

December 2017

PSNC Briefing 090/17: Update on the Health and Care landscape

This briefing is part of a series issued regularly by PSNC to inform pharmacy contractors and LPCs of developments in the wider health and care landscape beyond community pharmacy. It builds on the Health & Care Review articles which are published on the PSNC website every week.

1.4 million people referred to NHS mental health therapy in the past year

NHS Digital has published an [analysis](#) of psychological therapies in England, which includes information on recovery and waiting times.

The analysis shows that:

- there were 1,391,360 new referrals in 2016/17;
- 567,000 people finished a course of NHS talking therapy in 2016/17; this is 30,000 more patients than in the year before;
- waiting times are improving, with 88% of people waiting less than 18 weeks for treatment, and nearly 90% waiting less than six weeks; and
- as well as recovery rates improving to an average of 49% over the course of the year, 65% of patients showed 'reliable improvement' as a result of treatment.

NHS England has [commented](#) on the statistics and states that this type of intervention will mean people's conditions are spotted and treated sooner, reducing the need for more intensive and higher cost treatments.

Mental Health Bulletin: 2016/17 Annual Report

NHS Digital has published [annual statistics](#) relating to mental health services in England during 2016/17, which includes information on children for the first time.

Key facts include:

- 2,637,916 people were known to be in contact with secondary mental health, learning disabilities and autism services at some point in the year. 556,790 of these were under 18 years of age;
- this means that 4.8% of people in England were known to have accessed secondary mental health, learning disabilities and autism services during this year; and
- 9% (101,589) of people known to be in contact with secondary mental health, learning disabilities and autism services spent time in hospital as part of being in contact with these services during 2016/17.

Transforming children and young people's mental health provision: a green paper

The Department of Health and the Department for Education have opened a [consultation](#) in which they seek people's views on a green paper setting out measures to improve mental health support for children and young people.

The green paper focusses on earlier intervention and prevention, especially linked to schools and colleges.

The proposals include:

- creating a new mental health workforce of community-based mental health support teams;
- every school and college will be encouraged to appoint a designated lead for mental health; and

- a new 4-week waiting time for NHS children and young people's mental health services to be piloted in some areas.

The consultation closes on 2nd March 2018.

Mental health services for post 16 students in England

The House of Commons Library has published a [briefing](#) which outlines recent studies on the mental health of students, Government mental health policy for students, support in further and higher education providers and the legal duties of providers.

Thriving at Work: a review of mental health and employers

An [independent review](#) of mental health and employers, published in October 2017, has had a response from the DH and the Department for Work and Pensions. The paper published in response sets out plans to transform employment prospects for disabled people and those with long term health conditions over the next ten years.

The plan also serves as a response to its [Work, health and disability green paper consultation](#) which closed earlier this year and received around 6,000 responses from stakeholders and the public.

The plan involves making improvements in the following key areas:

- employment and financial support;
- supporting employers to create healthy, inclusive workplaces;
- supporting employment through health and high quality care for all; and
- working together with stakeholders.

Local area performance metrics

DH and the Department for Communities and Local Government have worked with stakeholders to produce the [NHS social care interface dashboard](#) which provides a set of measures indicating how health and social care partners in every local authority (LA) area in England are performing at the interface between health and social care.

Included in the dashboard is a breakdown of delayed days attributable to social care per 100,000 of the population and the equivalent for NHS-attributable delays.

More cancer specialists to be employed by the NHS

DH has [announced](#) that the NHS will be employing more cancer specialists in areas where there are shortages to speed up diagnoses and start people on treatments more quickly. The move is part of Health Education England's new [Cancer Workforce Plan](#).

Announcements of extra provision include:

- 200 clinical endoscopists – to investigate suspected cancers internally;
- 300 reporting radiographers – to identify cancers using x-rays and ultrasound; and
- support for clinical nurse specialists – to lead services and provide quality care.

Promoting professionalism, reforming regulation

DH has opened a [consultation](#) which seeks views on proposed reforms to the regulation of healthcare professionals in the UK.

