

Health E-News Bulletin

Issue 16 - September 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

Fewer young people using drugs, but alcohol consumption is of concern

The Information Centre for Health and Social Care has published the full statistics from the annual survey 'Smoking, drinking and drug use among young people in England in 2006', following up from the publication of headline figures in March of this year. The survey questioned 8,200 school pupils aged between 11 and 15 at 288 schools in England in the autumn term of 2006. The trends are encouraging, with fewer children reporting that they have used drugs, more children saying they had never drunk alcohol and the number of children who smoked once a week remaining steady.

<http://www.drugscope.org.uk/newsandevents/currentnewspages/schools-survey-smokedrinkdrug.htm>

Full report:

<http://www.ic.nhs.uk/webfiles/publications/smokedrinkdrug06/Smoking%20Drinking%20and%20Drug%20Use%20among%20Young%20People%20in%20England%20in%202006%20%20full%20report.pdf>

Study backs controversial link between alcohol intake and endometrial cancer

A new study has suggested a link between alcohol intake and cancer of the womb lining (endometrial cancer) in older women, although there is still no medical consensus on the subject.

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/news/newsarchive/2007/september/18274711>

CANCER

Charity moves to dispel breast cancer myths

The charity Breakthrough Breast Cancer is calling on GPs to help dispel widespread confusion among patients about the signs and symptoms of breast cancer. The initiative is part of the charity's campaign 'Show your breasts some TLC: Touch Look Check'.

http://www.breakthrough.org.uk/breast_cancer_awareness_month/breast_awareness/index.html

Contraceptive pill does not increase cancer risk

Taking oral contraceptive pills for less than eight years does not increase a woman's chances of developing cancer and may reduce the risk for many, a new study has found.

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/news/newsarchive/2007/september/18278262>

Ex-smokers 'still more susceptible to lung cancer'

New research suggests that some of the genetic damage caused by smoking may never be reversed, despite the long-term health benefits of giving up.

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/news/newsarchive/2007/august/18263190>

Study backs controversial link between alcohol intake and endometrial cancer

See **ALCOHOL**

CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

Two million babies screened for hearing

Two million babies in England will have had their hearing screened thanks to the NHS newborn hearing screening programme, the Department of Health has announced.

The programme, which was rolled out across England in 2001, screens 1,700 babies each day.

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=314475&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

Review of services for children with communication needs

A cross-government review into the services provided for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs is announced.

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2007_0162

New Hib booster catch-up programme starts.

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 starts on 10 September 2007 and continues until 3 March 2009.

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

Measles 'surge' prompts warning

Health experts are issuing a warning about measles after an unexpectedly high number of cases this summer. Parents are being urged to make sure their children have had both doses of the jab against measles, mumps and rubella before the return to school.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/6970525.stm>

Listen Up! A project by the Mental Health Foundation

See **MENTAL HEALTH**

More children are getting their five a day

See **NUTRITION/OBESITY**

Young children see poverty holding them back at school

See **HEALTH INEQUALITIES/SOCIAL INCLUSION**

DRUGS

DrugScope street drug trends survey 2007: two tier cocaine market puts drug in reach of more users

DrugScope is today publishing the results of its Druglink magazine 2007 Street Drug Trends survey. Key trends uncovered by the survey indicate that the UK cocaine market is maturing and expanding with the drug as affordable as it has ever been. In many areas dealers are offering two grades of cocaine to buyers, effectively dividing their sales into 'economy' and 'luxury' cocaine, putting it in reach of more – and younger – users.

