

Health E-News Bulletin

Issue 29 - October 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

Alcohol Profile for the Liverpool City Region

The North West Public Health Observatory (NWPHO) provided up-to-date, evidence-based research support to the Liverpool City Region Health is Wealth Commission, which was established to examine the growing gap between the City Region's booming economic performance and its worsening public health status and to look at why this might be happening, and to make recommendations as to what might be done to help improve the situation. One of the Commission's key themes was alcohol, and so NWPHO produced this summary report profiling the impact of alcohol-related harm in the area to assist the Commission in producing such recommendations.

<http://www.nwph.net/nwpho/Publications/Alcohol%20Profile%20for%20the%20Liverpool%20City%20Region.pdf>

WHO calls for evidence on alcohol strategy

The World Health Organisation is to hold a public hearing on its global strategy to combat the harmful use of alcohol. The one-month, web-based hearing will begin today and end on 31 October.

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/notes/2008/np10/en/index.html>

Submissions: http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/activities/hearing/en/index.html

CANCER

Cancer may be linked to wealth, study finds

An analysis of more than 3,000 cancer patients has found cervical and lung cancer are more common in poor people and breast cancer and melanoma higher in the wealthy. The findings from the North West Cancer Intelligence Service and the UK Association of Cancer Registries are published in the BMC Cancer journal.

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2407/8/271/abstract>

Older women unaware of higher breast cancer risk

Many older women, who are no longer routinely invited for breast screening, are not aware that increasing age is a major risk factor for the disease – according to a report published in the [British Journal of Cancer](#). In a national survey, researchers sent questionnaires to more than 700 British women aged between 67 and 73 to find out what they knew about breast cancer symptoms, their awareness of their personal risk of developing breast cancer and how confident they were of detecting any breast change.

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/news/archive/pressreleases/2008/october/479872>

King's Fund welcomes free prescriptions for cancer patients

The King's Fund has welcomed Prime Minister Gordon Brown's announcement that he will scrap prescription charges for cancer patients from April 2009, and subsequently for all patients with long-term conditions. It said moves in Scotland and Wales towards free prescriptions had "clearly piled on the political pressure".

http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/media/the_kings_fund_2.html

CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

Young children should not be given Ritalin - NICE

Ritalin should not be routinely prescribed for children and should never be given to those under five, the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence has advised. Training for parents and education programmes should be offered before any other treatment, the guidelines say.

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=byID&o=12061>

Children's continuing care plans published

The Department of Health today outlined proposals to improve the quality of care for children with complex, long-term health needs. The plans are contained in the consultation on the national framework for assessing children's continuing care.

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/NationalServiceFrameworks/Children/index.htm>

Government launches new UK Council for child internet safety

Some of the biggest names from industry and charities have joined forces with the Government, parents and young people to help keep children safe online, Children's Secretary Ed Balls and Home Secretary Jacqui Smith announced. The new UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) will unite over 100 organisations from the public and private sector working with Government to deliver recommendations from Dr Tanya Byron's report 'Safer Children in a Digital World'. Reporting directly to the Prime Minister, the Council will help to improve the regulation and education around internet use, tackling problems around online bullying, safer search features, and violent video games.

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0215

Article defending the Government's position on smacking

By the Rt Hon Beverley Hughes MP, Minister for Children, Young People and Families
Some colleagues and children's organisations are arguing that children 'enjoy less protection than prisoners' because parents are allowed to smack their children and that any form of physical punishment, such as a mild smack, is tantamount to an act of violence. Not only is this not true – as I will explain – it fails to acknowledge the real problems for families, including children, that a ban on smacking would entail. Let me be clear: we do not encourage or condone smacking and we do not believe that it is the best means of controlling children's behaviour. But neither do we support a ban which would make smacking a crime.

<http://www.surestart.gov.uk/events/newsevents/whatsnew/index.cfm?news=402>

Brook uncovers public ignorance over teenage pregnancy

Leading sexual health charity Brook has announced shocking figures revealing the extent of the general public's misunderstanding of the UK's teenage pregnancy rate. 95% of people over-estimate the rate of under-16s who get pregnant each year and the same amount are unaware of the significant drop in this figure over the last decade

http://www.brook.org.uk/content/M7_TPPOLL_SEP2008.asp

NHS Immunisation Statistics, England 2007-08

See Section: **NEW RESOURCES**

Anxiety UK launches free childhood anxiety resources

See Section: **NEW RESOURCES**

Healthy school dinners for primary pupils

See Section: **NUTRITION/OBESITY**

Case for universal free school meals now clear

See Section: **NUTRITION/OBESITY**

DRUGS

Substance misuse agency celebrates drug treatment figures

More than 202,000 people were recorded as receiving drug treatment in 2007-08, according to figures published today by the National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse.

More than 82,000 people started treatment in 2007-08, of whom more than 78 per cent remained in structured treatment for 12 weeks.

