



Public Health  
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health



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Chief Executive

## Friday message

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**Dear everyone**

District councils cover almost 40 per cent of the population in England and provide a wide range of services, as well as three key functions which directly influence the public's health: housing, leisure and green spaces. Beyond this they also have a broader role in terms of economic development, planning and community development and these too have a major impact on health. This week the King's Fund has published a [report](#) to help unlock the tremendous potential of district councils and their recommendations focus on three areas: partnership and alignment, health and wider economics, and innovating for outcomes. This is a practical contribution to the drive to achieve place-based, integrated public services and is well worth reading.

Antimicrobial resistance has been in the news this week due to considerable activity around the inaugural World Antibiotic Awareness week, including publication of new research from China and the Lancet report, and it is on the national risk register for the UK as a whole. On Monday we published the second annual [report](#) from our English Surveillance Programme for Antimicrobial Utilisation and Resistance (ESPAUR). This report, describing antibiotic resistance and antibiotic use in England showed that in 2014 consumption of antibiotics increased in both primary and secondary care, though age and sex adjusted prescriptions dispensed in the community have reduced for the last two years. It also showed that between 2010 and 2014 bloodstream infections caused by *Escherichia coli* and *Klebsiella pneumoniae* increased by 15.6% and 20.8% respectively. We now collate all antimicrobial resistance data from over 90% of NHS laboratories and have data from all NHS antibiotic prescriptions. National reporting on this will help NHS commissioners to monitor the prescribing of hospitals and surgeries in their area and see how they compare against a benchmark and will help indicate where action needs to be taken.

Our latest HIV data, also released this week, show that over 18,000 people in the UK remain unaware that they have HIV, increasing the risk of unknowingly passing the infection to others and reducing their own opportunity to benefit from early treatment. PHE has launched an England-wide [HIV home sampling](#) service to encourage those at high risk to get tested as well as new funding for seven innovative local prevention projects. This national home sampling service is a world first. Next week marks National HIV Testing Week and local authorities will be encouraging people to consider their risk and get tested.

The majority of liver disease in England is preventable. It is the only long-term condition that is increasing and at a higher rate than in any other country in Western Europe. This rise in mortality closely mirrors the rise in alcohol consumption and obesity. We have been closely involved in The Lancet's Commission on Addressing Liver Disease in the UK, the first [update](#) on its 2014 report being published today. The findings focus on the importance of prevention, through measures to tackle alcohol misuse, obesity and hepatitis C treatment, tackling variation in risk factors and quality of care, as well as parallel planning for patients in end of life care. These findings will be addressed in our upcoming Liver Framework.

And finally, I continue to visit councils and the local NHS around the country and on Wednesday spent the morning with Bolton Council. Bolton is wholly focused on the interdependencies between good health and having work, a good education, decent housing and companionship and the criticality of economic prosperity in achieving this. They have developed a series of practical interventions such as the Working Well Service which supports the hardest to "reach and hold" back into work. This is an example of a Greater Manchester-wide initiative and is already showing significant results with an expectation of a 20% success rate. This is public health in action.

**With best wishes**