



Health E-News Bulletin

Issue 31 - December 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

Low price promotions fuelling increased drinking says Big Drinking Debate

The biggest ever survey on alcohol in the North West has revealed that low price and discounts are fuelling our unhealthy drinking culture. Of the 30,000 respondents, 80% said that they thought low price and discounts increased people's drinking.

<http://www.cph.org.uk/showPublication.aspx?pubid=446>

Alcohol treatment services urgently need better planning, commissioning and funding

Primary Care Trusts' (PCTs) investment into alcohol prevention and treatment services can reduce the high cost of treating alcohol-related ill-health, according to a new report on alcohol services published today by the National Audit Office. Increased funding is one of several measures recommended by the NAO, such as better assessment of local needs, structured planning and streamlined commissioning, all necessary if the Department of Health wants to reduce the costs of alcohol misuse.

<http://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/servlets/doc/1386>

Measures to tackle irresponsible drink deals

A ban on 'all you can drink' promotions in pubs and bars is among a range of new measures announced today by Health Secretary Alan Johnson and Home Secretary Jacqui Smith, supported by a new £4.5 million crackdown on alcohol fuelled crime and disorder. Following an independent review, which found that many retailers are not abiding by their own voluntary standards for responsible selling and marketing of alcohol, The Government now intends to introduce a new mandatory code of practice to target the most irresponsible retail practices. This will set out compulsory licensing conditions for all alcohol retailers and will give licensing authorities new powers to clampdown on specific problems in their areas. Licensing authorities will also be able to impose these new powers on several premises at once.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Recentstories/DH_091410

CANCER

Earlier detection of cancer and better treatment for survivors Cancer Reform Strategy one year on report published today

Work is well underway to catch more cancer cases earlier and improve the longer term treatment for cancer survivors, National Cancer Director Professor Mike Richards said today. The first annual report setting out the Government's progress against the Cancer Reform Strategy, "Maintaining Momentum, Building for the Future", highlights the achievements made in the first year and identifies priorities for the year ahead.

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=386099&NewsAreaID=2&NavigateFromDepartment=False>

Deprivation doubles risk of developing cervical cancer, report claims

Women living in deprived areas are almost twice as likely to be diagnosed with cervical cancer than those in affluent areas, according to a report published by the National Cancer Intelligence Network. The report shows that in the most deprived areas of England 12 women per 100,000 were diagnosed with cervical cancer between 2000 and 2004, compared with six women per 100,000 in the most affluent areas. Researchers said the gap is mainly fuelled by a lower take-up of cervical screening in deprived areas, in addition to higher rates of smoking and an earlier onset in sexual activity. They added previous research has shown women in deprived areas are 40 per cent less likely to attend cervical screenings.

<http://www.ncin.org.uk/press/NCINBAC.pdf>

Full Report: http://www.ncin.org.uk/analyses/NCIN_Incidence_by_Deprivation_95_04.pdf

Scientists to study feasibility of lung cancer screening

The National Institute for Health Research Health Technology Assessment (NIHR HTA) programme has commissioned a study to assess the feasibility of a lung cancer screening programme in the UK. The NHS currently has established national screening programmes for breast cancer, cervical cancer and bowel cancer.

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/news/archive/newsarchive/2008/december/18931188>

CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

Children's Plan: One Year On

Vision for 21st century children's services

On the anniversary of the flagship Children's Plan, Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, today set out his vision for 21st century children's services to help deliver the ambition of making England the best place in the world to grow up. Announcing a new £200 million 'co-location fund' to bring health, education and children's services together under one roof, Ed Balls also promised more support for those who work with children, building capacity to work across boundaries to join up and support services so that children come first - not just in child protection but in all aspects of children's lives.

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0282

More help to get young people talking

Boost for services for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs. A £12 million action plan to improve services for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs was launched today by Health Secretary Alan Johnson and Children's Secretary Ed Balls. The plan is the Government's response to the Bercow review, published in July 2008, and outlines a range of cross-government initiatives building up to the National Year of Speech, Language and Communication in 2011-12.