<http://www.nta.nhs.uk/>

Addaction launches campaign to raise support for drug and alcohol treatment

Addaction launches a major awareness raising campaign for drug and alcohol treatment in the UK. The charity's campaign confronts the perception of substance misuse treatment as an unfashionable cause to support. It features adverts and online content telling four true stories of how drug and alcohol addiction has impacted individuals and families under the strap line 'Unfashionable, Not Unimportant'. The appeal has been launched in response to the scale of drug and alcohol addiction among young people in the UK. Statistics from the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) indicate that the UK has among the highest levels of drug use by under 18's in Europe.

http://www.drugscope.org.uk/newsandevents/currentnewspages/Addaction_Awareness.htm

See also: http://www.addaction.org.uk/?page_id=1293

Tougher action on cannabis

The Home Secretary, Jacqui Smith, has confirmed that repeat cannabis offenders will face tougher penalties. People caught carrying cannabis for a second time could now face an on-the-spot fine of £80 instead of a warning. This was announced alongside a Parliamentary Order to reclassify the drug to Class B from 26 January 2009.

<http://drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/news-events/latest-news/tougher-action-cannabis>

MENTAL HEALTH

Children's mental health services 'inadequate'

Young people with mental health problems are receiving inappropriate and inadequate care on adult wards because of a continuing shortage of hospital beds and facilities for people under 18, a report by the Children's Commissioner for England says.

<http://www.11million.org.uk/resource/m8vtedhs9cbqx3aid5stkdrk.pdf>

New website to help employers access the most appropriate information about mental health and employment

A new website is being launched today by [Shift](#), the national anti-stigma initiative, and Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health to help employers navigate the wealth of advice, and

resources on managing mental health in the workplace. The website www.shift.org.uk/reviewpanel gives immediate and easy access to the work of an Independent Review Panel set up a year ago to 'quality check' materials designed to help employers to manage mental health and promote mental wellbeing at work. http://www.scmh.org.uk/news/2008_new_website_mh_at_work.aspx

Landmark report published on World Mental Health Day (10 October 2008)

Health Secretary Alan Johnson today welcomed publication of a landmark international report, which highlights that mental health services in England are leading the way in Europe. http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Recentstories/DH_089091

Anxiety UK launches free childhood anxiety resources

See Section: **NEW RESOURCES**

NUTRITION/OBESITY

Healthy school dinners for primary pupils

Primary school children in deprived areas will be given free healthy school meals in a £20m drive to cut obesity and get young people eating more healthily, health secretary Alan Johnson and children's secretary Ed Balls announced yesterday. Local authorities in deprived areas are being invited to bid to take part in a two-year pilot that will investigate whether free school meals reduce obesity, change home eating habits and improve health. http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0212

Case for universal free school meals now clear

Responding to the positive evaluation of free school meals in Scotland, and a commitment by the Scottish Government to implement universal free school meals for primary 1 to 3 pupils, Kate Green, Chief Executive of the Child Poverty Action Group comments. <http://www.cpag.org.uk/press/021008.htm>

Healthy weight, healthy lives: A toolkit for developing local strategies

See Section: **NEW RESOURCES**

OLDER PEOPLE

Age Concern seeks views on older people's care

Age Concern is seeking views on how to improve the quality of care and support for older people. Their online survey of providers, commissioners and other experts working in the NHS and social care is designed to feed into the government's forthcoming green paper. http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=c_2bXanPk_2bsSBGjifHs9AiQTA_3d_3d

SEXUAL HEALTH/HIV/AIDS

HIV exposure guidance published

Updated guidance on how to handle exposure to HIV has been published by the Department of Health.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_088185?IdcService=GET_FILE&dID=172776&Rendition=Web

Brook uncovers public ignorance over teenage pregnancy

See Section: **CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE**

Terrence Higgins Trust launch new website

See Section: **NEW RESOURCES**

TOBACCO

Tobacco products to get picture warnings

Graphic picture warnings will be introduced on tobacco products from 1 October, chief medical officer Sir Liam Donaldson has announced. The Department of Health said smokers were more likely to remember the damage they are doing to their health if they have seen a picture.

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=379901&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

Smuggled tobacco kills four times more people than all illicit drugs combined

Four times more people die from the effects of smuggled tobacco than from all illicit drugs combined, according to an article published in the British Medical Journal. An international team of tobacco control experts, led by Cancer Research UK's director of tobacco studies Professor Robert West, suggest that four thousand deaths could be prevented in the UK each year if smuggling was abolished.

