

Health E-News Bulletin

Issue 15 - August 2007

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 Health Improvement Library, the Primary Care Library, St Helens Health Partnership and Halton Health Promotion Service.

ALCOHOL

Cut drink-drive limit, says BMA

Doctors' leaders in Wales have renewed calls for a reduction in the permitted blood alcohol level for driving. The British Medical Association wants to see the maximum level reduced from 80mg per 100ml to 50mg to help reduce the number of lives damaged by drink-drivers. http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/Drinkinganddriving?OpenDocument&Highlight=2,drink_driving

Booze boosts bowel cancer risk

Drinking a daily pint of beer or a large glass of wine increases your risk of bowel cancer by around 10 per cent – according to a new report by Cancer Research UK. And the more you drink the more the risk increases. Almost half a million people in 10 European countries were quizzed on their drinking habits as part of the EPIC study which is funded by Cancer Research UK, the Medical Research Council and other European agencies. The report, published online in the International Journal of Cancer, found that people who drink 15 grams of alcohol a day - equivalent to about two units - have about a 10 per cent increased risk of bowel cancer.

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/news/pressreleases/2007/july/345512>

Abstract:

<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/abstract/114294429/ABSTRACT>

Reference to online article:

Lifetime and baseline alcohol intake and risk of colon and rectal cancers in the European prospective investigation into cancer and nutrition (EPIC)

International Journal of Cancer

Published online ahead of print, 19th July 2007

CANCER

People are worrying unnecessarily about hereditary cancer, says Cancerbackup

People are worrying unnecessarily about cancer running in their family because they don't realise that only a small number of cancers are hereditary - 90 per cent occur by chance. A staggering 91 per cent of people surveyed in a Cancerbackup poll on Genes Reunited's website, thought that if one of their relatives had cancer, they are at a greater risk than average of getting it themselves. In actual fact in the majority of cases this would not significantly increase someone's risk at all.

<http://www.cancerbackup.org.uk/News/Mediacentre/Pressreleasesstatements/2007/8258203>

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Sunbathers know risks, survey reveals

Sunbathers who plan to get burnt on the beach know that they are permanently damaging their skin, according to the results of a survey by Cancer Research UK. The survey also showed that 40 per cent of those prepared to burn believed getting sunburnt was part of the tanning process.

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/healthyliving/sunsmart/>

Sunburn, smoking, alcohol and obesity fuelling rising cancer rates

New statistics from Cancer Research UK reveal steep rises in cancers linked to excessive sun exposure, alcohol, smoking and obesity.

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/news/pressreleases/2007/august/348735>

CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

Ban all baby milk ads, report demands

A report produced by the National Childbirth Trust, Save the Children and UNICEF is calling for a complete ban on advertising formula milk. The organisations say marketing baby formula milk undermines those who want to breastfeed and leaves many parents confused about how to feed their baby.

<http://www.nct.org.uk/files/downloads/formulaadvertising.pdf>

New head lice guidance published

The Department of Health has published guidance on the detection and treatment of head lice. The leaflet replaces guidance published in 2005.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_077269

Government announces £4bn for Sure Start, Early Years and Childcare

The Government today underlined its determination to improve life for disadvantaged children in England, with a cash injection of more than £4bn to children's centres, early years education and childcare.

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2007_0144

New Youth Facilities for every Community - Government Launches Ten Year Youth Strategy

Young people will have access to new and improved youth facilities in every community under plans unveiled today in the Government's Ten Year Youth Strategy.

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2007_0141

Fresh help for teenage mothers, young fathers and their children

Helping young families cope with the demands of parenthood and reach their full potential is a priority for Government, according to a strategy published today. The Department for Children, Schools and Families strategy for reducing the numbers of teenage pregnancies has already proved a success – with under 18 conception rates down by 11.8% and at their lowest level for 20 years. While continuing the drive to accelerate this reduction, we want to ensure that teenage parents receive the support they need to make successful futures for themselves and their children, and avoid repeat pregnancies in their teenage years.

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2007_0136

Extended Schools - £1 Billion Boost

Every child will be able to access breakfast clubs, out-of-hours tuition and after-school clubs in sport, music and drama as Ed Balls today announced a massive investment of more than £1 billion in the extended schools programme over the next three years.

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2007_0140

New Hib booster catch-up programme announced.

Following advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), a Hib booster will be offered to young children who have not previously received one, so that these children are protected in line with older and younger children. The Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) vaccination catch-up programme, which will start on 10 September 2007 and continue until 3 March 2009.