Some of the proposed reforms up for consultation include:

- establishing a single, shared, public-facing register of all health and care professions and occupations;

- there should be greater implementation of co-operative working, in particular to use regulatory data and insight in partnership with others to reduce harm; and
- establishment of a licensing regime should be investigated. Language change should be adopted to align with a licensing process, similar to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority. This should be informed through exploration of the scope for issuing licences within existing legislation and proportionate approaches to different professions.

The consultation closes on 23rd January 2018.

Introducing 'opt-out' consent for organ and tissue donation in England

DH has made available a consultation to seek people's views on changes to make it easier for people to consent to become organ donors. The proposed changes includes a system in which people are considered willing to be an organ donor after their death unless they have opted out.

The consultation closes on 6th March 2018.

Substance misuse treatment for young people: statistics 2016/2017

Public Health England (PHE) has published new [statistics report](#) relating to alcohol and drug treatment data for people under the age of 18.

Key facts in the report include:

- specialist substance misuse services saw 4% fewer young people in 2016/17 than in the previous year. This continues a downward trend, year-on-year, since a peak of 24,053 in 2008/09;
- two-thirds of the young people accessing specialist substance misuse services were male (66%) and half (50%) of all persons were aged 16 or over;
- the most common drug that young people presented to treatment with continued to be cannabis followed by alcohol;
- the most common routes into specialist substance misuse services were from education provision (29%), youth justice services (25%), and children's social care (15%); and
- the majority of young people presenting to specialist substance misuse services have other problems or vulnerabilities related to their substance use, such as:
 - having mental health problems;
 - being 'looked after';
 - not being in education, employment or training; or
 - wider factors that can impact on their substance use (such as offending, self-harming, experiencing sexual exploitation or domestic abuse).

PHE profile updates for 2017

PHE has updated several profiles relating to a range of topics and presenting a range of indicators using the latest available data.

The profiles are designed to improve the availability and accessibility of information around specific topics and data is presented in a user-friendly format.

Topics include:

- [cancer services profiles](#);
- [end of life care profiles](#);
- [general practice profiles](#);
- [school age children profiles](#); and

- [young people profiles](#).

Measles outbreaks confirmed in 5 areas across UK

PHE is [advising](#) people to ensure they have had the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine after recent outbreaks in England have been confirmed in children and adults who have not received two doses of the vaccine.

As of 8th December 2017, there have been 28 confirmed cases in Leeds, 18 confirmed cases in Liverpool, 13 confirmed cases in Birmingham, 7 confirmed cases in Surrey, and 4 confirmed cases in Manchester.

PHE local health protection teams are working closely with the NHS and LAs to raise awareness of the outbreaks in England and Europe with health professionals and local communities.

Enhanced health in care homes: learning from experiences so far

The King's Fund has published a [report](#) to highlight progress in developing enhanced health in care homes.

The report is based on interviews with people in 15 selected areas to provide a range of different experiences, as well as published research and guidance related to the topic.

The report sought to answer the following questions:

- what is the case for enhanced health in care homes?
- why do areas start developing enhanced health in care homes?
- how do areas start implementing enhanced health in care homes? and
- how do areas develop and sustain enhanced health in care homes?

Delayed discharge funding opened to LAs

NHS Digital has [announced](#) funding of £1.4 million for LAs and their NHS partners to reduce delayed discharges. The funding will enable the integration of patient discharge from hospital into LA social care processes.

Applications are now open for LAs to work with at least one of their NHS partners to create integrated digital assessment, discharge and withdrawal notices.

Challenging Health Inequalities: Support for CCGs

NHS England has created a guide for Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to help identify areas of variation in emergency admissions in more and less deprived CCGs. Data in the guide is from the [Hospital Episode Statistics](#) and [Population Figures](#), both provided by NHS Digital.

Poorest cancer patients let down at end of life, says new report

Macmillan Cancer Support has published new [research](#) into more than half a million cancer patients' final months and years to provide an overview of the experiences of people dying of cancer.

The report shows that:

- each year, around 57,000 people die within a year of being diagnosed with cancer – and they have over 85,000 emergency visits in the short time between being diagnosed and dying.
- cancer patients from the most deprived areas were 18% more likely to die in hospital than those from the least deprived areas. This is despite previous Macmillan research finding that most people with cancer, across all socio-economic backgrounds, prefer to die at home or in a hospice; and
- cancer patients from the most deprived areas had in total around 15,000, or 15%, more emergency hospital admissions in the final year of life than those from the least deprived areas.

