Alcohol misuse

Why the secrecy? Bringing transparency to alcohol labelling

It's time for accurate, transparent alcohol labelling; read this helpful summary of the subject, as well as an update on the 25 June 2019 meeting hosted by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Alcohol Harm.

1 in 5 hospital patients have alcohol-related problems

Various media sources report on the worrying extent of the alcohol problem in the UK, with the BBC and the Sun reporting that 1 in 5 people in hospital beds are heavy drinkers.

Minimum alcohol pricing cost Scottish drinkers millions of pounds since introduction

Responding to new figures showing a rise in alcohol-related deaths in Scotland last year, Christopher Snowdon, Head of Lifestyle Economics at the Institute of Economic Affairs, said: “When figures showed a small decline in alcohol consumption last week, some rushed to the conclusion that this was due to minimum alcohol pricing.”

Children and young people

LGA responds to Action for Children 150th anniversary report

"Councils have worked hard to protect vulnerable children and families from the full scale of cuts, but children’s services face a £3.1 billion funding gap by 2025 just to stand still and public health services, which also help children get the best start in life, have seen cuts of £700 million."

Physical activity helps children to deal with life’s challenges

Public Health England, Disney UK and Sport England launch new Change4Life campaign to inspire children to get more active.

LGA responds to Children’s Commissioner’s vulnerability report
“Early intervention services such as children’s centres and family support services play a crucial role in supporting children and helping to prevent problems becoming more serious later on.”

LGA responds to Ofsted report on children’s social care

“Councils have pulled out all the stops to protect children’s budgets but are now being forced to cut funding for vital services such as early intervention support, leaving some children having to reach crisis point before they get help.”

Asthma attacks triple when children return to school in September

“Child asthma cases can triple at the start of the school year as returning to the classroom exposes pupils to coughs and colds,” reports the Mail Online.

Teenage pregnancy rate at 25-year low

Teenage pregnancies in Scotland are at the lowest level since 1994, according to the latest statistics.

Take steps to keep symptoms under control and help prevent ‘back to school asthma’, says RCGP

The RCGP has responded to findings published in the BMJ linking ‘back to school asthma’ with an increase in health service appointments.

Councils seeing more than 560 child mental health cases every day

Social services are seeing more than 560 cases of children with mental health disorders every day – an increase of more than 50 per cent in just four years, the LGA reveals today.

Promoting healthy eating to children can have huge benefits for later life says College

Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard, Chair of the Royal College of GPs, has responded to a pledge from Labour to ensure children have more access to fresh fruit and vegetables.

Baby food industry needs better products and clearer labelling

Public Health England (PHE) publishes an evidence review of commercially available baby foods and drinks aimed at children up to 36 months.

'I was suspected of causing my child's illness'

Taliah Drayak's world was "turned inside out" when she was suspected of causing her daughter's illness.

LGA responds to RCPCH report on child health

Cllr Ian Hudspeth, Chairman of the LGA’s Community Wellbeing Board, responds to a Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health report calling for tougher food regulations to improve child oral and physical health.

Tackling childhood obesity: £1.5 million funding for local projects

Five local councils with forward-thinking ideas to address childhood obesity will receive funding.

“Positive step for LGBT inclusion” as RSHE guidance published

Stonewall and NAHT welcome guidance to help ensure children have the knowledge they need to grow up healthy, happy and safe.
'Amazing' gene-silencing drugs reach NHS

A new form of medicine called "gene-silencing" has been approved for use by the NHS in England. The drugs will be used to reverse a disease called amyloidosis, which causes nerve and organ damage.

'Rewiring nerves' reverses hand and arm paralysis

Nerves inside paralysed people's bodies have been "rewired" to give movement to their arms and hands, say Australian surgeons.

Device for preventing and relieving pain of cluster headaches approved by NICE in draft guidance

A handheld device that delivers a small electric current has been recommended by NICE for the prevention and treatment of cluster headaches, a rare but painful type of headache that affects around 100,000 people in the UK.

Life-extending lung cancer treatment recommended for use on the NHS

Dacomitinib has been recommended as a first-line treatment option for people with a type of non-small-cell lung cancer (NSCLC), in new NICE guidance.

Bladder cancer 'attacked and killed by common cold virus'

A strain of the common cold virus can infect and kill bladder cancer cells, a small study suggests.

Early cancer detection and survival to be prioritised by NHS

Screening programmes will be overhauled and diagnosis made faster and more accurate with new state-of-the-art technology as part of a blueprint for rapidly improving cancer detection and survival announced by Matt Hancock.

