

Health E-News Bulletin

Issue 14 - July 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

Warning over teenage binge drinking

Although the number of schoolchildren buying their own alcohol is falling significantly a third of teenagers binge drink, a new study has warned. According to the Trading Standards Institute (TSI), the proportion of children aged over 14 who buy their own alcohol has fallen from 40 per cent to 28 per cent since 2005. It quizzed nearly 12,000 schoolchildren in north-west England – the largest known survey of its kind to be carried out in Europe. The number of children that drink their own alcohol has also fallen from 50 per cent to 44 per cent. But nearly a third of teenagers (29 per cent) who do drink regularly are binge drinkers – consuming over five units of alcohol in one sitting at least once a week.

[http://www.inthenews.co.uk/news/health/warning-over-teenage-binge-drinking-\\$1103908.htm](http://www.inthenews.co.uk/news/health/warning-over-teenage-binge-drinking-$1103908.htm)

Local Health Improvement Developments

The Community Alcohol Screening & Educational Service (CASES) is an innovative new service developed by Halton & St Helens Primary Care Trust, which aims to help tackle rising levels of alcohol consumption and other alcohol related health problems in St Helens. Launched with the aim of educating the whole community on how to drink alcohol safely and sensibly, the service will provide free and confidential alcohol screenings, information and advice about alcohol and its associated health risks for the community. CASES will be working with people of all ages to offer both group sessions and one-to-one advice in a range of community settings

For more advice or information: please contact Julie or Katie on 01744 697433

Or visit our website at: www.cases-sthelens.co.uk

CANCER

Cancer Research UK

Funded scientists have for the first time identified a common genetic variant that can increase a person's risk of developing bowel cancer. Their findings appear in two papers published online in Nature Genetics today (Sunday). Several genes are already known to contribute to bowel cancer risk. However, these are extremely rare among the population – only around one person in every 2,500 carries any of the known bowel cancer genes and they account for less than five per cent of bowel cancer cases arising annually. Around 35,000 new cases of bowel cancer are diagnosed in the UK each year and it is estimated that genetic risk contributes to around a third of cases of the disease.

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/news/pressreleases/2007/july/336239>

CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

Delivering health services through Sure Start Children's Centres

By 2010 there will be 3,500 Sure Start children's centres; one in every community. They represent a radical shift in the way that services are delivered, offering significant opportunities for improving children's health and ensuring the families are able to access the information, support and services that they need. The Department of Health has produced new guidance on involving health in children's centres. This publication sets out the responsibilities of NHS organisations towards children's centres, ways in which children's centres can help deliver health priorities, some tips on building effective partnerships and examples of good practice.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_076333

What will it take to end child poverty in the UK?

2007 updates on the document. "What will it take to end child poverty in the UK?"

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/child-poverty/>

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Prison training pilot - Skilled for Health

WHI is working with the Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills on a pilot project - "Skilled for Health" - to address the lack of physical activity in prisons. Skilled for Health sits within the wider 'Skills for Life' strategy. The aim is to help prisoners live more healthily in prison and make lifestyle changes that they can take with them on release.

<http://www.whi.org.uk/details.asp?back=true&key=AX909|0|12186714065|R|18|263614672007441366329&parentkey=AX909|0|12186714065|p|18|0>

DRUGS

50 Best Documents Collection -

With this project, the International Harm Reduction Association (IHRA) aims to identify and collect approximately 50 documents that provide the best information on the subject of policing and harm reduction for illicit drugs. This will create a thorough and broad information base on this topic, with papers representative of a range of sub-topics and research and papers from around the world. This project is one of a number of '50 Best Collections' commissioned by IHRA.

<http://www.ihra.net/Policing>

Safe, Sensible, Social - Next Steps for the Government's National Alcohol Strategy

'Safe, Sensible, Social - next steps for the National Alcohol Strategy' unveiled today by the Home Office Minister Vernon Coaker and Public Health Minister Caroline Flint builds on the foundations laid and the lessons learnt since 2004, when the country's first Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy was launched. Firstly, the new strategy will ensure that the laws and licensing powers introduced to tackle alcohol-fuelled crime and disorder, protect young people and tackle irresponsibly managed premises are being used widely and effectively. Secondly, it will sharpen focus on the minority of drinkers who cause or experience the most harm to themselves, their communities and their families.

