

# Health E-News Bulletin

*Issue 21 - February 2008*

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*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**

### **Men drink twice as much alcohol as women**

According to new figures from the Office for National Statistics, men are drinking twice as much alcohol as women – 18.7 units a week, on average, compared with 9.0 units.

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/ghs0108.pdf>

### **Tougher powers to tackle teen drinkers**

Tougher police powers and a call for parents and industry to play their part to prevent young people drinking and to reduce the damage caused by alcohol to individuals and communities were outlined today by Home Secretary Jacqui Smith. In a major speech to an audience of police and local authority licensing officers, representatives from the drinks and retail industries, community pressure groups and other frontline practitioners, the Home Secretary described a package of measures to tackle alcohol related crime and disorder.

<http://drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/news-events/latest-news/tougherpowers>

### **A Practical Guide for Dealing with Alcohol Related Problems: What You Need to Know**

The aim of this Guidance is to outline the tools and powers available to practitioners and the key legislative provisions to tackle alcohol misuse strategically, signposting as necessary to more detailed guidance, which already exists. This guidance is intended to assist all of those tasked with addressing the issues and problems presented by the misuse of alcohol. It is specifically aimed at practitioners and provides information to help them tackle those 'everyday' matters by outlining the powers and tools available.

<http://drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/publication-search/drug-strategy/alcoholguide?view=Binary>

### **Alcohol strategy - local implementation toolkit launched**

This toolkit is a resource to help local teams develop strategies to address alcohol related crime, ill health and other harm in line with Safe, Sensible, Social. The next steps in the National Alcohol Strategy.

<http://drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/news-events/latest-news/alcoholkit>

## **CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE**

### **New charity to focus on teen health issues**

A new charity focusing on the health of adolescents is to be launched next week. The Association for Young People's Health will bring together professionals and organisations across the UK that work with teenagers in different sectors. The Department of Health and the Department for Children, Schools and Families are providing start-up funding. Professor John Coleman, senior research fellow at Oxford University and former director of the Trust for the Study of Adolescence, will chair the new organisation.

"Young people face specific health problems which we need to address. In the UK there are high rates of teenage pregnancy, as well as significant levels of alcohol and substance misuse. Obesity and sexually transmitted infections are also a problem in this age group. Much is being done to combat these issues, but progress could be even better if we all worked together," said Professor Coleman.

<http://www.youngpeopleshealth.org.uk/>

### **More work to be done to tackle Teenage Pregnancy**

Minister for Children, Young People and Families Beverley Hughes today called on all local authorities and Primary Care Trusts to redouble their efforts in reducing teenage pregnancy rates and to drive forward the Government's Teenage Pregnancy Strategy in their local areas.

[http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn\\_id=2008\\_0020](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0020)

### **Tougher powers to tackle teen drinkers**

See Section: **ALCOHOL**

### **Cooking lessons for secondary school pupils**

See Section: **NUTRITION/OBESITY**

### **Better support for emotional wellbeing in schools – 25 pilot areas announced**

See Section: **MENTAL HEALTH**

## **DRUGS**

### **New data from the British Crime Survey on drug-related crime**

Quarterly figures up to September 2007 were released this week from the British Crime Survey (BCS). The number of offences rose from 46,200 in July-September 2006 to 55,700 in July - September 2007, a 21 per cent increase from the same quarters in 2006 to 2007. However, the BCS report accompanying the figures states that "the increases [in drug offences] in this and previous quarters coincided with increases in the police use of powers to issue cannabis warnings."

<http://www.drugscope.org.uk/newsandevents/currentnewspages/BCS-data-drug-offences.htm>

Full report: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs08/hosb0108.pdf>

### **Cannabis supply to young people mostly through social networks**

Cannabis supply to young people is largely through social networks and friendship groups rather than through overtly criminal drug markets. This is according to [a new study from the Institute for Criminal Policy Research](#) published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

The report - [Cannabis Supply and Young People: "It's a social thing"](#) - provides a snapshot of how young people in a large city and rural villages obtain cannabis. Researchers found that nearly all of the 182 young cannabis users interviewed were introduced to the drug by friends; used the drug with friends; and accessed the drug through friends. Only 6% had bought the drug from an unknown seller so most of them were insulated or distanced from overtly criminal drug markets.