Communicable diseases

Fear and mistrust stalk battle to halt spread of Ebola

There can be few greater challenges than tackling a lethal epidemic. But imagine trying to do so in a conflict zone ravaged by extreme poverty, insecurity and poor communications amid a population where health workers are feared and distrusted.

Malaria in the UK: annual report

The 2018 annual report presenting data on malaria imported into the UK has been published.

Essex strep A outbreak death toll rises to 13

Thirteen people have now died in an outbreak of Group A streptococcal infection, health bosses said.

RSPH calls for clean-up of public attitudes to hygiene

RSPH have published Too Clean or Not Too Clean?, a new report calling for an end to the myth that some people are being too hygienic for their own good. The report follows a national survey looking at public understanding and practice of hygiene, revealing that while the broad value of hygiene is understood, there are key misconceptions and gaps in understanding that could be increasing the risk of spread of infections.

Disability

Blind man's legal fight over hospital small print letters
A registered blind man is taking a hospital trust to court because its eye department keeps sending him letters he cannot read.

**Vision loss: 'I couldn't see as I walked down the aisle'**

Charities claim a shortage of rehabilitation officers in Wales is putting people's safety at risk.

**Councils need to check how they help people with hidden disabilities**

Councils are being urged to check their procedures to avoid disadvantaging people with ‘hidden disabilities’ following the publication of three separate investigation reports into London councils by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

**PM launches new drive to tackle barriers faced by disabled people**

Injustices faced by disabled people in the workplace, at home and in the community will be tackled head-on through a new package of measures ordered by the Prime Minister.

### Drug Misuse

**New plan to tackle substance misuse in Wales launched**

Tackling substance misuse amongst the homeless and prisoners and dealing with mental health issues associated with addiction are some of the aims of a new Welsh Government plan published for consultation today.

### Environmental health

**Pollution 'cuts Birmingham children's life expectancy'**

Children who live in Birmingham could have their lives cut short by up to seven months due to the levels of air pollution, a study has found.

**NHS' top nurse urges public to enjoy sun safely this weekend**

England’s most senior nurse has today urged the public to look out for vulnerable relatives and neighbours when temperatures soar this weekend, revealing that thousands end up in hospital each year due to heat and allergies.

**Keep homes well ventilated when cooking and cleaning to prevent ill health**

Recommendations in [new draft guidance](#) published today provide advice on ways to reduce exposure to indoor air pollution in everyday life as well as measures local councils, landlords, architects and builders can take.

### Health protection

**HPV vaccine could prevent over 100,000 cancers**

Estimates suggest that the HPV vaccine programme could prevent over 64,000 cervical cancers and nearly 50,000 non-cervical cancers by 2058.

**RCGP welcomes roll-out of HPV vaccine to year-8 boys from September**

The RCGP has welcomed an announcement that the HPV vaccine will now be given to year-8 boys in further efforts to protect against the virus.
Contaminated blood inquiry: Scots victims to give evidence

The stories of Scots who contracted HIV and hepatitis from contaminated blood products will be heard as an inquiry into the scandal moves to Edinburgh.

Infected Blood Inquiry: information for GPs and patients

The Infected Blood Inquiry (IBI) is a public inquiry which will examine the circumstances in which patients treated by the NHS in the 1970s and 1980s received infected blood and/or blood products; the impact on their families; how the authorities (including government) responded; and the care and support provided to those infected and affected (such as their families, loved ones and carers). These documents provide further information about the inquiry to GPs and their patients.

HPV universal vaccination: guidance for health professionals

This guidance provides information for healthcare practitioners about HPV universal programme eligibility, scheduling and vaccine administration for the adolescent programme.

Success of HPV vaccine could lead to end of cervical cancer

"HPV vaccine programme in schools 'could wipe out cervical cancer for good'," reports the Mail Online.

Health services administration

UK plans £3m no-deal medicine transport

The Department of Health and Social Care plans to spend £3m on no-deal Brexit measures to transport medication. It wants to hire an "express freight service" to transport medicines, blood and transplant tissue.

Act now on social care crisis, Lords report tells Government

The Economic Affairs Committee publishes its report Social care funding: time to end a national scandal today. The report recommends that the Government immediately spends £8 billion to restore social care to acceptable standards and then introduces free personal care over a period of 5 years.

Judge rules doctors can treat diabetic who wants to die

A High Court judge has given doctors permission to administer insulin to a diabetic teenager who was refusing treatment because she wants to die.