<http://www.drugscope.org.uk/ourwork/pressoffice/pressreleases/drugscope-street-drug-survey.htm>

The International Treatment Effectiveness Project; Implementing psychosocial interventions for adult drug misusers

The International Treatment Effectiveness Project (ITEP) is part of the National Treatment Agency's Treatment Effectiveness strategy, which identified areas for enhancing the quality of treatment interventions. The project was a collaboration between the NTA, the Institute of Behavioural Research (IBR) in Texas and several service providers in the north-west England and London. ITEP utilised a care planning approach (referred to as "mapping") in the form of a manual, which was used by trained keyworkers with their clients. Previous research had shown that these psychosocial interventions had a number of positive outcomes in terms of clients' treatment experiences and reductions in illicit drug use.

http://www.nta.nhs.uk/publications/documents/nta_itep_implementing_psychosocial_interventions_for_adult_drug_misusers_rb34.pdf

Fewer young people using drugs, but alcohol consumption is of concern

See **ALCOHOL**

Getting Help for a Drug Problem: new NTA publication for service users

See **NEW RESOURCES**

HEALTH INEQUALITIES/SOCIAL INCLUSION

Web tool launched to improve life expectancy in disadvantaged areas

Dawn Primarolo, Minister of State for Public Health today launched the Health Inequalities Intervention Tool - an interactive website to help local health services and councils improve life expectancy in areas with the worst health and deprivation. The tool is designed to help Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), Practice-Based Commissioners and local authorities in Spearhead areas to understand the impact of simple, effective, evidence-based measures can have on the life expectancy gap of their local populations. It can be used as part of a comprehensive local strategy to reduce health inequalities

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=309566&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

Johnson delivers speech on health inequalities

Health secretary Alan Johnson will deliver a speech on health inequalities to the New Health Network today. The event forms part of the network's health inequalities project, launched in 2006.

<http://www.newhealthnetwork.co.uk/Content.asp?id=240>

School years increase education attainment gap for poorest children

A new report published today by Child Poverty Action Group "Chicken and Egg: Child Poverty and Educational Inequality" shows that children in poverty fall further behind their

peers at every stage of schooling. The report also shows that children who start behind, but are not affected by poverty, have better chances of rising out of low performance.

<http://www.cpag.org.uk/press/120907.htm>

CPAG's Report:

<http://www.cpag.org.uk/campaigns/education/EducationBriefing120907.pdf>

Young children see poverty holding them back at school

Children in poverty face greatly reduced educational prospects and future life chances. This is the conclusion not just of social policy experts and government statisticians, but of young children themselves. Emerging research published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) shows that children are aware of such outcomes from an early age and that their own stereotyping reinforces these differences.

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/pressroom/releases/070907.asp>

Full report: <http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/2094-literacy-poverty-children.pdf>

Reducing health inequalities for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people - briefings for health and social care staff.

See **SEXUAL HEALTH**

MENTAL HEALTH

Signs of improvement from community mental health services

Community mental health services are showing some improvement but concerns over access remain, according to a survey published today by the Healthcare Commission. Results show that the relationships between service users and their psychiatrists continue to improve year on year. However, almost half of service users do not have access to out-of-hours crisis care and only 49 per cent of those who wanted help finding work were offered it.

http://www.healthcarecommission.org.uk/db/documents/Community_mental_health_-_full_report.pdf

Listen Up! A project by the Mental Health Foundation

Despite significant increases in the rates of anxiety and depression among children and young people, their level of contact with services remains low. Left unresolved, mental health problems can significantly affect children and young people's social and educational development. The mental Health Foundation have been working for six years on a project to find out what young people want from their services and how to get young people in contact with them.

<http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/our-work/service-development/cyp/listen-up/>

Full report: <http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/?EntryId=49929>

NUTRITION/OBESITY

More children are getting their five a day

The number of children achieving their five a day target for fruits and vegetables has increased by 13 per cent in two years, according to new figures from the Department of Health. The report shows that the number of children eating five portions a day has increased from 27 per cent in March 2004 to 44 per cent in November 2006.

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=311470&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

Artificial colours and hyperactivity: food industry statements

The Agency has recently updated its advice on certain artificial food colours. As part of giving parents further information, food industry bodies have given the FSA statements identifying steps they are taking and provided links to their websites.

