Alcohol misuse

Some children drinking alcohol ‘every day’

Video: We visit the place with England’s highest rate of child hospital admissions due to alcohol.

Russian alcohol consumption down 43%, WHO report says

Russian alcohol consumption decreased by 43% from 2003 to 2016, a World Health Organization (WHO) report says. It attributed the decline to a series of alcohol-control measures implemented by the state, and a push towards healthy lifestyles. The WHO said the drop in alcohol consumption was linked to a significant rise in life expectancy. It noted that Russia had previously been considered one of the heaviest-drinking countries in the world.

Black and ethnic minority groups

Sheffield abuse survivor aims to break black mental health ‘taboo’

A woman who was abused as a child has launched a campaign to get more black people talking about mental health.

Ursula Myrie organised Breaking the Cycle of Abuse in Sheffield because she said the subject was “taboo” in many black families. She also made a film on the issue as part of Black History Month.

Children and young people

Bristol boxing charity gets grant to help ‘at risk’ children
A boxing charity helping vulnerable young people to "feel like they belong" has been awarded government funding. Empire Fighting Chance has been given £737,359 to continue helping vulnerable people have access to education and therapy over the next two years. It hopes its projects will help vulnerable 10 to 14-year-olds to stay away from a life of crime. The charity will roll out its projects across Bristol, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and south Wales.

**The pink dolphins giving people their lives back**

Physiotherapist Igor Simões Andrade gives monthly sessions to children with a range of physical and mental disabilities by taking them swimming with wild freshwater pink dolphins in the Amazon. The scheme is supported by the Brazilian government's environment agencies on the condition that the dolphins are not harmed.

**Child obesity: Will we see radical action?**

Strategies for tackling obesity in England have been much talked about - but consistency has been hard to find.

Three different prime ministers in four years have all had their own approaches. Policies have been floated but implementation has been patchy.

Now the outgoing chief medical officer for England has said in no uncertain terms only radical action will give the government any chance of getting close to its target of halving childhood obesity by 2030.

**Evidence of breastfeeding increasing food allergies risks not clear-cut**

"Breastfed babies may face more than double the risk of developing food allergies," the Mail Online reports.

The headline follows a Japanese study that questioned how parents fed their 6-month-old babies, whether they:

- never breastfed
- exclusively breastfed
- partially breastfed – combined with using formula milk

They then asked whether their child had sought medical help for food allergy up to 5.5 years of age. They found that exclusively breastfed babies had a 50% greater chance of having a food allergy compared with never breastfed babies. However, allergies were uncommon, affecting only 5-10% of babies, so this reflected only around a 3% absolute risk increase.

**Chronic conditions**

**If pain was an object, what would it look like?**

Video: New York-based photographer Justin J Wee lives with chronic back pain. He's compiled stories from other people who suffer from pain, and his project How I Hurt aims to translate the physical feelings they describe into visual art.

**Endometriosis: I'm in control, not the condition**

A woman who suffers with endometriosis has described "taking back control" after the condition left her in chronic pain. More than 13,500 women have shared their experience with the BBC in the largest study of its kind into the condition. Around half told the study it had led to suicidal thoughts. But Jaimee Rae
McCormack, 27, from Cardiff said there was hope and she had found ways of getting her life back.

**Less than 6 hours of sleep a night linked to increased risk of early death**

"Getting less than 6 hours of sleep could double – or even triple – your risk of dying from heart disease or cancer, especially if you have chronic diseases," reports Mail Online.

This stark warning is taken from US research that analysed the sleep of around 1,600 adults. Participants had their sleep monitored during a single night in a sleep laboratory during the 1990s. Researchers kept track of the group up to 2017 and found that in general, those who slept less than 6 hours were more likely to have died. They also found there was an increased risk of early death among people with long-term (chronic) conditions, such as high blood pressure or heart disease, who slept for less than 6 hours each night.

**Communicable diseases**

**Girl, 4, suffers kidney failure after E. coli bug**

A four-year-old girl was left in a critical condition in hospital after contracting E. coli. Isla Asprey spent 17 days in intensive care after picking up the potentially fatal E. coli O157 strain. Isla's mother Lauren Asprey, from Botley in Hampshire, said she "feared the worst" when her daughter became unwell days after a break to the Isle of Wight. Public Health England (PHE) said it was investigating the source of the bug.

**Do colds and the flu really 'go around', and how can we avoid them?**

Winter does seem to come hand-in-hand with snotty noses. According to Public Health England, between November and February, the number of cases of flu-like illnesses dealt with by GPs is higher than at any other point in the year.

GP Dr Simon Bowers explains that illnesses don’t exclusively go around at this time of year. “There’s always stuff going round… because there are bugs that are in the air all the time.”

**'Flu is still dangerous' say couple who lost baby son**

A couple whose baby son died of flu said they wanted to "raise people's awareness that the flu is still dangerous" by telling his story.

Nikki Shaw, 32, and Dan Rowe, 36, from Market Harborough, had identical twin boys, Ned and Gus in December 2018.

In January Ned was rushed to Kettering General Hospital, later diagnosed with flu and passed away at Addenbrooke’s Hospital in Cambridge.