NHS trusts have prepared for a tough winter, but patient risk remains

NHS Providers has published a briefing [Ready and resilient? How NHS trusts have prepared for winter](#) which outlines in detail what has been done nationally and locally to prepare for extra winter pressures.

The report identifies continuing challenges and pressures facing hospital trusts:

- lack of beds – the NHS is already running at 87% bed occupancy;
- shortages of key staff groups including paramedics, GPs and A&E consultants and nurses;
- funding pressures – the additional NHS funding for winter in the Budget was welcome but has come very late to be used to maximum effect; and
- flu – this year's strain is potentially the worst seen in two decades, having already placed health systems in Australia and New Zealand under severe pressure earlier this year.

Specific actions taken by trusts include:

- steps to ensure the seamless flow of patients through to discharge;
- local resilience plans with partner organisations such as social care services;
- support to ensure people with mental health needs are treated in the right place;
- initiatives that make it easier for staff to do the right thing; and
- communications to complement the “*Stay well this winter*” national campaign.

Sharing best practice from clinical leaders in urgent and emergency care

The Care Quality Commission has developed a best practice resource for all NHS acute trusts to help meet the challenges of managing capacity and demand.

The publication, [Meeting the quality challenge; sharing best practice from clinical leaders in emergency departments](#) is a result of a workshop held earlier this year which brought together 36 senior clinicians and managers from 17 hospital trusts across the country.

Professor Ted Baker, Chief Inspector of Hospitals, said: ‘This resource provides practical examples and strategies that are being used by staff in emergency departments across the country to help manage risk and provide high quality care. By sharing these examples of best practice, we hope that staff in all hospitals can learn from them and adapt them to support improvement in the quality of emergency care for their own patients.’

Reaching out: influencing the wider determinants of health

The New Local Government Network has published [research](#) which calls for public health to be more fully recognised as contributing to our nation's growth potential.

Key findings include:

- the Government must acknowledge health as an economic asset that boosts workforce productivity;
- over 85% of senior public health officers surveyed found that economic development departments are not as engaged as they could be; and
- £65 million should be invested in Health and Wellbeing Boards to enable them to invest in innovative public health pilots that address the wider determinants of health.

Working with schools to improve the health of school-aged children

The Local Government Association (LGA) has published a [report](#) which showcases the work being done by schools and LAs across the country to improve the health of children.

The case studies cover various topics such as mental and emotional health, healthy behaviours, sex education, oral health and nursing services.

Active people, healthy places

The LGA has published a [report](#) which aims to share good practice and help decision-makers consider how their council can deliver sport, leisure and physical activity in the best way for local people and communities.

This report includes 12 case studies from different LA areas. Six look at how councils are working with charitable leisure trusts to deliver services, facilities and activities while the other six have a focus on in-house provision of sport and leisure or sports development teams by councils.

The bill of health

A [calculator](#) has been created by GoCompare to enable people to find out how much their health has cost the NHS by totalling up operations, visits to the GP and A&E, number of prescriptions and various other diagnostics.

There is also a salary calculator to find out how much an individual has contributed towards the NHS.

Brexit: the implications for health and social care

The King's Fund has published an [article](#) highlighting the developments that have taken place since the 2016 referendum.

Key facts in the article include:

- Brexit appears to already be having an impact, especially on the recruitment and retention of European Union (EU) nationals in some parts of the workforce which is contributing to shortages of key staff;
- Brexit may present some opportunities for the UK, in particular the chance to go further and faster on public health regulation and remove rules on competition that are currently inhibiting further integration and collaboration between health services; and
- the UK's membership of the European single market, customs union and Euratom has provided significant benefits. Securing equivalent access to new drugs and treatments must be a priority in the next phase of negotiations.

What's going on with A&E waiting times?

The King's Fund has published an [article](#) to highlight reasons for patients waiting longer in A&E departments.

The article looks at what different types of A&E departments there are, how A&E performance is measured, recent trends in waiting times and possible contributing factors.