LGA: health and wellbeing boards are achieving their goal

The report, based on 22 effective HWBs across the country, shows the boards are driving health and social care integration and making sure that prevention is at the heart of this - helping to keep people well in the first place, rather than managing ill health better.

Councils set Government ten-week deadline to publish much-delayed social care green paper

The new Prime Minister must publish the long-awaited adult social care green paper before Parliament goes into recess in September for the sake of the millions of older and disabled people who rely on vital care and support, council leaders demand today.

Medical cannabis 'expectations unfairly raised

Families’ hopes were unfairly raised when doctors were allowed to prescribe cannabis, a report has concluded. The public had expected ready access to prescriptions after the law changed in November but that had not and will not happen any time soon, MPs said.

One in three councils fear funding for legal duties will run out within three years

Safe & compassionate care, every time
A third of councils fear they will run out of funding to provide their statutory services – such as adult social care, protecting children and preventing homelessness – by the end of this Parliament.

**MPs 'staggered' by NHS fines 'complacency'**

MPs on the public spending watchdog committee attacked the "breathtaking complacency" of a system of healthcare fines in England in which 1.7 million penalties were overturned as incorrect.

**New ways of working to free up doctors as part of the NHS Long Term Plan**

Patients are set to get longer appointments with their family doctor thanks to new ways of working which start today. Practices large and small will work to support each other and deliver a wider range of specialist care services for patients from a range of skilled health professionals.

**Primary Care Networks have undeniable benefits, but there is no 'one size fits all' approach to solving GP pressures, says College**

Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard, Chair of the Royal College of GPs, has responded to the launch of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) in England.

**Prescription drugs 'contributed to Theresa Feehan's death'**

A mum of seven died with toxic levels of prescription drugs in her body after visiting a surgery that had out of date records missing patient conditions.

**Are you happy to share your health data to benefit others?**

From automated eye scans to analysing the cries of new-born babies, faster drug development to personalised medicine, artificial intelligence (AI) promises huge advances in the field of healthcare. But major challenges remain.

**Medicines and medical products supply: government updates no-deal Brexit plans**

The government has announced plans to launch procurement exercises to secure freight capacity if the UK leaves the EU with no deal.

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### HIV & AIDS

**Antiretroviral treatment can reduce the risk of HIV transmission between male partners to ‘zero’**

The risk of transmission of HIV between gay couples when the HIV-positive partner is taking antiretroviral treatment that successfully suppresses the viral load is ‘effectively zero.’

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### Mental health

**LGA responds to Alzheimer's Society report on dementia care costs**

"With adult social care facing a £3.6 billion funding gap by 2025, councils are having to make incredibly difficult decisions within tightening budgets and cannot be expected to continue relying on one-off funding injections to keep services going."

**'I used to scream: For God’s sake, just eat!’**

Guidelines to make sure families of people with eating disorders get better support have been launched by a charity. One family tells the Victoria Derbyshire programme how they struggled to get help after their daughter's diagnosis.

**Making the right choices: using data-driven technology to transform mental healthcare**
This report examines the current landscape of data-driven technologies and their applications in mental healthcare, highlighting areas where these tools offer the most potential for the NHS and its patients.

Next Prime Minister can't turn back on mental health

The next Prime Minister must not let down a generation by stepping back on mental health commitments, six national mental health charities will warn tomorrow as they launch a new manifesto aimed at the new Tory leader.

Calorie counting apps 'can exacerbate eating disorders'

Calorie counting app creators have been criticised for allowing the platforms to be misused by people with eating disorders.

LGA responds to Healthwatch England report on dementia care

“Councils are committed to the underlying ambition of the Care Act to improve the lives and wellbeing of people with dementia and their families, to ensure their care is personalised and fits around the way they want to live their lives.”

Are you burning out?

Are you exhausted all the time, feeling cynical towards your work responsibilities and find the demands of your job overwhelming? You could be suffering from burnout - and you might be the last person to know it.

People with dementia should be offered activities that can help promote wellbeing

People living with dementia should be offered activities such as exercise, aromatherapy, art, gardening, baking, reminiscence therapy, music therapy, mindfulness and animal assisted therapy to help promote their wellbeing.

Statement in response to new Scottish suicide figures released today

In response to the new suicide figures for Scotland released today, Director of Mental Health Foundation Scotland Lee Knifton said: “It's very concerning to see that the suicide figures for Scotland have increased again, with 784 people taking their lives in 2018.”

