment and employment rates. But other key indicators, including those for children's development, are said to be a cause for concern. For more information see the institute's [press release](#).

ONS report indicates improvement in national wellbeing

People in the UK are more satisfied with their lives than at any time since 2011, the ONS has said. The twice-yearly [survey of wellbeing](#) shows life satisfaction and happiness indicators are up on last year's figures. Regional data is also available on the [ONS website](#).

Survey of allied health professionals

The Royal Society for Public Health, working in partnership with PHE, is conducting a [survey](#) of the potential for allied health professionals to engage in “healthy conversations” with their clients and with patients in order to improve their health and wellbeing. The survey closes on 17 October.

Events news

PHE Board's ninth open meeting

The ninth open meeting of PHE's Board will take place from 11am to 1pm on 24 October 2014 at Skipton House, London. The meeting will focus on the work of local authorities.

Regional workshops on the transfer of children's public health commissioning

PHE has organised a series of regional workshops designed to explore the data, information and supporting IT aspects of the transfer of commissioning public health services responsibilities for 0-5 year olds from NHS England to local authorities in Octobers 2015. Workshops will be held in London and Bristol in the first week of October 2014. For details including registration visit the PHE events [website](#).