

Health E-News Bulletin

Issue 27 - August 2008

Health Improvement - Keeping you informed

Welcome to the monthly issue of the Health E-News Bulletin. We aim to keep you updated with national, regional and local news, events and other relevant information which relates to the six key areas of the Department of Health's White Paper "Choosing Health: Making Healthier Choices Easier". We will also include more broader public health information. This is being produced collaboratively by the Halton & St Helens Health Improvement Library Service, the Primary Care Library, and St Helens Health Partnership.

ALCOHOL

Drinks industry facing tough laws

Ministers have told the drinks industry to act more responsibly or face new laws governing alcohol sales. A review of retailers showed many were not following a voluntary code calling on them to display details on units and to encourage sensible drinking. Ministers have responded by launching a consultation on proposed laws covering happy hours, promotion and labelling. It comes as figures suggest the scale of alcohol-related hospital admissions was much higher than thought.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/7518843.stm>

DH moots new restrictions on alcohol sales

Restrictions including only selling alcohol in small glasses, restricting happy hours and price-based drink promotions and banning alcohol displays at checkouts could be introduced following a consultation on the drinking culture in England. Alcohol manufacturers have been given until the end of the year to put warnings on cans and bottles about the amount of alcohol they contain or a mandatory scheme will be put in place, after a review found some sections of the industry were not following a voluntary code.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_086412

Safe, Sensible, Social - a consultation on further action

Mandatory regulation and labelling could be on the cards for the alcohol industry following a major consultation about England's drinking culture, just launched by the Department of Health.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_086412

Big Drink Debate

Have your say by posting your views on drinking in the Northwest by completing this questionnaire online at: www.nwph.net/alcohol/bigdrinkdebate/intro.aspx

Alcohol & Public Health

See Section: **NEW RESOURCES**

CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

HPV vaccination programme extended

The national vaccination programme against the HPV virus is to be extended to 300,000 girls aged 17 and 18. The programme is in addition to the routine vaccination of 12 and 13-year-old girls and will be followed by a "catch-up" programme to vaccinate girls aged 15-18 in September 2009.

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=374703&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

DCSF publishes 2007 Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has published its [2007 Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey](#). The survey collects information on the key characteristics of providers, the number of places and children attending, staff characteristics and qualifications, training, recruitment and retention issues and income.

<http://www.surestart.gov.uk/events/newsevents/whatsnew/index.cfm?news=387>

More to do to protect children's psychological health and wellbeing

See Section: **MENTAL HEALTH**

PCTs urged to inform parents of children's weight

See Section: **NUTRITION/OBESITY**

DRUGS

Action against steroid abuse and GHB type drugs

People who take drugs to enhance their physical appearance, including those who aspire to take part in the 2012 London Olympics, are being warned against using anabolic steroids as the government has announced its intention to add a further 24 anabolic steroids and two growth promoters to the list of those already classed as Class C drugs.

<http://drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/news-events/latest-news/action-against-steroids>

HEALTH INEQUALITIES/SOCIAL INCLUSION

The health needs of asylum seekers

See Section: **NEW RESOURCES**

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health being neglected in the elderly

Older people's mental health and well-being is being severely neglected, claims a report by the Institute for Public Policy Research. Its report *Older People and Wellbeing* estimates 2.4 million older people have depression and predicts the number with mental health problems will rise dramatically over the next 20 years. This will be driven by an increase in the prevalence of mental health problems across all ages, an ageing population and a rise in the number of carers. Ill health, reduced mobility and living alone all increase the risk of depression.

<http://www.ippr.org.uk/pressreleases/?id=3215>

Report: <http://www.ippr.org.uk/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=620>

Suicide rates at record low - National Institute for Mental Health

The national suicide rate is at its lowest level ever, according to the latest progress report from the National Institute for Mental Health in England. The report says the overall suicide rate in England fell to a three-year average of 8.3 deaths per 100,000, compared with the previous three-year average of 8.5.

<http://www.nimhe.csip.org.uk/our-work/suicide-prevention/annual-report-on-progress-2007.html?keywords=suicide>

Long waiting times for psychological therapies harmful, says mental health report

Mental Health Foundation...Mind...Rethink...Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health...YoungMinds

A group of leading mental health charities has today published a report which says that the lives of those stuck on long NHS waiting lists for psychological treatments are being damaged as a result. Mental health problems can worsen, relationships can break down and some people are forced to take time off from work - or give up a job completely - according to While we are waiting.

<http://www.mind.org.uk/News+policy+and+campaigns/Press/WWAW240708.htm>

New study first to investigate parents' perspectives on adolescent self-harm

Parents of children who self-harm often become aware of the problem long before school or NHS services are involved, prompting experts to call for greater support to help parents understand and cope with self-harm.