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/pressroom/releases/310108b.asp>

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

### **Research links diabetes to depression**

A third of young adults with type-1 diabetes report symptoms of depression, according to new research. The study, published in Diabetic Medicine, found that 35 per cent of young people taking part reported symptoms of depression and 23 per cent had symptoms of severe depression.

#### **Abstract:**

<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1464-5491.2006.02012.x?prevSearch=allfield%3A%28depression%29>

If you require the full article please contact your local Primary Care Librarian

### **Dementia services lag behind need, MPs claim**

The prevalence and scale of suffering from dementia has not been matched by NHS funds or status, the public accounts committee said today in a report.

MPs said the result was that services were underdeveloped and sufferers often went undiagnosed.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmpublicacc/228/22802.htm>

### **Get involved in child well-being, fathers urged**

Children's mental health charity Young Minds has launched a campaign urging fathers to seek help for their children if they are worried about them.

The charity said nine out of 10 parents who contact its helpline are mothers.

<http://www.youngminds.org.uk/>

### **New research shows rise in GPs prescribing exercise for depression**

The last three years have seen a significant rise in the number of GPs prescribing exercise to people with mild to moderate depression, according to new research\* from the Mental Health Foundation. The charity says that 22% of GPs now prescribe exercise therapy as one of their three most common treatments for depression compared with only 5% three years ago.

<http://www.mhf.org.uk/media/news-releases/news-releases-2008/8-february-2008/>

### **Suicide risk factors consistent across countries: Being female, younger, less educated, unmarried and having a mental disorder increase likelihood of suicidal thoughts, plans and attempts**

A new study from the USA has found that the risk factors for suicidal thoughts, plans and attempts are consistent across high-, middle- and low-income countries. These risk factors include being female, younger, less educated, unmarried and having a mental disorder.

However, there are differences in the prevalence of suicidal behaviours (suicidal thoughts, plans and attempts) across countries. Suicide is a leading cause of death worldwide, but information on its prevalence and the risk factors is unavailable in many countries – particularly in those that are less developed.

<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pressparliament/pressreleases2006/pr976.aspx>

**Full research:** <http://bjp.rcpsych.org/cgi/reprint/192/2/98>

### **Better support for emotional wellbeing in schools – 25 pilot areas announced**

Minister for Young People Kevin Brennan today announced the 25 local authorities that will begin the Targeted Mental Health in Schools project.

Each local authority and corresponding Primary Care Trusts will work with between three and six secondary schools, as well as their feeder or associated primary schools, to deliver better support for those children who are at risk or are already experiencing mental health problems.

[http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn\\_id=2008\\_0016](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0016)

## **NUTRITION/OBESITY**

### **Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives**

#### **A Cross Government Strategy for England**

This cross-government strategy is the first step in a sustained programme to support people to maintain a healthy weight. It will be followed by a public annual report that assesses progress, looks at the latest evidence and trends, and makes recommendations for further action.

[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_082378](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_082378)

### **Government announces first steps in strategy to help people maintain healthy weight and live healthier lives**

A new £372 million cross-government strategy to help everyone lead healthier lives was published today by the Health Secretary, Alan Johnson and the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, Ed Balls. The Government's groundbreaking strategy supports the creation of a healthy society - from early years, to schools and food, from sport and physical activity to planning, transport and the health service.

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=347137&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

### **NHS Information releases statistics on obesity, physical activity and diet**

Following on from the release of the Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives strategy, NHS Information releases statistics on obesity, physical activity and diet (England, January 2008)

<http://www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/healthand-lifestyles/obesity/statistics-on-obesity-physical-activity-and-diet:-england-january-2008>

### **Cooking lessons for secondary school pupils**

#### **Focus on healthy eating is part of Obesity Strategy**

Compulsory cooking lessons for all schoolchildren aged 11 to 14 will be in place by September 2011. The move forms part of the Government's Obesity Strategy and builds on the existing 'Food in Schools' programme. Schools are being asked to suggest healthy versions of classic dishes such as shepherd's pie, curries and Bolognese sauces.

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=346786&NewsAreaID=2>

### **GPs told to promote weight constancy not loss**

Primary care staff should promote weight maintenance rather than loss to improve the health of obese patients, according to a discussion paper in the February edition of the British Journal of General Practice.

The paper said over-ambitious weight loss targets have poor long-term outcomes.

