



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health



Duncan Selbie
Chief Executive

Friday message

Friday 24 July 2015

Dear everyone

The risk to the UK from the Ebola outbreak in West Africa has reduced and we have this week [adjusted](#) our port screening arrangements to reflect this. With 90 per cent of those arriving from affected countries going through Heathrow and Gatwick, where we will continue to screen and subsequently monitor high-risk returning workers, with other, low-risk passengers being asked to self-refer, we are now moving, at Birmingham and Manchester airports and St Pancras International, to the same risk assessment arrangements already in place at all other ports of entry in England. I want to say a big thank you to all of our people who have made sure we have met the enhanced screening standards at Birmingham, Manchester and St Pancras day after day for the past nine months and also to our great colleagues in the Border Force who have worked alongside us throughout.

One in two people will develop cancer at some point in their lives, with the number of cases expected to rise to more than 300,000 by 2020. This week the Independent Cancer Taskforce launched its strategy to help England match world-class cancer outcomes. The aim is to achieve a significant reduction in preventable cancers, improvements in survival rates so that the people of England have the same outlook as those in comparable countries, and a transformation in patient experience and quality of life. PHE has contributed throughout to the development of this strategy and we will play our full part in implementing it. The strategy proposes six key priorities for the next five years and the first of these focuses on the need for a radical upgrade in prevention and public health. With concerted action on smoking, alcohol and diet, we can address the four in ten cancers that are preventable and all the misery these bring. PHE additionally has a critical role in promoting public awareness of early signs and symptoms and in providing the data and intelligence on which the NHS depends.

On Tuesday our National Dementia Intelligence Network [published](#) new findings on emergency hospital admissions for people with dementia. The study showed that the number of people with dementia being admitted to hospital in an emergency rose by 48 per cent between 2008 and 2013 and looked at ways in which some of these emergency admissions could have been prevented. Around a fifth relate to potentially preventable acute conditions such as pneumonia and other respiratory infections, which means that with the right care in place further upstream, we could reduce the risk of admission – for example through the proactive management of long-term conditions, early intervention in acute conditions, and developing community-based alternatives to protect older people from slips, trips and falls. This is only the first in a series of dementia data briefings to be published by the Network – watch this space.

The wider public health workforce includes an incredibly varied range of people from social care providers, volunteers, police and fire services to those working in housing, leisure, and education. Together with the Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH), we are determined to ensure they are supported and developed so as to make best use of their collective talents and experience. The RSPH [report](#), *Rethinking the Public Health Workforce*, published this week, identifies a blueprint for action. We are also working with the Local Government Association and other partners on a five year plan to develop the core public health workforce. We are hosting a series of workshops across the country in the autumn and I hope many of you will contribute to these.

With best wishes