The Agency's advice to parents follows the publication of an FSA-commissioned study by Southampton University. The research suggests that eating or drinking certain mixes of Sunset yellow (E110), Quinoline yellow (E104), Carmoisine (E122), Allura red (E129), Tartrazine (E102) and Ponceau 4R (E124) - together with the preservative sodium benzoate, could be linked to a negative effect on children's behaviour.

<http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2007/sep/industrycolourlinks>

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Brits 'dying not to do exercise'

Most UK adults are so unwilling to exercise that not even the threat of an early death is enough to get them off the sofa, a survey suggests.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/6994632.stm>

SEXUAL HEALTH

Call for HIV test kit review

The Terrence Higgins Trust is urging the government to change the law and allow people to buy and use home test kits for HIV.

The charity says that the use of unregulated kits bought from the internet is on the increase.

<http://www.tht.org.uk/mediacentre/pressreleases/2007/september07/september12.htm>

Reducing health inequalities for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people - briefings for health and social care staff

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people experience a number of health inequalities which are often unrecognised in health and social care settings. These briefings are intended to show that LGBT people can be younger, older, bisexual, lesbians, gay men, trans, from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities and disabled, and to dispel assumptions that they form a homogeneous group. The briefings provide easy-to-read guidance for health and social care commissioners, service planners and frontline staff. They aim to inform the delivery of appropriate services and to support health and social care professionals in their everyday work with LGBT people by providing fundamental awareness and evidence of LGBT needs in relation to health.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_078347

TOBACCO

UK to lead the way with picture warnings on tobacco packets

Graphic images illustrating the devastating effects that tobacco can have on health will be printed on all tobacco packets from next year Health Secretary Alan Johnson announced.

The 15 images to be used were chosen following a consultation in 2006, market research and a public vote. The move makes the UK the first country in the EU to introduce such visual warnings on all tobacco products aimed at raising awareness, helping smokers who want to quit and further reducing smoking related illnesses.

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=310521&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

Picture health warnings: UK a front-runner, other EU countries urged to catch up

ASH applauds the UK Government's decision to introduce stark pictorial warnings on all tobacco products, noting that this signals a continuing commitment to strong tobacco control measures. ASH is particularly pleased that the pictures will be applied to ALL tobacco products. This makes the UK unique in Europe: to date the UK is the only country to have made a commitment to placing graphic warnings on products on the whole range of tobacco products. Belgium has already adopted picture warnings but these are found only on cigarettes while Romania and Finland plan to implement picture warnings on cigarettes next year.

http://www.newash.org.uk/ash_wv5hs39m.htm

Smoking ban cuts exposure but smokefree homes remain a challenge

A trio of studies published online in the British Medical Journal have found that Scotland's ban on smoking in public places has brought about a large reduction in exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke.

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/news/newsarchive/2007/september/18274709>

7% drop in cigarette sales since ban

Cigarette sales fell by 6.9 per cent during July following the introduction of the smoking ban in England at the start of the month, figures show. Consumer research group AC Nielsen also reveals that sales were down 1.2 per cent in June, as many tried to give up ahead of the ban, and overall consumption has been falling by around two per cent a year.

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/news/newsarchive/2007/august/18255333>

Ex-smokers 'still more susceptible to lung cancer'

See **CANCER**

OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Health minister Ivan Lewis has announced £10m funding to improve health at work

The money will finance the new NHS Plus demonstration sites to improve occupational healthcare services offered to small and medium-sized businesses. This second phase of funding follows a previous £10m allocated in April, which was used to finance five demonstration sites around the country. NHS Plus aims to tackle work-related health problems and help staff get back to work

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=312507&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

Research project recruits volunteers

NHS patients in England will be invited to take part in a multi-million-pound medical project that will research life threatening and debilitating diseases.

Supported by the Department of Health, UK Biobank will recruit people aged 40-69 and track their health over the next 30 years.

