



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health



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Chief Executive

Friday message

Friday 13 February 2015

Dear everyone

Wednesday saw a landmark vote in Parliament to end, from 1 October this year, people smoking in cars when carrying children. This is a significant and very welcome step forward in protecting children from the dangers of secondhand smoke. To coincide with this, we have begun our Smokefree Homes and Cars campaign, with its range of free support and quitting advice, which shows that 80 per cent of secondhand smoke is invisible so even if you think you are being careful by, for example, leaving the window open, the chemicals are still there causing damage. The aim is to raise public awareness of this change in the law.

I am sharing the most recent MORI [survey](#) of how local government, the NHS and the third sector experience working with PHE, where we are doing well and where we could do better. The findings are very encouraging, with many reporting a further improvement in our working relationship over the last year, with a six per cent improvement in those saying spontaneously that they hold our contribution in high regard. MORI say that this is the most important measure and is most unusual in an organisation so young. Consistent with the recent National Audit Office report, the front line of local government and the NHS are keen to have more practical support from us in making use of our tools and services and in helping them find cashable savings through strengthening our expertise in 'return on investment' and health economics. As you know we are refocusing our work to ensure that this is exactly what we do. I want to thank all who took part and if you have a moment you might have a look at a short video which speaks to the key messages.

Launched at this week's LGA and ADPH annual public health conference, together with NHS England, we published a new [guide](#) to community centred approaches to health and wellbeing. This is packed with examples of the great work being done locally to involve and empower communities, and aims to share best practice and examples of what works so local organisations can learn from each other.

PHE is responsible for the revalidation of over 600 medical consultants in England, an important statutory role in which we oversee the fitness to practise and performance of doctors employed in local authorities and in universities as well as in PHE. At the start of this month we achieved, ahead of time, an important milestone, having completed the revalidation of 50 per cent of those doctors, with the remainder to complete by March 2016. I want to say thank you to the revalidation team for their impressive work in making this happen. PHE is also a pilot site for nurse revalidation and, albeit these are different systems, there is much to be shared between the professions on how to make this a positive experience for the doctors and nurses concerned.

And finally, in partnership with the British Heart Foundation, we are encouraging people to find out the age of their heart, using a new heart age tool – [My Heart Age](#). Heart disease is one of the leading causes of premature death in England, claiming more than 18,000 lives a year. This new digital tool works by inputting simple lifestyle information such as weight and whether you smoke which enables you to see how your 'heart age' compares to your actual age.

With best wishes