CQC finds Mental Health Act Code of Practice not being used as intended

The Mental Health Act (MHA) Code of Practice is not being used as it was intended due to a lack of awareness and understanding of the statutory guidance amongst providers and staff.

Obesity

Obesity 'causes more cases of some cancers than smoking'

Obesity now causes more cases of four common cancers in the UK than smoking, according to a charity. Cancer Research UK says bowel, kidney, ovarian and liver cancers are more likely to have been caused by being overweight than by smoking tobacco.

Safety

HSE releases annual workplace fatality figures

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has today released its annual figures for work-related fatal injuries for 2018/19 as well as the number of people known to have died from the asbestos-related cancer, mesothelioma, in 2017.

Watchdog wants councils to get behind commitment to H&S
Britain’s workplace health and safety regulator is urging local authorities (LAs) across the country to make a statement of commitment to work with others to improve health and safety standards in the sectors they regulate.

**Update on investigation into food supply chain linked to listeria**

Investigation continuing into foods linked to listeria infections in hospitals.

**Household antibacterial chemical linked to weakened bones**

"Chemical found in soap and toothpaste linked to osteoporosis in women," reports The Daily Telegraph.

**Hazardous homes - hundreds of thousands of private renters living in unsafe properties**

Weak regulation of private renting is leaving hundreds of thousands of tenants living in hazardous homes in England, research by Citizens Advice has revealed.

**FSA welcomes new allergen labelling law**

The Food Standards Agency Chair Heather Hancock has welcomed the announcement of a new allergen labelling law to help further protect the UK’s two million people living with food allergy, made today by Environment Secretary Michael Gove.

### Screening

**Group B Strep: NI parties call for mothers-to-be screening**

Northern Ireland's politicians have jointly called for Group B Strep screening for all pregnant women.

**Lesbian women cervical screening myth is 'dangerous'**

The "dangerous myth" that gay and bisexual women cannot get cervical cancer means thousands could be missing out on screening, NHS England says.

### Smoking

**England’s top midwife warns ‘tens of thousands’ still smoking during pregnancy**

The NHS’ chief midwife has spoken out as new stats released today show that although fewer adults overall are smoking, and maternity smoking specifically has fallen from 92,123 women ten years ago, last year more than 61,399 mums-to-be – more than one in ten of all pregnant women – were still smoking at the time they gave birth.

**Smoking 'damages eyes as well as lungs'**

Millions of people in the UK are putting their sight at risk by continuing to smoke, warn specialists. Despite the clear connection, only one in five people recognise that smoking can lead to blindness, a poll for the Association of Optometrists (AOP) finds.

**Statistics on Smoking, England - 2019**

The report aims to present a broad picture of health issues relating to smoking in England and covers topics such as smoking prevalence, habits, behaviours and attitudes among adults and school children, smoking-related ill health and mortality and smoking-related costs.

**Local tobacco control profiles for England: July 2019 update**

An overview of the extent of tobacco use, tobacco related harm and the measures being taken to reduce this
Using both nicotine patches and gum together improves the chances of quitting smoking

Using a nicotine patch together with a fast-acting type of nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) such as gum or lozenges improves smoking cessation rates compared to using only a single type of NRT. Higher-dose nicotine patches are also more effective than lower dose ones, this NIHR-funded review suggests.

Social & economic issues

Families facing steep costs to get through the summer holidays

Children are facing the prospect of being swept into poverty during the summer holidays as their parents try to juggle rising costs, especially for childcare, according to new research commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and carried out by Loughborough University.

Women’s health

Get A Drip ‘fertility’ IV that costs £250 withdrawn from sale

A wellness company has withdrawn a £250 IV “fertility drip” after experts said it could "exploit vulnerable women”.

‘I don’t regret my two abortions’

UK attitudes towards abortion are becoming more liberal, a poll suggests.

Does more leg fat protect women against heart attack and stroke?

"Leg fat 'better than belly fat' for older women,” reports BBC News. Researchers looked at the body composition of 2,683 women in the US who were a healthy weight and had been through the menopause.

Smear tests: Actress writes play based on own experiences

"The last six months have been lonely, scary and uncomfortable, but I’d do it all again if I didn’t have to tell my mum and dad that I had cancer”. That’s how Gabrielle MacPherson feels after doctors found pre-cancerous cells in her cervix.

Workplace health

Experts to drive “real change” in support of teachers’ wellbeing

Health and wellbeing experts to provide more support for school and college staff to deal with pressures of the job.

For more up to date public health news visit our netvibes page

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