<http://www.ukbiobank.ac.uk/>

Healthcare education consultation under way

Skills for Health has begun a three-month consultation on a new quality assurance framework for healthcare education. The Enhancing Quality in Partnership framework has been developed to support the national standard contract for healthcare education.

<http://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/page/about-us/news-articles/3-month-consultation-around-a-quality-assurance-framework-for-health-education>

In-depth UK study on heart problems leads to warning for young adults with gum disease

The UK's leading dental health charity has warned that young people must take care of their teeth if they are to avoid heart problems in later life. The British Dental Health Foundation was speaking after an in-depth UK health study (published in the medical journal, 'Heart') found that young adults who lose their teeth to decay or gum disease are considerably more likely to die from heart disease in later life.

<http://www.dentalhealth.org.uk/pressreleases/releasedetail.php?id=327&offset=0&limit=10&type=&keyword=>

Research document:

Influence of tooth loss on cardiovascular mortality

Heart, 2007, vol 93 (9) p. 1022-3

http://heart.bmj.com/cgi/search?andorexactfulltext=and&resourcetype=1&disp_type=&sortspec=relevance&author1=&fulltext=&volume=93&firstpage=1022

NEW RESOURCES

A new NHS Internet site has been launched.

Our NHS, our future - led by Lord Darzi - brings together patients, NHS staff and the public to develop a new vision for a 21st-century National Health Service ahead of its 60th anniversary celebrations in 2008.

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

Getting Help for a Drug Problem: new NTA publication for service users

Drug treatment is complex, so we have produced a plain English guide for service users called Getting Help for a Drug Problem. It explains what help is available and what to expect from treatment.

http://www.nta.nhs.uk/publications/documents/nta_getting_help_with_a_drug_problem.pdf

The answer to healthy eating on a plate

The Food Standards Agency has launched the 'eatwell plate', a visual tool that illustrates the types and proportions of foods that make up a balanced diet. It updates the previous illustrative model, the 'Balance of Good Health'. Some food groups shown on the eatwell plate have been renamed making them easier to understand, the design has been made more contemporary and photography of real foods that reflect current eating patterns have been included.

<http://www.food.gov.uk/news/newsarchive/2007/sep/plate>

'Don't ignore the signs' meningitis leaflets and posters sent to all universities and colleges in England as freshers start.

As new students start college they are at increased risk of getting meningitis. This new poster and leaflet remind students of the need to make sure they are immunised against meningitis C. But, as meningitis C is not the only cause of meningitis and septicaemia, the leaflet describes signs and symptoms of the diseases so medical help can be obtained urgently

<http://www.immunisation.nhs.uk/newsitem.php?id=75>

New Leaflets:-

"Cannabis and your mental health"

"Hib Does your child need a Hib Booster Immunisation?"

"Keep Warm Keep Well"

"If you knew about flu, you'd get the jab"

Available from Health Improvement Information Resource Library – Contact details at the end of this bulletin.

HEALTH EVENTS 2007 – OCTOBER

Oct 1	International Day of Older Persons www.un.org	Oct 10	World Mental Health Day www.wfmh.org
Oct 1 - 31	Breast Cancer Awareness Month Ph: 020 7025 2400 Fax: 020 7052 2401 www.breakthrough.org.uk	Oct 16	World Food Day www.un.org
Oct 1 – 31	Breast Cancer Awareness Month Ph: 020 7384 2984 Fax: 020 7384 3387 www.breastcancercare.org.uk	Oct 20	World Osteoporosis Day Ph: 020 7820 1010 Fax: 01761 471104 www.nos.org.uk
Oct 1 - 31	International Walk to School Month Ph: 020 7820 1010 Fax: 020 7820 8208 www.walktoschool.org.uk	Oct 31	Bug Busting Day – Head Lice Ph: 020 7686 4321 Fax: 020 7686 7322 www.nits.net/bugbusting
Oct 1 – 31	Lupus Awareness Month Ph: 01708 731251 Fax: 01708 731252 www.lupusuk.org.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.

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