It concludes that high levels of hospital bed occupancy, delays in transferring patients out of hospital, and staff shortages throughout the urgent and emergency care system have all had an impact on A&E waiting times.

NHS becomes first healthcare system in the world to publish numbers of avoidable deaths

DH has [announced](#) that every trust in England will be publishing quarterly data relating to the number of deaths due to problems in care. The data will not be comparable and will not be collated centrally. This will allow trusts to focus on learning from mistakes and sharing lessons across their organisations and their local healthcare systems.

Out in the cold: lung disease, the hidden driver of NHS winter pressure

The British Lung Foundation has published a new [report](#) which explores how the NHS can take a more seasonal approach to supporting people with lung disease, reduce unnecessary attendances and admissions, and ultimately improve patient care and outcomes.

Key facts in the report include:

- in 2016/17, respiratory admissions peaked in December at 32,492 – far above the average of 10,652 for the 20 most common disease areas;
- there are 80% more lung disease admissions in the winter months of December, January and February than there are in the warmer spring months of March, April and May;
- the vast majority of respiratory admissions are in infants and children aged 1 to 4 (17%), and people aged 65 and above (54%); and
- over the last 7 years lung disease admissions to hospital have risen at over three times the rate of all other conditions (36.6% vs 11.1%).

Why it's prime time to protect children from Junk food adverts

The Obesity Health Alliance commissioned the University of Liverpool to analyse the adverts shown during some of the TV shows popular with children in February 2017 to examine how many adverts for food and drink products high in fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) children were exposed to. The findings of the analysis have been published in a new [report](#).

Key findings include:

- the majority (59%) of food and drink adverts shown during family viewing time would be banned from children's TV, yet hundreds of children are exposed to these ads every week;
- in the worst case example, children were exposed to nine HFSS adverts in a 30-minute period;
- adverts for fruit and vegetables made up just over 1% of food and drink adverts shown during family viewing time; and
- adverts for fast food and takeaways appeared more than twice as often as any other type of food and drink adverts – largely due to their tactic of sponsoring popular family shows.

HEE launches plan to 'future-proof' NHS and care workforce

Health Education England (HEE) has published [Facing the Facts, Shaping the Future, A health and care workforce strategy for England to 2027](#) which looks at challenges faced by the health and care system and the workforce over the next decade.

The draft strategy includes content from NHS England, NHS Improvement, PHE, CQC, National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) and DH. It will now be consulted upon over the coming months and a final report will be published in July.

Specific measures mentioned in the strategy include:

- targeted retention schemes to encourage staff to continue working in healthcare;
- improvements to medical training and how junior doctors are supported in the careers;
- a far-reaching technology review across England; and
- making the NHS a more inclusive, 'family-friendly' employer.

Medical profession at 'crunch point', GMC report finds

The General Medical Council (GMC) has published an [annual report](#) which looks at data on the medical workforce across the UK to identify challenges and highlight priorities for those responsible for medical training and workforce planning.

Key facts in the report include:

- supply of new doctors into the UK's medical workforce has failed to keep pace with changes in demand – the number of doctors on the medical register has grown by 2% since 2012, while in contrast A&E attendances and GP appointments have grown by 27% in England.

- dependence on non-UK qualified doctors has increased, ranging from 18% in the South-West to 43% on the East of England;
- at the same time, the UK is at risk of becoming a less attractive place for overseas doctors to work in.

The report sets out four key priorities for workforce planning which the GMC will support. They include maintaining a healthy supply of doctors, helping the profession evolve to meet future demands, reducing pressure and burden on doctors and improving workplace culture.

NHS diabetes prevention – more than 110,000 people ‘at risk’ offered help

A new [article](#) has been published by Diabetes UK to highlight progress being made by the [Healthier You: NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme](#) in terms of referrals, uptake and participant characteristics. It was co-authored by NHS England, PHE and Diabetes UK.

NHS England has published [highlights](#) from the article, which are:

- the programme received 43,603 referrals between June 2016 and March 2017 – 16% higher than expected;
- nearly half of those referred on to the programme attended their first session – higher than the 40% originally expected;
- attendance rates for men, for people from black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, and for individuals from the most deprived areas, suggest that the programme is reaching those who are both at greater risk of developing Type 2 diabetes and who typically access healthcare less effectively.