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=387816&NewsAreaID=2&NavigateFromDepartment=False>

Young people need better mental health services, says charity

See Section: MENTAL HEALTH

Balls and Alan Johnson boost Child Mental Health Services

See Section: **MENTAL HEALTH**

New data on children's height and weight published (Amended quote)

Almost one million children measured

See Section: **NUTRITION/OBESITY**

DENTAL HEALTH

Alan Johnson announces review of NHS dentistry

An independent review team to help improve access for patients who want to see an NHS dentist was appointed today by Health Secretary Alan Johnson. Increased investment in NHS dentistry has seen improvements in some parts of the country but access remains a problem in some areas. The review team will investigate why there are variations in access and advise how everyone who wants to see an NHS dentist can do so.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Recentstories/DH_091839

DRUGS

Innovative new advertising campaign to highlight the risks of taking cocaine

A new hard-hitting £1million TV and online FRANK advertising campaign which shows the dangers of cocaine use was unveiled today by the Government. The campaign is centred on "Pablo the drug mule dog", who died as he was being used to smuggle cocaine into the country. Waking from the dead, he goes on a mission to find out the truth about the risks and consequences of taking the drug. The adverts, which launch tonight on Channel 4, satellite channels and online are aimed at 15-18 year olds and signpost young people to the FRANK website talktofrank.com.

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0273

DrugScope responds to publication of welfare reform White Paper

DrugScope, the UK's leading drug information charity, has welcomed some of the measures in the White Paper on Welfare Reform but expressed concern over the potential use of benefit sanctions for problem drug users who do not engage in drug treatment.

http://www.drugscope.org.uk/ourwork/pressoffice/pressreleases/DS_Response_Welfare_White_Paper.htm

MENTAL HEALTH

Young people need better mental health services, says charity

Three in four young people with mental health problems are not receiving the treatment they need, according to a report by New Philanthropy Capital. The charity estimates that £244m to £376m could be saved each year by ensuring services were provided to all young people with conduct disorder. The report, called Heads Up, says charities play an important role in providing support, carrying out research and campaigning to change policy and perception.

http://www.philanthropycapital.org/research/research_reports/health/child_mental_health.aspx

Balls and Alan Johnson boost Child Mental Health Services

Children's mental health services will be radically improved by a package of measures including a National Advisory Council and the roll-out of extra support for children in schools, Children's Secretary Ed Balls and Health Secretary Alan Johnson announced today.

The findings of this independent review, which the Government commissioned in December 2007, sets out a clear vision for how children's services and child and adolescent mental health services can be improved to more effectively address the mental health needs of children and young people.

http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0260

Samaritans fear suicide increase due to economic crisis

Emotional support charity urges anyone in emotional distress to seek 24-hour confidential support this Christmas and throughout the coming year.

Samaritans warns that the deepening financial and economic crises could lead to an increase in suicide rates nationwide as people face unemployment, mounting debt and housing insecurity. The charity is encouraging people to look out for family, friends and colleagues in these times of economic uncertainty. Research shows that people who are unemployed are 2-3 times more likely to die by suicide than people in employment, with unemployed men more at risk than unemployed women. Unemployment can result in poorer mental health, such as anxiety and depression, lowered self-esteem and feelings of hopelessness – all of which increase the likelihood that someone will think that life is not worth living.

http://www.samaritans.org/media_centre/latest_press_releases/samaritans_suicide_crisis.aspx

HandsOnScotland

See Section: NEW RESOURCES

New film helps children and young people understand mental illness

See Section: NEW RESOURCES

NUTRITION/OBESITY

ITV1 to launch healthy campaign

ITV1 is to launch a campaign to help fight obesity and get the nation healthy after Christmas. The Feelgood Factor aims to encourage people to shape up and get fit and will be supported by celebrities from the channel's most popular shows. The shows will include a mix of live music, dance and comedy combined with advice and challenges from experts on how to lose weight. The initiative ties in with the government's Change4Life campaign.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/7736219.stm>

New data on children's height and weight published (Amended quote)

Almost one million children measured

Nearly one million school children were weighed and measured during 2007/08 as part of the National Child Measurement Programme, Public Health Minister Dawn Primarolo announced today (11.12.08). This exceeds the national goal of 85 per cent participation with 88 per cent of children in Reception and Year Six being weighed