Ms Shaw: "If you can have the flu vaccination why wouldn't you have it?"

**Diet & nutrition**

**Personal trainer's photo stolen to promote diet pills**

A personal trainer says photos he posted on Instagram to mark his fitness transformation were taken and reposted by fake accounts to promote diet pills which he had never taken. He told the Victoria Derbyshire programme such companies feel they are untouchable.

**Have controversial new guidelines put red meat 'back on the menu'?**

"New research that claims red and processed meat is probably not harmful to our health has caused
controversy among experts who maintain people should cut down," The Guardian reports. The World Health Organization currently classifies processed meats, such as bacon and salami, as being cancer-causing (carcinogenic) to humans – putting it in the same category as tobacco – while red meat is classed as "probably carcinogenic". The strongest link is with bowel cancer. World Cancer Research Fund recommends adults eat no more than about 3 portions of red meat per week, about 350g to 500g cooked weight in total. It also advises adults to consume little, if any, processed meat.

**Disability**

*Jack has a learning disability. He spent 3 years in a secure mental health unit. He tells his story.*

Video: Jack now has his own living space and is much happier, with two visiting support workers.

**Spikes - and other ways disabled people combat unwanted touching**

Bronwyn Berg became so fed-up with people manhandling her without asking, she put spikes on her wheelchair. And she's not alone. With a spate of disabled people reporting unwanted touching some are taking action to stop it in its tracks.

**Drug Misuse**

*Is Norwich losing the fight against drugs?*

Eighty people have died from drug misuse in Norwich in the past three years - more than in any single London borough, statistics have revealed. Residents have told the BBC substance abuse and drug dealing is becoming a common sight across the city, with it leading to a number of violent crimes. The government figures also show that more people are dying from drugs in Norwich than anywhere else in the East of England.

**Environmental health**

*Hospital wards closed after subsidence*

Hillingdon Hospital has closed two children's wards and a paediatric facility after advice from structural engineers over subsidence in the building.

Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust chief executive Sarah Tedford said the move was a precaution.

**Health protection**

*Biggest NHS flu campaign under way*

About 30 million people - nearly half the UK population - are being offered the flu vaccine, in the biggest winter vaccination campaign the NHS has seen. For the first time, all primary school pupils can have the vaccination free. Alongside children - so-called super-spreaders - the over-65s, pregnant women and those with existing illnesses will also be offered the vaccine. Meanwhile, the government said it was confident the flu campaign would not be disrupted by a possible no-deal Brexit.

**Health services administration**

*NHS: Huge audit targets tens of thousands on NI waiting lists*

A huge hospital waiting list audit is under way across Northern Ireland. Tens of thousands of people are receiving letters as part of a validation exercise to update lists. The majority of patients will be sent two letters before being removed. The Royal College of GPs (RCGP) has advised patients to respond to their letters within two weeks to avoid the "significant risk" of losing their place on the list. Almost 13,000 letters have already been sent as part of the audit, which is in "its very earliest stages".

**HIV & AIDS**

Safe & compassionate care, every time
‘I contracted HIV while waiting for Prep’

Video: David is one of at least 15 people in England who have tested positive for HIV while waiting to get access to the anti-HIV drug Prep. He spoke to the BBC’s LGBT correspondent Ben Hunte about his experience.

A man has denied recklessly infecting three women with HIV.

John Nehemiah Rodney, of Toothill, in Swindon, pleaded not guilty to three counts of inflicting grievous bodily harm against three women, when he appeared before magistrates in the town. The court heard the women had been infected with the virus. The 60-year-old is due to appear at Swindon Crown Court on 1 November.

Mental health

Ruth Davidson to chair ITV mental health advisory group

Former Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson is to chair ITV’s new Mental Health Advisory Group. The group, created following the deaths of participants on The Jeremy Kyle Show and Love Island, will give practical advice to ITV and STV shows.

Ms Davidson - who is still an MSP - has taken up the unpaid role designed to protect the mental wellbeing of audiences and participants.

Alexis Quinn has autism and talks of her time held in a mental health facility

A CQC report claims people with learning disabilities aren't getting correct support.

Prince William speaks about mental health on Pakistan school visit

The Duke of Cambridge has spoken about the importance of young people learning about mental health during the first stop on the royal tour of Pakistan. Prince William and the Duchess of Cambridge met boys and girls at a government-run college in Islamabad on the first full day of their visit.

Comedians on Depression

Video: One of the frankest conversations you’ll hear about depression.

Billy Connolly: ‘Nothing else will keep you going like laughter’

Video: Billy Connolly retired from stand-up in 2018, six years after being diagnosed with Parkinson’s Disease. In a new book, he shares his love of drawing, reflects on his decades of live comedy and talks about living with his illness. He speaks to BBC Arts Editor Will Gompertz at Glasgow's King's Theatre, where he used to perform.

Obesity

What is obesity?

Explores implications of obesity on child health.