<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pressparliament/pressreleases2008/bank2008/prselfharm.aspx>

Study: <http://bjp.rcpsych.org/cgi/reprint/193/2/140>

Frequency and type of childhood abuse may predict suicide attempts in young adults

Children who are repeatedly abused, or are abused by a member of their immediate family, are at higher risk of attempting suicide in later life, a Canadian study has shown. Sexual abuse and, to a lesser extent, physical abuse in childhood have both been associated with suicidality. However, not all individuals who were abused as children go on to attempt suicide. This latest study, published in the August issue of the British Journal of Psychiatry, sheds new light on the indicators of risk for suicide attempt.

<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pressparliament/pressreleases2008/bank2008/prabuse.aspx>

Study: <http://bjp.rcpsych.org/cgi/content/full/193/2/134>

More to do to protect children's psychological health and wellbeing

There have been notable improvements in how services promote and protect the psychological health and wellbeing of our children and young people, but there is still a great deal more to do, according to the interim report from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Review. The Review, Chaired by Jo Davidson, Group Director of Children and Young People's Services at Gloucestershire County Council, has identified six main areas for future recommendations.

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0161

Mental Health and Smoking

See Section: NEW RESOURCES

NUTRITION/OBESITY

Health secretary targets obesity

Health secretary Alan Johnson will tonight call for a national movement to tackle obesity in a speech on public health to the Fabian Society. Mr Johnson will outline the public health implications of the obesity epidemic and argue that the strategy to combat obesity will only succeed if every part of society recognises the problem and joins together to address it.

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=374915&NewsAreaID=2>

PCTs urged to inform parents of children's weight

Starting this September, parents of children who have been weighed and measured at school could automatically receive their child's results to help them achieve a healthy weight. The government is urging primary care trusts to send parents the results of the national child measurement programme. About 40 per cent of primary care trusts have said they intend to automatically contact parents in the next school year and a further 40 per cent will decide when they see the new guidance issued today.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/PublicHealth/HealthImprovement/HealthyLiving/DH_073787

More catering companies commit to healthier food

More of the UK's workplace caterers have made commitments to provide healthier food, lower in salt, saturated fat and sugar. These agreements, which add to undertakings made by some of the biggest contract caterers and suppliers earlier this year, will result in a positive impact on more than one and a half million meals served in workplaces every day. Food eaten in the workplace increasingly makes up an important part of our daily diet. The Agency is therefore working with a range of catering companies to improve the nutritional content of food eaten out of the home and to encourage companies to provide clear and easy to understand nutritional information.

<http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2008/jul/catcom2>

Shops get fruit and veg sale help

Corner shops in deprived areas of England are to be given money to help boost sales of fruit and vegetables. The Department of Health scheme comes after a similar project has helped increase sales in Scotland. Some £200,000 will be provided in the first year to pilot it in the North East before being expanded nationally.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/7556850.stm>

Clumsy young 'face obesity risk'

Clumsy and poorly co-ordinated children could be at higher risk of obesity in later life, a study says. Researchers found youngsters who performed least well in tests assessing cognitive and physical function were far more likely to be obese aged 33. Experts suggested it was likely such children shied away from sport. The research, published online by the British Medical Journal, was based on tests involving more than 11,000 people.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/7557028.stm>

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Keep on running

"Running can slow the effects of ageing and give older people a new lease of life", the Daily Mail reported. It said that researchers have found that runners are half as likely to die prematurely as non-runners, that they remain fit and active for longer, and are less likely to suffer from cancer, heart disease and neurological disorders. These findings come from a well-conducted study of middle-aged and older runners. Despite some limitations, this study reinforces the idea that exercise helps you to live longer and to keep able-bodied. Vigorous exercise such as running may not be suitable for all people, and those who wish to start, but have specific health concerns (for example, high blood pressure or obesity), should take advice from their doctor. Those who are unable to perform vigorous activity can consider low-impact activity as an alternative.

<http://www.nhs.uk/news/2008/08August/Pages/Keeponrunning.aspx>

SEXUAL HEALTH/HIV/AIDS

New HIV infections in decline, report reveals

There have been significant gains in preventing new HIV infections in a number of heavily affected countries, according to a new report. The UNAIDS 2008 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic found that condom use is increasing among young people with multiple partners in many countries.

http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/HIVData/GlobalReport/2008/2008_Global_report.asp

HIV prevention services should be targeted, survey shows

A survey of Africans in England has found that targeted HIV prevention services are needed to improve people's confidence and skills to avoid passing on or getting HIV. The survey of more than 4,000 African people revealed that one in five were unaware that effective treatment for HIV exists and more than a third did not know these treatments work better the earlier they are taken. Those questioned also widely believed that having HIV could be a reason for deportation from the UK.