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=387241&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

Food Standards Agency launches tools for schools

See Section: NEW RESOURCES

SEXUAL HEALTH/HIV/AIDS

Record numbers living with HIV in the UK

Wider availability of testing required to reduce heterosexual and gay transmission
An estimated 77,400 people were living with HIV in the UK in 2007 with more than a quarter (28 per cent) unaware of their infection, according to figures released today by the Health Protection Agency. This compares to the estimated 73,000 previously reported to be living with the infection (2006).

http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1227515310331?p=1204186170287

Free online postal Chlamydia testing kits for young people

All young people will be able to order free Chlamydia testing kits online at www.freetest.me.uk as part of a time-limited pilot project between Brook, the young people's sexual health charity, and Preventx.

http://www.brook.org.uk/content/M7_2008_freetestmeNOV2008.asp

SOCIAL INCLUSION/HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Help announced to get people fit for work

Sick notes could be replaced by "fit notes" and fit for work schemes launched for people who have been off work due to sickness, under proposals announced by health secretary Alan Johnson and work and pensions secretary James Purnell. The announcements came in the government's response to [Dame Carol Black's report on the health of Britain's working age population](#), which was published in March. Other proposals include a review of the health and well-being of the NHS workforce; a national centre for working age health and well-being; local health, work and well-being co-ordinators; and an occupational helpline for small businesses.

<http://www.workingforhealth.gov.uk/documents/working-for-a-healthier-tomorrow-tagged.pdf>

Welfare reform has steered away from a right to support into decent work

Commenting on the government's new legislative programme announced in the Queen's Speech, the Chief Executive of Child Poverty Action Group, Kate Green said: "Enshrining the target to eradicate child poverty in law should unite MPs across the House to put the wellbeing of children at the heart of our national priorities. Just a year ago Britain was judged to be the worst in a UNICEF list of wealthy countries for the wellbeing of our children. But British people do not believe their children should suffer worse poverty and diminished lives compared to children in other countries. In every seat voters will be looking to their own MP to support this important commitment to our children and the future of Britain."

<http://www.cpag.org.uk/press/031208.htm>

Raising expectations and increasing support: reforming welfare for the future

Following the publication of the Welfare Reform Green Paper [No one written off: reforming welfare to reward responsibility](#) in July 2008, we held a consultation to which we had over a thousand responses. We have welcomed the wide and varied responses and listened carefully to what people have said. This White Paper 'Raising expectations and increasing support: reforming welfare for the future' sets out how we plan to take our proposals forward as part of our vision for a personalised welfare state, where more support is matched by higher expectations for all.

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/welfarereform/raisingexpectations/>

TOBACCO

Stubbing out recruitment of young smokers

Plans were laid today to remove cigarette displays in shops and prevent underage access to vending machines, putting children and young people at the forefront of the next tobacco control strategy. This will mean removing cigarette displays in shops and preventing underage access to vending machines, putting children and young people at the forefront of the next tobacco control strategy

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Recentstories/DH_091689

Tobacco display ban - health wins the day!

ASH welcomes the government's announcement that tobacco products are to be removed from public view as part of a range of measures to protect children from tobacco marketing

http://www.ash.org.uk/ash_9i6otx98.htm

OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

Health experts are warning of a measles epidemic after the highest ever number of cases were recorded

Health Protection Agency figures show there have been 1,049 measles cases in England and Wales up to the end of October 2008, surpassing last year's figure of 990.

This is the highest number since records began in 1995.

<http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&Page&HPAwebAutoListName/Page/1191942172782?p=1191942172782>

Stroke awareness campaign to save lives

Stroke Strategy first anniversary marks improvements in stroke services

A three-year £12 million communications campaign to promote public awareness around stroke was announced today by Health Minister Ann Keen.