Obesity: Ban snacking on public transport, top doctor says

Snacking should be banned on public transport and extra taxes placed on unhealthy foods to tackle child obesity, England's outgoing chief medical officer says.
Physical activity

Slow walking at 45 ‘a sign of faster ageing’

How fast people walk in their 40s is a sign of how much their brains, as well as their bodies, are ageing, scientists have suggested. Using a simple test of gait speed, researchers were able to measure the ageing process. Not only were slower walkers’ bodies ageing more quickly - their faces looked older and they had smaller brains. The international team said the findings were an "amazing surprise". Doctors often measure gait speed to gauge overall health, particularly in the over-65s, because it is a good indicator of muscle strength, lung function, balance, spine strength and eyesight. Slower walking speeds in old age have also been linked to a higher risk of dementia and decline.

Prison health

HMP Hewell prisoner ‘set himself on fire while smoking Spice’

A prisoner died of burns injuries after accidentally setting himself on fire while smoking the so-called zombie drug Spice, a report has revealed. The inmate at HMP Hewell, in Redditch, Worcestershire, "might have been saved" were it not for an "unacceptable" delay in responding to his cell bell. Details of the death were revealed in the annual report of the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman. A disciplinary investigation was subsequently opened. Presenting her annual report, ombudsman Sue McAllister said psychoactive substances continued to be a "serious problem" in jails.

Safety

Head injuries: Cheap drug ‘could save thousands of lives a year’

A cheap and widely available drug could save hundreds of thousands of lives a year worldwide if it was routinely given to people brought into hospital with head injuries, UK doctors say. Tranexamic acid helps stop bleeding in and around the brain when blood vessels have been torn. A large international study in The Lancet now suggests it improves patient survival rates if given early enough. It cannot undo damage but can stop smaller bleeds becoming worse.

Sexual health

Endometriosis: Women in NI ‘not getting good deal’

Women in Northern Ireland are not getting a good deal from the health service, according to the head of the support charity Endometriosis UK. Angela Style said women are living in limbo with challenging symptoms. Waiting times for endometriosis treatment were "shocking", she said, with some women waiting two years for an appointment with a consultant.

Smoking

Vaping: 'I'm 17, and rarely ID'd for e-cigs'

Almost 40% of sellers targeted by councils in England have been caught illegally allowing children to buy e-cigarette products, a report has found.

Ninety of the 227 premises tested sold vaping goods to under-age teenagers in 2018-19, data from 34 councils showed.

Trading Standards - which compiled the research - has called for greater resources to enforce the law.

Public Health England said vaping was 95% healthier than smoking. It is estimated 3.6 million people in the
UK now use e-cigarettes.

**Even a few cigarettes a day worsens lung health**

"Smoking just a few cigarettes each day is just as bad for your lungs as burning through two packets," reports the Mail Online.

The headline reports a study that pooled the results of 6 population-based studies from the US including over 25,000 adults. It found that people's lung function – the amount of air that lungs can inhale and exhale – decreases almost as fast in people smoking 5 or fewer cigarettes a day, as people smoking 30 or more. Lung function declines in most people as we get older. However, smoking has long been recognised as the main cause of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), where there is inflammation and narrowing of the air passages. This makes people get short of breath easily and have persistent cough.

### Social & economic issues

**Sharp rise in babies facing being taken into care**

The rate of newborn babies involved in care proceedings has more than doubled in three years, the first analysis of data in Wales has revealed. It means newborns in Wales are now more likely to appear in care proceedings than those in England. Courts have the power to put a child into council care if they are being harmed or likely to be harmed at home. The report aims to shine a light on the family justice system, but said more work is needed to explain the trend.

**Brexit uncertainty raises NHS concerns in Wales**

Disruption from Brexit could have an adverse effect on people's health and welfare, especially for vulnerable groups, a report has said.

Public Health Wales is concerned about the "likely disruption" to medical supplies and the impact of any price hikes on things like food.

**Will the EHIC be valid after Brexit?**

If you are planning a holiday in a country in the European Union (EU) you may be wondering whether your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) will still be valid after Brexit. The EHIC currently entitles you to state-provided medical treatment if you fall ill or have an accident in any EU country, or in Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, where the scheme also applies. The UK has issued 27 million EHIC cards. They cover pre-existing medical conditions and routine maternity care as well as emergency care. Individuals with chronic illnesses, for example those who require daily dialysis, can travel knowing they will receive treatment on the same terms as the citizens of the country they are visiting.

So what will happen after Brexit? It depends on whether the UK leaves with or without a deal…

**'How my son went from gamer to compulsive gambler'**

The NHS has opened its first clinic for young people addicted to gaming and gambling, a year after a Gambling Commission report found that 55,000 11-to-16-year-olds in the UK were problem gamblers. For some the path to gambling begins with playing online games, as the BBC's Becky Milligan heard from the father of one young man now getting help for his addiction.

### Statistics

**More than half of A&Es 'not good enough'**

Half of A&Es in England are not good enough - and there are no guarantees services will get better despite
the extra money going into the NHS, the regulator says. The Care Quality Commission said people were turning to A&E in a crisis because of a lack of support in the community. It said services would remain under pressure until a funding solution was found for social care. The government pledged in the Queen’s Speech to reform social care.