<http://www.immunisation.nhs.uk/newsitem.php?id=72>

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

New weapon in fight against childhood obesity

Schools in deprived areas are to be given 45,000 pedometers to encourage children to get active. Public health minister Dawn Primarolo says she hopes the move will help tackle rising obesity levels.

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=299055&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

Five hours of sport a week for every child

A £100m campaign to give every child the chance of five hours of sport every week was announced by the Prime Minister, Gordon Brown. He called for a 'united team effort' in the run up to 2012 to make sport a part of every child's day to build a greater sporting nation and a fitter nation. He wants schools, parents, volunteers, coaches and the sports world to offer the equivalent of an hour of sport to every child, every day of the school week.

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2007_0128

Helping keep your child safe in sport

A guidance leaflet for parents and carers which provides advice to help them ask the right questions about important child protection measures that sports providers should have in place, wherever and whatever their child participates in.

<http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/8039E519-B5AD-483E-BF64-66641B639B03/0/safeinsport.pdf>

St Helens Active Challenge/Corporate Cup - See Events Section

DRUGS

Public must be warned of cannabis dangers, says charity

Mental health campaigners are calling for more public information on the dangers of cannabis following a study on the long-term effects of the drug. Research published in medical journal The Lancet has found that using cannabis increases an individual's risk of developing a psychotic illness by more than 40 per cent. Mental health charity Rethink director of public affairs Paul Corry said: 'Rather than focusing its attention on the reclassification debate, the government would do well to crack on with the more important job of informing the public about the health implications.'

http://www.rethink.org/how_we_can_help/news_and_media/press_releases/rethinks_position_o.html

Research link:

Cannabis use and risk of psychotic or affective mental health outcomes: a systematic review
The Lancet - Vol. 370, Issue 9584, 28 July 2007, Pages 319-328

Cannabis harms lungs more than tobacco, research reveals

Smoking a single cannabis joint has the same effect on the lungs as smoking up to five cigarettes at once, scientists have claimed. Research published in the journal Thorax says cannabis damages the large airways of the lungs, blocking airflow and forcing the lungs to work harder.

<http://www.lunguk.org/news.asp#299>

Research link:

<http://thorax.bmj.com/cgi/content/abstract/thx.2006.077081v1>

This is an abstract only.

Drugs: Our Community, Your Say

Investing a further £5.65 million in drugs education will boost our efforts to drive down drug misuse, Home Secretary Jacqui Smith said today as she launched the country's largest ever public consultation on tackling drugs. The current drug strategy, which has delivered a 24% fall in drug use among young people since 1998, is due to end in March 2008.

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/Tackling-Drugs.pdf?view=Binary>

DrugScope responds to launch of drug strategy consultation

Leading drug charity DrugScope today welcomed the launch of Drugs: our community, your say, the Home Office consultation paper on the future of the UK drug strategy. DrugScope chief executive Martin Barnes responded to the launch: "DrugScope welcomes the consultation and the commitment to an open debate about the ways forward for the next drug strategy. However, discussion about drugs often generates more heat than light with conflicting views and opinions, so it is crucial that policy is grounded in evidence of what works best and not swayed by media or populist opinion".

<http://www.drugscope.org.uk/ourwork/pressoffice/pressreleases/Drug-strat-consul-launch.htm>

HEALTH INEQUALITIES/SOCIAL INCLUSION

Public attitudes to economic inequality

A review of public attitudes to economic inequality, poverty and redistribution. Economic inequality in the UK stands at historically high levels and there is emerging evidence that a high level of inequality may cause socio-economic problems. However, little is known about public attitudes on this issue.

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/2080-attitudes-economic-inequality.pdf>

MENTAL HEALTH

Mums more depressed in the North

A survey of mothers has found that the further north mums live, the more likely they are to suffer from post-natal depression. The survey, carried out by parenting support and information website Netmums, found that mothers in Scotland and northern England were significantly more likely to be suffering from post-natal depression than those in the South.
<http://www.netmums.com/h/n/SUPPORT/HOME//656//>

Dementia strategy announced

The government has announced plans to produce a national dementia strategy. The strategy will aim to improve awareness of the condition among professionals and the public and tackle stigma and misunderstandings, improve early diagnosis and intervention, and improve quality of care for people with dementia. The programme, which is expected to take a year to complete, will be led by Sube Banjeree, professor of mental health and ageing at the Institute of Psychiatry, and Jenny Owen, Essex county council executive director of adults, health and community well-being.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Policyandguidance/Healthandsocialcaretopics/Olderpeopleservices/DH_077211