<http://www.sigmaresearch.org.uk/go.php/projects/african/project39/>

TOBACCO

Mental Health and Smoking

See Section: **NEW RESOURCES**

OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

National MMR vaccine catch-up campaign launched

The Department of Health is making extra vaccine and more funds available to help local health trusts start a campaign to vaccinate every child up to the age of 18 against measles.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Recentstories/DH_086861

Action to reduce risk of measles epidemic

The Health Protection Agency welcomes the Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) MMR catch up programme, which urges Primary Care Trusts and GPs to identify individuals not up to date with their MMR and offer catch-up immunisation to reduce the risk of a measles epidemic. Latest modelling research carried out by the Agency, examining the potential for measles transmission in England, suggests that there is now a real risk of a large measles outbreak of between approximately 30,000 to 100,000 cases - the majority in London.

http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1218093967161?p=1204186170287

Extra money to help more mums breastfeed

An extra £2 million will be invested to help more women in England breastfeed, Public Health Minister Dawn Primarolo announced. The extra funding, announced during World Breastfeeding Week will help improve the UK's breastfeeding rate, which is among the lowest in Europe, and in particular help mums in deprived areas.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Recentstories/DH_086790

Another sign that breast is best

"Babies who are breastfed have lower cholesterol levels in later life", the Daily Express reports. It says that researchers who reviewed the histories of 4,608 children given formula milk and 12,890 breastfed children found that in adulthood, those who were breastfed had a

lower overall level of cholesterol. This story was based on a review that combined the results of several studies on infant feeding practices and cholesterol levels in adult life.

<http://www.nhs.uk/news/2008/08August/Pages/Anothersignthatbreastisbest.aspx>

NEW RESOURCES

NHS launches online pregnancy care planner

The NHS's first online maternity guide offering information on pregnancy and birth has been launched. The pregnancy care planner is designed to provide advice on all aspects of pregnancy and comparative guides on what is on offer at local maternity units.

<http://www.nhs.uk/planners/pregnancyplanner/Pages/Before.aspx>

The Faculty of Public Health – Latest Publications Mental Health and Smoking

People with mental health problems have higher levels of smoking, which is responsible for a large proportion of the excess mortality of people with mental illness. This statement highlights the health inequalities faced by people with mental health problems who smoke. It then sets out what needs to happen to ensure that people with mental health problems who smoke are given adequate support to quit, and that their physical health protected.

http://www.fph.org.uk/resources/AtoZ/ps_mental_health_and_smoking.pdf

Alcohol and Public Health

This briefing describes the association between alcohol (and its misuse) and violence. It summarises the impact on individuals and society, as well as outlines the distinctive contribution public health can make to tackling this issue.

http://www.fph.org.uk/resources/AtoZ/ps_alcohol.pdf

The health needs of asylum seekers

This briefing gives an overview of the issues faced by asylum seekers and the health and social care organisations that care for them. It summarises the impact on individuals and the NHS within the context of the asylum process.

http://www.fph.org.uk/resources/AtoZ/bs_asylum_seeker_health.pdf

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL HEALTH EVENTS 2008 – September

For a full list of Health Events and links please visit:

<http://www.equip.nhs.uk/staffwm/healthevents.html>

OTHER LOCAL E-BULLETINS.

ChaMPS Public Health Network Bulletin

ChaMPS is your public health network for Cheshire and Merseyside PCTs, NHS Acute Trusts, local authorities and wider health organisations. If you would like to know more about joining ChaMPS and receiving this bulletin contact Viv Martindale, ChaMPS Network Administrator on 0151 643 5369 or email vivienne.martindale@bwwpct.nhs.uk

Cheshire & Merseyside New Documents Bulletin

A weekly review of new documents produced collaboratively by primary care librarians across Cheshire & Merseyside. Contact the Primary Care Library on 0151 676 5650 or email library.pct@sthk.nhs.uk if you would like to receive this bulletin.

Your Comments

The content of this bulletin highlights recent articles and/or documents appearing on a selection of websites, which we feel may be of interest to the wider health improvement area. All links are correct at the time of publishing. If you have any comments or suggestions about the Bulletin or would like to forward an item or news of an event, we would love to hear from you. Please forward this bulletin on to people who might otherwise not receive it. Contact lynda.moss@hsthpct.nhs.uk.

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