<http://www.drugs.gov.uk/news-events/latest-news/0506>

HEALTH INEQUALITIES/SOCIAL INCLUSION

Welfare experts call on Prime Minister Brown to prioritise ending child poverty

Child Poverty Action Group are today publishing a special edition of the journal *Poverty* in which experts on child welfare and poverty ask 'Where next for Gordon Brown? His first hundred days'. The contributors urge the new Prime Minister to place tackling child poverty and redressing inequalities in the UK at the forefront of the Government's agenda, Kate Green, Chief Executive of Child Poverty Action Group, said: "It is shocking that as Brown takes office 3.8 million children are still living in poverty in the UK. The new Prime Minister must use his first hundred days to set out how the Government will deliver the resources needed to halve child poverty by 2010. He will be judged by voters on his ability to meet the Government's historic promise to end child poverty."

<http://www.cpag.org.uk/press/270607.htm>

MENTAL HEALTH

New report says people with mental health problems need extra support to help them stop smoking

According to a new report published today by the Mental Health Foundation, government efforts are needed to ensure that people with mental health problems are supported to give up smoking in light of the imminent ban. The charity is calling for investment in services that offer counselling and stress management techniques. 'Taking a deep breath (The mental health implications of anti-smoking legislation)' says that people with mental health problems are more likely to smoke than the general population, and less likely to be able to give up using the mainstream programmes already on offer, leaving them more at risk of smoking related diseases. People with mental health problems face some of the greatest health inequalities and are much more likely to suffer chronic physical ill-health and premature death than the general population.

<http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/media/news-releases/news-releases-2007/18-june-2007/>

<http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/?q=0,smoking,&EntryId=47065>

New research reveals alarming increase in mental health prejudice in England

Mental health charity Mind today expressed deep concern that public attitudes to mental ill health have deteriorated further, with people now more likely to wrongly associate mental distress and violence. The research, for the Department of Health anti-stigma organisation, Shift, shows an increase in prejudice across a wide variety of indicators over the last ten years.

<http://www.mind.org.uk/News+policy+and+campaigns/Press/AW2007-07-06publicattitudes.htm>

Download report at-

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsStatistics/DH_076516

Mentally Disordered Offenders: Standard 5

In the Community

This is one of a series of papers setting out the desired standards (i.e. the necessary skills and arrangements), which should be present when working with mentally disordered offenders. The 'standards' will apply to different points of intervention in the criminal justice process where there is an interface between the criminal justice system and that of health and social care.

<http://www.nacro.org.uk/data/resources/nacro-2007061500.doc>

Dementia care lags behind

Treatment for people with dementia is little better than for cancer patients in the 1950s, the National Audit Office has warned. In a damning report published this week, the watchdog says that, as with cancer 50 years ago, there are few available treatments for dementia and patients are often not given a diagnosis for fear of causing distress. Dementia services are not delivering value for money, the report says, with diagnoses made late if at all.

<http://www.hsj.co.uk/healthservicejournal/pages/N1/p8/070705>

New schizophrenia treatment licensed in the UK

Pharmaceutical company Janssen-Cilag has announced the authorisation of Invega (paliperidone), a new treatment for schizophrenia. In clinical trials, people treated with paliperidone experienced reductions in the symptoms of schizophrenia, as well as improvements in day-to-day personal and social functioning. Paliperidone (prolonged-release tablets) is the first atypical antipsychotic treatment for schizophrenia to use OROS prolonged-release technology, which provides a steady release of medicine over a 24-hour period.

<http://www.hsj.co.uk/healthservicejournal/pages/A2/070704>

Attitudes to mental illness improving, survey shows

People are more tolerant of those with mental illnesses than they were four years ago, new figures reveal. Fewer people believe that mentally ill patients are a burden on society, while numbers of those claiming to sympathise with the mentally ill have gone up.