The campaign will be launched in February 2009, and will be supported by advertising, public relations and direct marketing communications

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=386592&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

Deaths from hepatitis C: a legacy of our past behaviour

Recreational drug use that began in the 1960s is now resulting in deaths from hepatitis C

Many hepatitis C infections in the UK stem from recreational injecting drug use that began in the 1960s according to a new report released today by the Health Protection Agency.

http://www.hpa.org.uk/webw/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1228810590873?p=1204186170287

NEW RESOURCES

The Kings Fund has published a report entitled "Commissioning and Behaviour Change – Kicking bad habits final report". It is the final report of a year-long investigation into the effectiveness of different types of public health programmes to tackle smoking, alcohol misuse, poor diet and lack of exercise.

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

Approaching FAST...a national campaign to increase stroke awareness

The FAST campaign offers a simple way of learning and remembering the signs of stroke so the 'stroke saver' can identify when someone is having a stroke and react immediately. The leaflet and poster that support the campaign are available to download from this page.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_091519

See also: **[Stroke awareness campaign to save lives \(above\)](#)**

HandsOnScotland

The HandsOnScotland Toolkit is an online resource for anybody working with children and young people. It is a one-stop shop for practical information and techniques on how to respond helpfully to children and young people's troubling behaviour, build up their self-esteem and promote their positive mental wellbeing.

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

National Library for Public Health

Resources for the Choosing Health priority areas are now fully available and can be easily accessed via The National Library for Public Health.

<http://www.library.nhs.uk/publichealth/>

Food Standards Agency launches tools for schools

The Food Standards Agency has launched two new interactive teaching tools as part of its programme to 'help young people to choose, cook and eat safe, healthy food'.

Health Survey for England 2007: Healthy lifestyles: knowledge, attitudes and behaviour

The 2007 Health Survey for England focuses on knowledge, attitudes and behaviour on key aspects of lifestyle - smoking, drinking, eating and physical activity. Both adults and children were asked about their views on what constitutes healthy behaviour, their knowledge of government recommendations and the factors that may encourage or discourage healthy behaviour.

<http://www.ic.nhs.uk/pubs/hse07healthylifestyles>

See also: Department of Health response to Health Survey for England

<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=387695&NewsAreaID=2&NavigateFromDepartment=False>

New film helps children and young people understand mental illness

The Royal College of Psychiatrists has funded a short film to help children and young people better understand mental illness. One in 12 children in the UK has a parent with a mental illness. However, it can be difficult to explain mental health problems in a way that is both easily understood by a young person, and acceptable as an explanation to their parents and relevant health professionals. The [new 16-minute film](#), called When a parent has a mental illness, can be watched for free on the Royal College of Psychiatrists' website. It was produced by Dr Alan Cooklin, a consultant in family psychiatry, with funds from the College's recent Images of Psychiatry campaign.

<http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pressparliament/pressreleases2008/bank2008/prcaringforaparent.aspx>

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.

'STUB OUT' Ash Tray Campaign

The aim of this campaign is to increase awareness of the Stop Smoking Service and to offer support to existing smokers. Portable "ash trays" will be provided to people standing smoking in various locations in Halton & St Helens from 15th December to 24th December 2008 and from 5th January until 12th January 2009.

New Year New Beginnings

The Stop Smoking Service will be available in the Halton Lea Shopping Centre week beginning 12th – 17th January 2009 to promote their service and to offer support to all smokers.

Bright Ideas

NHS Halton and St Helens is looking to bring Christmas cheer to community and voluntary groups throughout the area by launching its second round of the Bright Ideas scheme. If you have a bright idea to improve the health and wellbeing of your local community but need the resources to support its development and implementation, NHS Halton and St Helens would like to hear from you. Projects and activities must be new, and must be able to demonstrate how they will have a positive impact upon the health of the community. Grants are available for any sum up to £2,500, and not all applications will be successful. This is a unique opportunity for groups and organisations to help improve the health of local people –

whether this is through a new healthy eating project for a youth club, samba dancing for a pensioners clubs, or something completely different – it's up to you! Application packs and more information are available from the Customer Care Unit on 0800 849 7088, from the website, www.haltonandsthelenspct.nhs.uk or via email at customer.care@hsthpct.nhs.uk The closing deadline for all applications is Friday 30th January 2009, so act quickly.

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL HEALTH EVENTS 2009 – January

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.

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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.

*“A Merry Christmas and a Healthy New Year”
To all our Readers*