

June 2018

## PSNC Briefing 035/18: Update on the Health and Care Landscape (June 2018)

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. These briefings contain useful background information to help you understand what is happening in the wider health and care environment which may impact on community pharmacy. They build on the Health & Care Review articles which are published on the PSNC website every week.

### Government must improve preventive care outside hospitals

The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee has published a [report](#) on NHS emergency admissions and readmissions to hospitals and the proportion that could be avoided. The report finds that emergency admissions continue to rise, and nearly 1.5 million people could have avoided emergency admissions in 2016/17 if hospitals, GPs, community services and social care had worked together more effectively.

Key findings include:

- in 2016/17, there were 5.8 million emergency admissions, up by 2.1% on the previous year; 24% that could have been avoided if effective preventative services were in place;
- without a better understanding of what works best to reduce emergency admissions, NHS England cannot prioritise resources effectively; and
- poor data on day-case emergency care and readmissions stops NHS England knowing if its efforts to reduce emergency admissions are helping or potentially harming patient.

A number of recommendations have been made in the report, including:

- NHS England should identify gaps in capacity in primary and community health care and set out how it intends to fill those gaps;
- NHS England's and NHS Improvement's regional teams should assess the capacity that hospitals need in terms of beds, staff and funding to deal with emergency admissions throughout the year; and
- NHS England and NHS Improvement should set out their plans for how and by when they will determine which interventions are most effective at reducing emergency admissions and how they will use any findings to ensure a more targeted use of resources and funding.

### Carers action plan 2018 to 2020

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has published an [action plan](#) which sets out the cross-government programme of work to support carers over the next two years.

The programme is structured around the following themes:

- services and systems that work for carers;
- employment and financial wellbeing;
- supporting young carers;

- recognising and supporting carers in the wider community and society; and
- building research and evidence to improve outcomes for carers.

It is envisaged that the action plan will help to improve the health and wellbeing of carers and to support a better experience for them.

## Good progress but more to do: teenage pregnancy and young parents

The Local Government Association (LGA) has published a [report](#) which provides a progress update on the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy which was launched 15 years ago. The Strategy was launched in response to England having one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in Western Europe and prompted councils to take action to lower the under-18 conception rate.

Key facts include:

- the conception rate for young women aged 15-17 has fallen by 60% since 1998 with a similar reduction in conceptions to under-16s;
- conceptions rates for the above age groups are at the lowest levels since record-keeping began in the 1960s;
- the teenage birth rate remains higher than a number of other western European countries and progress made has been uneven across England; and
- around 29% of local authorities (LAs) have a rate significantly higher than the England average where inequalities exist.

The report features case studies on how LAs have taken various approaches to drive down the conception rate.

## Making the money work in the health and care system

The Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA) has published a [report](#) in conjunction with Pricewaterhouse Coopers to explore how financial flows could be redesigned to get maximum value of any new investment in the health service. The report also proposes radical financial reforms so that benefits to patients are maximised and resources are used more effectively.

The report outlines the changes that need to be made and proposes that:

- financial flows should be aligned with the emerging place-based architecture;
- systems should be provided with more clarity through longer-term funding; and
- money should be focussed towards achieving better outcomes.

## Childhood obesity is everyone's business

The House of Commons Health Select Committee has published a [report](#) on childhood obesity ahead of the Government's childhood obesity plan. The report highlights key areas as a matter of urgency for the Government to consider before the next plan is published.

The Committee is calling for an effective childhood obesity plan with a joined-up, 'whole systems' approach and one which focusses particularly on tackling the ever-widening health inequality due to childhood obesity between the richest and poorest areas. The Government is being urged to ensure that children at risk of obesity are identified at an earlier stage, so they and their families can access appropriate help and services.

Some of the key issues highlighted in the report are:

- the Committee endorses the calls for a 9pm watershed on junk food advertising;
- restrictions on discounting and price promotions and removal of unhealthy foods from the ends of aisles and checkouts;
- calorie labelling at point of food choice for the out-of-home sector; and

- the Committee calls for targets to improve rates of breastfeeding and a full and timely implementation of the school-centred measures contained in the original 2016 Child Obesity Action Plan.

## National campaign needed to tackle loneliness ‘epidemic’, says RCGP

The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) has called for a national [public campaign](#) to raise awareness of loneliness and social isolation across society. The College argues that the campaign is essential to educating the public and should encourage people to speak to neighbours and members of their communities about loneliness or start local initiatives to build social connections.

The call is made in a new RCGP manifesto which seeks to influence the Government’s approach to tackling loneliness.

