



Public Health  
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health



Duncan Selbie  
Chief Executive

## Friday message

Friday 15 May 2015

**Dear everyone**

Along with many of the public health and NHS family, we were devastated to learn of the untimely death of Professor Aidan Halligan. A former Deputy Chief Medical Officer, during his career Aidan held a number of significant and influential roles. He was the driving force behind the Pathway charity which provides specialist support for the homeless and is now operating in ten hospitals across the country. Most recently he went on to devise Well North, a collaboration led by the University of Manchester in partnership with PHE, where he was our Leadership Advisor, and nine, and increasing, local authorities across the North of England. The aim of Well North sums up everything Aidan worked for and believed in – reducing health inequalities and worklessness, a leading cause of poor health, and bringing both hope and opportunity to underserved people and communities. Those who met him will never forget him.

Reframing our local presence around the nine geographies that reflect how local government organises itself is moving at pace and each of the nine Centre Directors (London as a combined Region and Centre) will have communicated with their partners in local government and the NHS. One of our key objectives is to be focused on the priorities that are set by local health and wellbeing boards, bringing evidence and expertise to bear, publishing performance and strengthening transparency on outcomes, and to be of practical utility and relevance in all of our contributions. In effect, we want to be an organisation that strives to provide central support for local action and we know that this depends on building and investing in local relationships, and that whatever we do nationally ultimately expresses itself at local level. This speaks to the heart of how we see our role.

At a national level we are reviewing the products and services we provide to the public health system. These include the health profiles, our spending and outcomes tool, Longer Lives, our Atlases of Variation, evidence-based guidance and service frameworks among many others. We want to ensure these are relevant to local authority and NHS requirements and so we will be introducing a more structured approach to obtaining your feedback and your priorities for future product development. We are also addressing the frequent request for more help in articulating the 'return on investment' from public health interventions and in addition to the Local Government Association and NHS England, we will be involving a range of experts in this, including CIPFA, the third sector and university departments. We understand the imperative to realise cash savings in the local system and investing in prevention is one of the routes to achieving this.

A PHE authored [paper](#) on the potential of climate change to increase tick and mosquito borne diseases in the UK, is now one of the 50 most popular Lancet articles of all time for news and social media interest. This is great science.

And finally, congratulations to our London TB Extended Contact Tracing team, which has received the Nursing Standard award for Public Health Nursing, presented to lead nurse Sarah Murphy. Through a carefully tailored approach to personal care and working across the capital as a whole they are reaching and screening far more people who have been exposed to TB than ever before. People are receiving treatment earlier and this, in turn, is preventing onward transmission – an outstanding example of prevention in action.

**With best wishes**