Link to abstract:

<http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/rcgp/bjgp/2008/00000058/00000547/art00012>

### **Study suggests public misunderstand health messages**

Many Britons still do not fully understand advice on healthy eating, according to a new survey which found that many believe potatoes to count towards their daily vegetable intake. Two thirds of the 3,300 respondents to a Health Food Manufacturers' Association (HFMA) survey thought that potatoes could count as one of their five recommended portions of fruit and vegetables a day.

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/news/archive/newsarchive/2008/february/18453098>

**Link to survey:**

[http://www.hfma.co.uk/PressRelease-Peas\\_from\\_Potatoes\\_release\\_national.pdf](http://www.hfma.co.uk/PressRelease-Peas_from_Potatoes_release_national.pdf)

### **First steps to reduce saturated fats**

The Agency has announced the first steps of its activity to help people in the UK reduce the amount of saturated fat they eat. Eating a diet high in saturated fat and calories can contribute to developing a range of serious diet-related illnesses, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some cancers. In the UK, intakes of saturated fat are around 20% higher than official Government recommendations.

<http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2008/feb/satfats>

## **ORAL HEALTH**

### **New guidance on fluoridation**

The Department of Health has issued new guidance for NHS organisations to encourage more areas to add fluoride to water supplies and help halt tooth decay. The document includes information about the roles of primary care trusts and strategic health authorities and good practice on consulting local people on new fluoridation schemes.

[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH\\_082666](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH_082666)

## **PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

### **NICE promotes stair-climbing for fitness**

Ensuring staircases are attractive and clearly signposted is one way public bodies can encourage people to do more exercise, according to new public health guidance. The guidelines from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence encourage NHS organisations, councils and others to create buildings and spaces that boost physical activity.

<http://www.nice.org.uk/PH008>

## **TOBACCO**

### **Smoking in decline in the UK, figures show**

Smoking in Britain has hit an all-time low, says a report on smoking and drinking habits from the Office for National Statistics. The proportion of adult smokers fell to 22 per cent in 2006, with two-thirds claiming they wanted to give up.

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/ghs0108.pdf>

### **More to do on tobacco control, says WHO**

A World Health Organisation study has found that while progress has been made in tobacco control, not a single country fully implements all key tobacco control measures. It has outlined an approach governments can adopt in an effort to prevent tens of millions of premature deaths by the middle of this century.

[http://www.who.int/tobacco/mpower/mpower\\_report\\_full\\_2008.pdf](http://www.who.int/tobacco/mpower/mpower_report_full_2008.pdf)

## OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

### **Campaign promotes antibiotics best practice**

A national campaign is to be launched to remind doctors of the rise in antibiotic resistance and make it clear to patients that antibiotics will not get rid of the common cold. Chief medical officer Sir Liam Donaldson said antibiotics had to be conserved as a valuable clinical resource.

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=349962&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=True>

### **Indications of Public Health in the English Regions 9: Older People**

This report focuses on the health and quality of life of older people living in Britain. The report includes information on life expectancy through to quality of life. (January 2008).

<http://www.apho.org.uk/resource/item.aspx?RID=44315>

### **Autism not linked to MMR vaccine, study shows**

There is no evidence of a link between the combined measles, mumps and rubella vaccine and autism, according to a new study published today.

The joint report by Guy's Hospital, London, the Health Protection Agency and Manchester University looked for the measles virus and antibody levels in children. The study found there was no difference between the results from children with autism and those without.

<http://www.nhs.uk/News/2007/January08/Pages/MMRvaccinedoesnotcauseautism.aspx>

### **The Health Effects of Climate Change in the UK**

The possible health effects of climate change have been set out in a report published by the Health Protection Agency and the Department of Health today. The report, written by an Expert Panel, takes into account the latest information and current predictions about climate change in the UK. It will form the basis of the Agency's response to a recent request for information from the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, to help scope their new study on 'Adapting the UK to Climate Change'.

There is now a scientific consensus that human activity is contributing to global warming, and there are questions about how to reduce possible health risks.

[http://www.hpa.org.uk/hpa/news/articles/press\\_releases/2008/080212\\_climateChange.htm](http://www.hpa.org.uk/hpa/news/articles/press_releases/2008/080212_climateChange.htm)

#### **Link to Report:**

[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_080702](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_080702)

## NEW RESOURCES

### **Wellchild launches health hotline**

Children's charity Wellchild has launched a free helpline to provide information and support about children's health concerns. Anyone of any age can call the helpline to have their concerns answered or be referred to the right organisations for more information.

