



Public Health  
England



Duncan Selbie  
Chief Executive

## Friday message

Friday 13 June 2014

**Dear everyone**

Yesterday we published our [Business Plan](#) and we received our first [Remit Letter](#) setting out what the Government expects of us over the coming year. The Government also published their [response](#) to the Health Select Committee, and together these should provide Parliament with concrete assurance that its expectations of PHE have been fully taken on board. As importantly, I hope that our staff and our many partners read these as a compelling and exciting future for the public health system, and our part in it.

One of the things we strive to achieve in PHE is a direct understanding of what others want from us and how we can best help them to achieve what matters most to them. A tangible example of this is the annual Cancer Outcomes conference, run by our National Cancer Intelligence Network, which was held in Birmingham on Monday and Tuesday. This brought together more than 550 delegates including patients, carers, clinicians, charities and researchers with a common interest in two things: cancer and using data to improve outcomes. The wealth of good work reported was impressive and appears to be growing year on year. One of the scores of people present who had been personally affected by cancer was the BBC's Robert Peston who covered the conference in his [blog](#) and hosted a lively radio debate – it's not often that PHE gets a mention in the business section! The intelligence networks, of which we will soon have five, are intended to build partnerships around areas of common interest and we use them to ensure our resources are deployed where they can make most difference and in a way that helps others most. This is a deceptively simple but, hopefully, highly effective strategy to achieve both impact and efficiency from a limited resource. The success of the cancer work has already been matched by the child and maternal health and end of life intelligence networks, and early signs are that the new cardiovascular and mental health networks will be equally successful – watch this space.

As the evidence shows, getting active and keeping active are fundamental to good health and wellbeing and nowhere is this taken more seriously than in Hertfordshire where their inspirational Director of Public Health, Jim McManus, has championed an exceptional series of initiatives to encourage people to think and act on their health, diet and lifestyle and levels of physical activity. This is their Year of Cycling and next year will be the Year of Walking. Last month saw 121 referrals to weight management services, more than 400 referrals to smoking cessation, 230 referrals to health checks, 200 opportunistic health checks, the Fire Service has done 475 additional cycle safety checks and there has been an upsurge in school requests for bikeability courses and cycle racks. Jim McManus and Hertfordshire County Council are, quite literally, getting their residents moving and this will translate into improvements in their health and wellbeing.

And finally, profound congratulations to our marketing director Sheila Mitchell and her superb team who earlier this week received a number of national awards from the Institute of Promotional Marketing (two golds, one silver and two bronze) and, last night, they were awarded gold in the prestigious Public Sector Communications Excellence Awards for our Be Clear on Cancer campaign. Our marketing team are recognised by the industry as best in class.

**With best wishes**