



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health



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Chief Executive

Friday message

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Dear everyone

On Wednesday I joined the Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne, Mayor Boris Johnson, Simon Stevens, and Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt together with local health and civic leaders to sign the [health devolution agreement](#) for London. This blueprint sets the stage for the radical transformation of health and social care services across the capital and lays out a clear vision for how partners across the system will work together to improve the health of Londoners. Whilst the agreement sets out plans to take action on a London-wide level, it also identifies five pilot areas which will operate locally and sub-regionally. With prevention as an element of all pilots, they will include the optimal use of planning and licensing powers, the development of an Accountable Care Organisation (ACO), new approaches to collaboration on asset use and integration of health and social care. The London Health Board, chaired by the Mayor, will provide political leadership, oversight and support in implementing the agreement. PHE London has been at the forefront of developing the deal as a member of the London Partners and will continue to provide the relevant evidence and expertise during implementation in the coming months.

Today, the last Friday before Christmas and sometimes colloquially known as Booze Black Friday, will be a challenging day for our emergency services, with an estimated £2.3billion spent on alcohol in bars, pubs and restaurants. Inevitably the festive period sees people drinking more than usual, but in addition to the well-known harms this causes it also means the NHS and police have to deal with more drinking-related emergencies. So taking a post-Christmas break from alcohol is a great way to allow ourselves to recover. Last year over 2 million drinkers had a Dry January and we are again encouraging people to take part in this. The New Year is often a time when people not only resolve to drink less but also to stop smoking. Our Smokefree health harms campaign also launches at the end of this month and runs throughout January, encouraging smokers to quit and offering support to those who are making a quit attempt. Finally, our Change4Life Sugar Smart campaign also launches at the beginning of January which aims to encourage families to eat less sugar (apps can be downloaded [here](#) and [here](#)). It focuses on new guidelines for the maximum amount of sugar recommended each day, shows how a range of everyday food and drinks take children up to or over the daily safe limit and provides easy ideas for how to take control of sugar.

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde have this week changed their smoking policy to allow e-cigarettes within designated parts of their estate and cited our evidence and their own local research as pivotal to this decision. Also this week, the Prime Minister during Prime Minister's Questions, backed the use of e-cigarettes to help people quit smoking, again citing our evidence review. This is an example of evidence into action and it is great to see reasonable, balanced and evidence-based policy making.

And finally, I wish everyone a peaceful and happy Christmas break. I am away with my family from mid next week and my next message will be on 8 January.

With best wishes