<http://www.online.wellchild.org.uk/content.asp?id=15052&section=2070>

### **New charity to focus on teen health issues**

**See Section: CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE**

### **Department of Health – New look website**

Following research and feedback from users, staff and stakeholders, the DH website has been upgraded. Two major changes include a brand new graphic design and a new content structure. The new website continues to be at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk)

### **Asthma danger campaign launched**

Asthma UK has launched a campaign to make people aware of how dangerous asthma can be and to raise funds to support research into the condition.

<http://www.dont-wait.org/>

### **National breastfeeding helpline launched**

A national breastfeeding helpline that will provide practical support and information to mothers - backed by £150,000 a year - was launched by public health minister Dawn Primarolo today. The launch coincided with the publication of a report by the scientific advisory committee on nutrition, which highlights the need for more accessible and timely support for breastfeeding mothers.

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/Content/Detail.asp?ReleaseID=352806&NewsAreaID=2>

### **Crime and Drug Strategy Directorate Publication List**

The Crime Drugs Strategy Directorate oversees the delivery of the National Drugs Strategy through local and regional partnerships. All publications and posters are free and are also available electronically at [www.drugs.gov.uk](http://www.drugs.gov.uk).

<http://drugs.homeoffice.gov.uk/publication-search/Publicationlist/publication-list?view=Binary>

### **A Practical Guide for Dealing with Alcohol Related Problems: What You Need to Know** **See Section: ALCOHOL**

### **Alcohol Strategy – local implementation toolkit launched**

**See Section: ALCOHOL**

## **NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL HEALTH EVENTS 2008 – March**

15 Feb- 31 Mar	Great Daffodil Appeal <a href="http://www.mariecurie.org.uk/supportus/thegreatdaffodilappeal/">www.mariecurie.org.uk/supportus/thegreatdaffodilappeal/</a>	8	International Women's Day <a href="http://www.un.org/events/women/iwd/2007/">www.un.org/events/women/iwd/2007/</a>
25 Feb-2 Mar	Eating Disorders Awareness Week <a href="http://www.b-eat.co.uk/Home">www.b-eat.co.uk/Home</a>	10- 16	Prostate Cancer Awareness <a href="http://www.prostate-cancer.org.uk/">www.prostate-cancer.org.uk/</a>
1 March	Self Injury Awareness Day <a href="http://www.lifesigns.org.uk/siad/">www.lifesigns.org.uk/siad/</a>	12	No Smoking Day <a href="http://www.nosmokingday.org.uk/smokers/index.htm">www.nosmokingday.org.uk/smokers/index.htm</a>
1-31	Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month <a href="http://www.ovarian.org.uk/">www.ovarian.org.uk/</a>	13	World Kidney Day <a href="http://www.worldkidneyday.org/">www.worldkidneyday.org/</a>
1-31	National Bed Month <a href="http://www.sleepcouncil.com/">www.sleepcouncil.com/</a>	15- 22	Conductive Education Awareness Week <a href="http://www.conductive-education.org.uk/2008/">www.conductive-education.org.uk/2008/</a>
2-8	Endometriosis Awareness Week <a href="http://www.endo.org.uk/">www.endo.org.uk/</a>	22	World Water Day <a href="http://www.worldwaterday.org/">www.worldwaterday.org/</a>
3-9	Glaucoma Awareness Week <a href="http://InternationalGlaucomaAssociation">International Glaucoma Association</a>	24	World TB Day <a href="http://www.tbalert.org/">www.tbalert.org/</a>
7	National Doodle Day <a href="http://www.epilepsy.org.uk/">www.epilepsy.org.uk/</a>	31-6 April	Brain Injury Awareness Week <a href="http://www.headway.org.uk/">www.headway.org.uk/</a>
26	National Health Promotion Conference 2008 To register for your free place at this event visit: <a href="http://www.healthfirst.nhs.uk/conference">www.healthfirst.nhs.uk/conference</a> or telephone 08456 522511		

## **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](mailto: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](mailto: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@hsthpcr.nhs.uk](mailto:lynda.moss@hsthpcr.nhs.uk).

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