Research backs talking therapies

The economic case for investing in talking therapies has been highlighted in research published by mental health charity Rethink. Staff at King's College London and the London School of Economics have written a review of the cost-effectiveness of talking therapies and initiatives to reduce mental health stigma and discrimination. The Next Lap: taking mental health to the finishing line suggests that computerised cognitive behavioural therapy and helping people with psychosis early on can result in significant savings.

http://www.rethink.org/how_we_can_help/news_and_media/press_releases/new_research_s_hows_e.html

Eleven more areas set to benefit from talking therapy projects

New Mental Health Minister Ivan Lewis in his first major announcement, signalled the Government's commitment to lead a radical change in the way mental health services are delivered. He today gave the go-ahead for eleven new projects which will allow people with anxiety and depression better access to psychological therapies.

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=303898&NewsAreaID=2&Navi gatedFromDepartment=False>

Older people not receiving enough mental health support

More than 3.5 million older people with mental health problems are not receiving enough services or support, according to an independent inquiry supported by Age Concern. The UK Inquiry into Mental Health and Well-Being in Later Life says one in four people over 65 are suffering from depression and one in five over 80 suffer dementia, but are often ignored by services which have little understanding of their needs. There are also poor levels of services for people with long-standing severe mental health problems such as schizophrenia.

<http://www.mhilli.org/documents/Inquiryfinalreport-FULLREPORT.pdf>

NUTRITION/OBESITY

Consumers can afford healthy food, report claims

People are not being priced out of healthy eating and there is no significant link between income and dietary patterns, a report claims. The Food Standards Agency's Low Income

Diet and Nutrition Survey found that diet-related problems were generally consistent across the population regardless of budget.

<http://www.food.gov.uk/science/dietarysurveys/lidnsbranch/>

SEXUAL HEALTH

Young people fuel rise in STI rates

Diagnoses of sexually transmitted infections in genitourinary medicine clinics rose by 2 per cent in 2006, according to figures from the Health Protection Agency. Rates of diagnosis were highest in women aged 16-19 years and men aged 20-24 years. Chlamydia was the most commonly diagnosed infection and diagnoses of first episode genital warts and genital herpes continued to rise, by 3 per cent and 9 per cent respectively in 2006.

http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hiv_and_sti/epidemiology/datatables2006.htm

Not enough condom talk with new partners, says charity

People, regardless of age, struggle to discuss using condoms with a new sexual partner, a survey by the FPA has found. The survey found that 39 per cent of people said they did not find it easy, of which 70 per cent said it was embarrassing and 42 per cent said it was a turn-off. A third of all those surveyed said they regretted not using a condom with a new partner in the past.

<http://www.fpa.org.uk/news/press/current/detail.cfm?contentid=746>

TOBACCO

DoH publicises ban on tobacco sales to under 18s

The Department of Health has launched a campaign to raise awareness of a change to the age at which people can buy tobacco. From 1 October, the law will be changed to raise the age of sale for tobacco from 16 to 18 in England and Wales. The move is part of efforts to reduce smoking rates among young people. DoH figures reveal that 9 per cent of 11-15 year olds in England are smokers. It follows the introduction of legislation banning smoking in public places, which came into effect in Wales on 2 April and England on 1 July. Health secretary Alan Johnson announced the change in the age of sale earlier this month.

<http://www.tobaccoagechange.co.uk/>

Smokefree England - one month on

97 per cent of premises inspected in the two weeks after 1 July were smokefree as required by the new law, data published today by the Department of Health reveals.

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=305420&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Donaldson publishes annual report on public health

Chief medical officer Sir Liam Donaldson has published his annual report for 2006. On the State of Public Health calls for action in five key areas: improving hand hygiene in hospitals; tackling the present crisis in organ shortages; reducing the risk of radiation overdoses; conducting more research into why 500 babies die each year despite starting the process of birth apparently healthy; taking steps to increase the number of women in senior positions in medicine.

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Aboutus/MinistersandDepartmentLeaders/ChiefMedicalOfficer/index.htm>

C difficile rates continue to rise as MRSA falls

Statistics published by the Health Protection Agency show an increase of 22 per cent in reported cases of Clostridium difficile. This is an increase on the previous quarter but the Department of Health says it is in line with seasonal rises in infection and results for the same period last year. MRSA bloodstream infections showed a 6.4 per cent fall on the previous quarter, the third time the figure has fallen.