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/news/archive/pressreleases/2008/october/smuggled-tobacco-kills-more>

Article: http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/short/337/oct09_2/a1933

New Report Calls for Action to Protect Young People and Curb Tobacco Marketing

The annual cost of smoking to the NHS in England has soared from £1.7 billion a year in 1998 to £2.7 billion this year. Presented at the NCRI conference today the figures are included in a major new report, 'Beyond Smoking Kills' published by Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), in collaboration with the British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research UK and endorsed by over 100 health and welfare organisations. The cost of smoking to the NHS would have risen even more – to more than £3 billion a year - if Government action, health education and changing social attitudes had not led over the last decade to a fall in the total number of smokers from nearly 12 million to just over 9 million

http://www.ash.org.uk/ash_eyhkg96u.htm

OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

MRSA infections down, Health Protection Agency reports

MRSA infection rates have dropped by 14 per cent, according to figures from the Health Protection Agency. The latest figures for MRSA bloodstream infections show there were 836 cases reported in England between April and June 2008, representing a 14 per cent decrease on the previous quarter and a 36 reduction from the corresponding quarter of 2007.

<http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&Page&HPAwebAutoListName/Page/1191942126522?p=1191942126522>

Patient information consultation begins

Connecting for Health has launched a consultation on the use of patient information. It wants the public and health professionals to give their views on the use of patient information for purposes such as health research and managing and planning care.

<http://www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk/systemsandservices/research/consultation>

Flu information campaign announced

This year's flu immunisation communications campaign begins on 1 October and will focus on people under 65 with long-term conditions as well as those aged 65 and over.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/PublicHealth/Flu/Flugeneralinformation/DH_4087158

Health Protection Agency begins winter influenza activity reporting

This week the Health Protection Agency (HPA) resumes its surveillance of flu activity for the winter season across the UK; flu surveillance usually runs from October to May. Regular

updates will be published on the Agency's website and depending on the level of flu activity these will be available either weekly or fortnightly.

http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1223019389441?p=1204186170287

New guidelines for doctors on reporting convictions

The General Medical Council has published revised guidance clarifying doctors' duty to report criminal offences and related matters such as anti-social behaviour orders to their regulator. It follows increased police powers to issue fixed penalty notices rather than criminal charges.

<http://www.gmc-uk.org/news/index.asp#ethicalupdate>

UK government launches global health strategy

A strategy setting out how the UK government will work with the World Health Organisation and EU to improve world health has been launched. The strategy identifies health security, strong and fair health systems, more effective international health organisations, freer and fairer trade and stronger use of evidence as areas for action.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/International/DH_072715

NEW RESOURCES

Patient safety campaign launches web resources

The Patient Safety First Campaign has launched a website with resources for trusts that have signed up to its patient safety initiative. The site includes a set of How-to guides detailing recommended interventions and measurement.

<http://www.patientsafetyfirst.nhs.uk>

Healthy weight, healthy lives: A toolkit for developing local strategies

This toolkit is intended as a resource to help those working at local level to plan, coordinate and implement comprehensive strategies to prevent and manage overweight and obesity. This toolkit has been designed to follow on from Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: Guidance for local areas and to provide further support for developing a local strategy to tackle overweight and obesity. It is primarily aimed at commissioners of public health services in both primary care trusts and local authorities.

http://www.fph.org.uk/resources/AtoZ/toolkit_obesity/default.asp

Anxiety UK launches free childhood anxiety resources

Anxiety UK, Britain's largest anxiety disorders charity, is today launching a DVD and booklet dealing with the huge, and often overlooked, issue of anxiety in childhood. This announcement comes the day after Professor Al Aynsley-Green, the children's commissioner for England has said there is "some way to go" to improve NHS care for mentally ill children.

<http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/information/news/?EntryId17=64693>

NHS Immunisation Statistics, England 2007-08

The number of people who are immunised against childhood diseases by their first, second and fifth birthday, over 65s immunised against influenza and immunisation against tuberculosis (BCG) for young babies and older people at greatest risk.

[http://www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/health-and-lifestyles/immunisation/nhs-immunisation-statistics-england-2007-08-\[ns\]](http://www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/health-and-lifestyles/immunisation/nhs-immunisation-statistics-england-2007-08-[ns])

New website to help employers access the most appropriate information about mental health and employment

See Section: **MENTAL HEALTH**

Terrence Higgins Trust launch new website

“What Next” for people just diagnosed with HIV.

<http://whatnext.tht.org.uk/>

LOCAL & NATIONAL EVENTS/COURSES

GO Campaign in St Helens

A free Health MOT available for men over 40 in this area. The MOTs are a good chance to meet one-to-one with our friendly staff to discuss any health worries that may concern you. To book your free session phone 01744 697433.

Target: Wellbeing – St Helens

There are 8 projects in St Helens that have been funded through The Target Wellbeing funding until 2012. The aim of these projects is to increase exercise, encourage healthier eating and promote mental wellbeing. For further information contact 01744 697432.

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL HEALTH EVENTS 2008 – November

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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Health Improvement Network

If you would like to become a member of the Health Improvement Network or find out more information about the Network, please contact Linda Gittens on 01744 697433 or email lindagittens@sthelens.gov.uk.