Campaign to protect young people from STIs by using condoms

PHE has launched a new [campaign](#) to encourage 16-24 year olds to use condoms in order to reduce the rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). ‘Protect Against STIs’ launched on 15th December 2017 with a nationwide digital advertising campaign targeting young people. The new advertising hears from real people talking about their own personal experiences of having an STI and aims to help normalise and encourage condom use in young people.

To coincide with the launch of the survey, a YouGov survey of 2,007 young people reveals that almost half of sexually active young people have had sex with someone new for the first time without using a condom whilst 1 in 10 sexually active young people said they have never used a condom.

New approach to NHS clinical assessment could save thousands of lives

NHS England has asked every hospital trust to adopt a new [clinical assessment system](#), produced by the Royal College of Physicians to save approximately 2,000 lives and 627,000 beds every year.

The National Early Warning Score aims to create a standardised approach to clinical assessment and provides a consistent system especially as NHS staff move between trusts.

Under the system, patients are assessed on a series of key measures and the results are plotted on a chart which then gives a score for each measure and the combined number then shows the level of clinical care needed and the risk of deterioration. The patient would then be seen by a nurse, acute clinician or a critical care team depending on their score.

England’s chief nurse launches new winter support package to help patients stay active and leave hospital

The Chief Nursing Officer for England has issued a winter [framework](#) to reduce the amount of time people overstay in hospitals over the winter period.

The framework aims to maximise the appropriate use of care homes as well as identify and care for the cohort of patients who are medically fit for discharge. This is in recognition of the pressure that can build in the system, with ensuing threats to patient safety, during the winter months.

Doing Care Differently

Independent Age has published a [report](#) summarising what needs to be considered to deliver a social care solution and examines six themes currently dominating discussions on social care. By bringing together ideas and suggestions of over 30 individuals and organisations from across the care sector, the six themes were identified as: demand; funding and responsibility; quality; integrated care; technology; and sustainability.

GPhC publishes updated strategic plan 2017-20

The General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC) has published a [strategic plan](#) to set out the progress made in the first year since the plan was published in 2016.

Key achievements mentioned in the plan include:

- launching new standards for pharmacy professionals and developing and publishing guidance on religion, personal values and beliefs;
- carrying out a consultation on the education and training of non-registered pharmacy staff; and
- publishing new standards for the initial education and training of pharmacy technicians.

Populus research published by Mind explores the impact that the festive season can have on mental health

Mind, the mental health charity, has published new [research](#) as part of its Christmas appeal on the impact that the festive period is having on people's mental health.

Key findings in the research are:

- a quarter of people feel unable to ask for help when struggling emotionally;
- 1 in 10 people consider taking their own life because of the festive period; and
- 1 in 5 people feel like they have nowhere to turn for support.

Making obesity everybody's business: A whole systems approach to obesity

The LGA has published a [briefing](#), written in partnership with PHE and the Association of Directors of Public Health, which focusses on a programme providing LAs with a different approach to tackling obesity.

The Whole Systems Obesity programme explores the evidence and local practice to develop guidance and tools to help councils set up a whole systems approach in their local area to tackle obesity.

Key benefits of the programme are that it:

- supports the council's key priorities;
- develops a coordinated set of approaches;
- reflects the local leadership role of LAs;
- develops transferrable workforce skills and capacity relating to systems thinking.

Health Survey for England, 2016

NHS Digital has published the [Health Survey for England](#) which is designed to monitor trends in the nation's health, estimating the proportion of specified health conditions and prevalence of risk factors associated.

Key facts include:

- 26% of men and 27% of women were obese. The proportion of adults who were obese has been similar since 2010;
- 66% of men and 58% of women aged 19 and over met the aerobic activity guidelines of at least 150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week or an equivalent combination of both, in bouts of 10 minutes or more;
- 28% of adults had high blood pressure (hypertension). 12% of adults had untreated hypertension; and
- 31% of men and 16% of women usually drank at increased or higher risk of harm in 2016.