<http://www.hsj.co.uk/healthservicejournal/pages/A3/070706>

NUTRITION/OBESITY

Consumers confused by health claims

Consumers are often confused by health claims on food labels, according to a review of research carried out on behalf of the Agency in anticipation of a new European regulation on health and nutrition claims. According to European Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006, which has applied in the UK since 1 July 2007, health claims should only be authorised if they are well understood by the average consumer. This condition will be important both in deciding whether a claim should be authorised, and in the enforcement of the presentation of claims when deciding whether consumers are being misled. In order to help implement this condition, the Agency commissioned EdComs, a specialist educational consultancy, to conduct a review and analysis of the existing scientific literature in this area. To take account of as much relevant information as possible, EdComs also considered research conducted into consumer understanding of food labelling in general, where this could be used to draw conclusions about consumer understanding of claims.

<http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2007/jul/healthconfuse>

SEXUAL HEALTH

Quarter of virgins not using contraception for first time

Although people losing their virginity are more likely than ever to use contraception, more than one in four still do not, according to a report by Durex Network. The report also found that for every year first-time sex is delayed up to the age of 17, contraceptives are more likely to be used. If virginity is lost from the age of 18 onwards, the rate of contraception usage declines. The report's authors said pressure to have sex, alcohol use and fear of contracting a sexually transmitted infection or becoming pregnant do not appear to have any influence on first-time contraceptive use.

<http://www.hsj.co.uk/healthservicejournal/pages/A1/070703>

Commission criticises sexual health data

The Healthcare Commission has called for improvements to the collection of data on sexual health and how that data and information is used by services. Its review of sexual health services found that tracking progress and recognising where improvements are needed in sexual health are difficult because of gaps in data. It concludes that services are limited in their ability to target groups at high risk, use data to plan and allocate resources where they are needed, or monitor effectively people's access to services and levels of sexual health.

<http://www.hsj.co.uk/healthservicejournal/pages/a2/070705>

TOBACCO

On July 1st virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in England became smokefree. This is good news because:

It protects everyone, especially workers, from the dangers of secondhand smoke

Reducing your exposure to secondhand smoke reduces your risk of cancer

Most smokers and non-smokers welcome England going smokefree

Going smokefree will help smokers give up

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/publicpolicy/smokefreeengland/>

Smoking cessation clinics provide new opportunity to detect early carbon monoxide poisoning

Smoking cessation clinics provide a new opportunity to detect early carbon monoxide poisoning, the Health Protection Agency has discovered. Results from routine carbon monoxide (CO) testing in the breath of people attending such clinics or GP support services can alert healthcare professionals to patients who are suffering from chronic, low-level CO poisoning

http://www.hpa.org.uk/hpa/news/articles/press_releases/2007/070705_carbon_monoxide.htm

OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

NICE advice drives up treatment costs

Commissioners are being pushed into spending too much money on life-saving drugs by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence, economists have warned. Trusts are struggling to pay for the expensive treatments it has recommended, the Commons health select committee has heard. More cost-effective treatments may be getting squeezed out as a result.

<http://www.hsj.co.uk/healthservicejournal/pages/N1/p13/070705>

Health Protection Agency warns of risks from accidental exposure to raised levels of chlorine in swimming pools

During the summer months there is an increase in the numbers of incidents associated with accidental release of high levels of chlorine in swimming pools, the Health Protection Agency warned today. Since 2005, the Agency has given advice following 30 such incidents with eight incidents reported so far in 2007. During April and May 2007 more than 140 people were exposed to raised levels of chlorine as a result of swimming pool incidents and about 20% of those exposed required medical attention.

http://www.hpa.org.uk/hpa/news/articles/press_releases/2007/070702_swimming_pools.htm

NEW RESOURCES

The Mind: A User's Guide

The Mind: A User's Guide is an accessible, jargon-free reference book designed to educate, inform and empower anyone who has an interest in safeguarding or improving their mental health.

<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/publications/gaskellbooks/gaskell/9780593056356.aspx>

HEALTH EVENTS 2007 – AUGUST

Aug 6-12	Sexual Health Week Helpline: 0845 310 1334 Ph: 020 7608 5242 Fax: 0845 123 2349 Email: shw@fpa.org.uk www.fpa.org.uk
Aug 12	International Youth Day www.un.org

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 01744 697233 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@hsthpcnhs.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.