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=302372&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

Pandemic flu strategy published

A review of clinical measures to tackle pandemic flu has been published by the Department of Health. It covers the use of antiviral drugs, vaccines, antibiotics and avian viruses.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_077276

Looking ahead to local involvement networks

Minister calls on NHS and local government to help empower patients

New minister for patient empowerment, Ann Keen, has called on the NHS and local government to give more people a greater say over local health and social care services. Launching two new resources to help both the NHS and local authorities prepare for replacement of the current system of patient forums with Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) next year, Health Minister Ann Keen, said: "Services get better when they listen to the people that use them and respond to what they want. We know that the vast majority of people think that having a say in local health and social services is important, but we need more people to take an active role. For this to happen, getting involved must be simple and convenient.

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=305981&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

NEW RESOURCES

Depresja – a new Polish translation of the depression leaflet

<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinformation/languages/polish.aspx>

Green Spaces in St Helens on You Tube

The sights and sounds of St Helens are being used to tackle ill health and promote a positive sense of well being. The 'Healthy Hearts and Minds' campaign promoting the health benefits of green spaces in St Helens has been launched on You Tube. The short film footage features breathtaking images of local beauty spots in St Helens and has been featured on Health TV in GP surgeries and Health Centres across St Helens, and is now available to download free of charge on You Tube – an online video platform that allows people all across the world to easily upload and share video clips.

To view the footage copy the following address into your browser address bar:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HrVk3gUujwY>

For further information about the campaign please contact Mark Swift, Health Improvement Specialist – Mental Health & Wellbeing

Email: markswift@sthelens.gov.uk Tel: 01744 697433

“Don't Walk Away and Let a Friend Die” Campaign

Steve Evans, a Paramedic in the North West Ambulance Service is running a campaign to encourage young people to stay and help an unconscious friend, by giving first aid and then

calling an ambulance. You can get details of the campaign as well as a campaign poster by visiting:

<http://www.nwas.nhs.uk/Internet/Portals/0/docs/patient/Don't%20Walk%20Away.pdf>

HEALTH EVENTS 2007 – SEPTEMBER

Sep 1-30	Pregnancy Health Month Ph: 08707 70 70 70 Fax: 08707 70 70 75 Email: mailbox@tommys.org www.tommys.org	Sep 15-22	National Eczema Week Ph: 020 7281 3553 Fax: 020 7281 Email: helpline@eczema.org.uk www.eczema.org
Sep 2-9	Hughes Syndrome Awareness Week Ph: 020 7188 8217 Email: hsf@btconnect.com www.hughes-syndrome.org	Sep 16-22	Children's Hospice Week Ph: 0845 203 2233 Fax: 0117 905 5340 Email: info@childhospice.org.uk www.childhospice.org.uk
Sep 4 - 10	Migraine Awareness Week Ph: 01536 461 333 Fax: 01536 461 444 Email: info@migraine.org.uk www.migraine.org.uk	Sep 17-23	Continence Awareness Week Ph: 020 7404 6875 Fax: 020 7404 6876 www.continence-foundation.org.uk
Sep 9-16	UK Fibromyalgia Awareness Week Ph: 01384 895002 Fax: 01384 895005 Email: fmukoffice@aol.com www.fmuk.org	Sep 21	World Alzheimer's Day Ph: 020 7981 0880 Fax: 020 7928 2357 Email: info@alz.co.uk www.alz.co.uk
Sep 10-16	National Blood Testing Week Ph: 020 8772 4994 Fax: 020 8772 4999 Email: kyn@bpassoc.org.uk www.bpassoc.org.uk	Sep 25	International Ataxia Awareness Ph: 020 7582 1444 Fax: 020 7582 9444 Email: info@ataxiaawarenessday.org
Sep 15	World Lymphoma Day Ph: 01296 619418 Fax: 01296 619415 Email: juliem@lymphoma.org.uk www.lymphoma.org.uk	Sep 30-Oct 6	Rural Health Week Ph: 01686 650 800 Fax: 01686 650 300 Email: info@irh.ac.uk www.irh.ac.uk

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 St Helens Primary Care Library on 0151 676 5650 or email library_pct.pct@sthkhealth.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@hsthpcct.nhs.uk.

Bulletin prepared by:

Lynda Moss, Katherine Bell, Linda Gittens, Laura Devlin, Paula Wright

Library Contact Details:

Health Improvement Library – Tel. 01744 626667, Fax. 01744 457339

Primary Care Library – Tel. 0151 676 5650, Fax. 0151 676 5663

Halton Health Promotion Unit – Tel. 01928 593057