Media monitoring

On Friday 1st December 2017 the following story was published:

- Prescribing restrictions are covered in the [Times](#) and the [Independent](#).

On Sunday 3rd December 2017 the following story was published:

- [The Sunday Times](#) reports that the UK has the third-lowest number of hospital beds per person in the European Union as well as the third lowest number of doctors, with only Romania and Poland worse off, a European Commission report has found.

On Monday 4th December the following story was published:

- [The Times](#) has reported that the growing popularity of buying medications online is a public health crisis in the making, writing that a growing number of unscrupulous and illegal websites have sprung up to meet the demand, exploiting regulatory loopholes to make huge profits.

On Tuesday 5th December the following stories were published:

- [The Independent](#) reports on cuts to public health budgets and the effect on smoking cessation services.
- [The Mail](#) has a story on millennials failing to turn up to GP appointments.

On Wednesday 6th December the following stories were published:

- [The Guardian](#) has reported on a pioneering project which aims to double the amount of voluntary workers in hospitals and alleviate the pressure on staff in the health service.
- [The Independent](#) has reported on the findings of a new study which show that three quarters of British people have cured an ailment or illness after Googling the symptoms on the internet. Research revealed that seven in ten people now self-diagnose and treat minor health issues rather than try and secure an appointment with their local GP.

On Monday 11th December 2017 the following story was published:

- The [Sunday Times](#) and [Mail on Sunday](#) reported that the number of women using the contraceptive pill has dropped as women increasingly use an app called 'Natural Cycles' to avoid unwanted pregnancy.

On Tuesday 12th December 2017 the following story was published:

- [The Telegraph](#) reports on an article in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) which blames the cartoon Peppa Pig for fostering unrealistic expectations about family doctors. This was also covered by the [Daily Mail](#) and [Independent](#).

On Thursday 14th December 2017 the following stories were published:

- The NHS Health Survey for England has indicated that half of all adults are taking prescription statins or antidepressants on a regular basis. The survey has been reported in the [Daily Mail](#), [Sun](#) and [Telegraph](#).
- HEE has also published a report, covered by the [Sun](#) and the [Times](#), in which it claims that the NHS staffing crisis has been caused by millennials insisting on only working part-time.

- [Channel 4 News](#) had a piece on the 1,400 people with dementia who are facing spending Christmas in hospital.
- [The BBC](#) has reported a BMJ study which says that larger wine glasses are encouraging greater alcohol consumption.

On Sunday 17th December 2017, the following story was published:

- [Sunday's Observer](#) reported that a NHS Ideas Lab hackathon had taken place, intended to explore new ideas for healthcare apps.

On Monday 18th December 2017, the following stories were published:

- [The Telegraph](#) reports that the NHS is going to use a 'sickness surveillance system' to predict illnesses before they happen this winter in a bid to cope with pressures within the healthcare system.
- [The BBC](#) has a story from the British Cardiovascular Society, which says that tens of thousands of people may be at increased risk of dying early from heart attacks and strokes by misusing anabolic steroids.
- [The Daily Mail](#) says that a new study has shown that a third of diabetes patients are not taking their medication because of the side effects.

On Tuesday 19th December 2017, the following story was published:

- [The Daily Express](#) has reported on how there is no scientific evidence that over the counter medicines are effective in tackling cold and flu symptoms, but that people turn to them due to their availability and desperation.

On Friday 22nd December 2017, the following stories were published:

- [The Times](#) reports that tens of thousands of patients will have operations cancelled with immediate effect to make space for winter emergencies after NHS bosses issued the first edict from a national crisis team. Hospitals are expected to cancel all non-urgent operations until mid-January, the health service's national emergency pressures panel said.
- [The Times](#) also reports that the number of people waiting for a heart transplant is 24% higher than this time last year and includes 33 children. At present 298 people are on the waiting list.
- [The BBC](#) has reported that cases of shingles have reduced by 35% in England since a vaccine was offered to 70-year-olds, but that PHE is still urging more people in their 70s to get their free injection against the painful condition.

If you have queries on this PSNC Briefing or you require more information please contact [Zainab Al-Kharsan, Service Development Pharmacist](#).