## Dementia-friendly rural communities guide

The Alzheimer’s Society has published a new [guide](#) to help all types of rural communities increase awareness of dementia and become more dementia-friendly. The charity highlights that 24% of older people in rural communities are carers, and there are now greater numbers of older people living in rural areas than urban areas.

## Numbers of GPs who want to leave within 5 years at all-time high, finds survey

The Ninth National GP Worklife Survey 2017 was carried out by University of Manchester researchers, who have now [published](#) the independent report commissioned and funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Policy Research Programme.

Key facts highlighted include:

- the number of GPs who say they are likely to quit within five years is 39%. This is an increase from 35% in 2015; the figure rose from 61% in 2015 to 62% in GPs over 50. Among this group, the majority said it was highly likely (47%) or considerably likely (15%); and
- more than 90% of GPs reported experiencing considerable or high pressure from increasing workloads.

## NHS England welcomes homeopathy court ruling

NHS England has [welcomed](#) the high Court’s decision to reject a legal challenge by the British Homeopathic Association to overturn plans to no longer routinely fund homeopathy on the NHS.

Last year, NHS England published guidance for Clinical Commissioning Groups to restrict the amount of prescriptions for medicines that are ineffective, unsafe or low clinical priority treatments such as herbal treatments and homeopathy.

## New data reveals 420,000 cases of STIs diagnosed in 2017

Public Health England (PHE) has [published](#) new figures in a report that covers sexually transmitted infections (STI) and sexual health services provided in England by demographics and geographical region.

Key facts highlighted include:

- in 2017, there were approximately 422,000 diagnoses of STIs in England, similar to 2016;
- there were 7,137 diagnoses of syphilis reported in 2017, a 20% increase compared to 2016 and a 148% increase compared to 2008;
- there were 44,676 diagnoses of gonorrhoea reported in 2017, a 22% increase relative to the year prior;
- there were 441 diagnoses of first episode warts in 15-17 year old girls in 2017, a 90% decrease relative to 2009 and an early expression of the success of the national human papillomavirus (HPV) immunisation programme; and

- over 1.3 million chlamydia tests were carried out and over 126,000 chlamydia diagnoses were made among young people aged 15 to 24 years. There was an 8% decline in the number of chlamydia tests in 2017 compared to 2016.

### Focus on brisk walking, not just 10,000 steps, say health experts

PHE and the RCGP have launched a new [campaign](#) which encourages middle aged adults to do more moderate intensity physical activity by incorporating brisk walking into their days rather than just counting steps to improve their health.

The campaign is encouraging people to download the PHE 'Active 10' app which is the only app that combines intensity and time, rather than just the distance.

### Nuffield Trust and UCL come together to rapidly evaluate new ways of care

The Nuffield Trust and University College London have [collaborated](#) to rapidly evaluate new ways of providing and organising care. This collaborative work has been funded by the NIHR Health Service and Delivery Research programme for five years.

The project will study the latest changes in health and care services and evaluate service innovations driven by national policy and local needs.

### An open letter: a long-term funding settlement for the NHS

The King's Fund, Nuffield Trust and Health Foundation have written an [open letter](#) to the Prime Minister about a long-term funding settlement for the NHS. The letter sets out what the upcoming long-term funding settlement for the NHS must do. The key messages focus on providing adequate resource and reforms to transform, addressing the NHS workforce crisis and reform of social care.

### Tobacco control plan: delivery plan 2017 to 2022

DHSC has published a report setting out [actions](#) for meeting the aims of the tobacco control plan for England and how progress will be monitored. The delivery plan sets out specific milestones and what is expected at national and local levels.

It includes actions for:

- government departments;
- national agencies; and
- local partnerships.

### Three million hours of home care lost due to council cuts, says Age UK

Age UK's new report, [Behind the Headlines – The battle to get care at home](#), highlights cases where many older people and their families struggle to get the care at home they need due to bureaucracy and LAs struggling to meet growing demand. The report states that LAs are facing deeply inadequate resources, a situation worsened by years of budget cuts.

Key facts in the report:

- provision of homecare services has fallen by three million hours since 2015;
- the average spend per adult on social care fell 13%, from £439 to £379, between 2009/10 and 2016/17; and
- over the same period around 400,000 fewer older people received social care, as eligibility criteria were tightened by councils.

Key issues faced by older people include long waits to get an assessment; social services declining to get involved; and poor quality services and support.

## Innovative models of general practice

The King's Fund has published a [report](#) which looks at innovative models of general practice in the UK and how this compares to other countries. It also looks at way in which GP services could be developed and successfully transformed under new models.

Key facts highlighted in the report include:

- funding for GP practices has not grown at the same rate as demand, leaving the profession under strain and facing a recruitment and retention crisis;
- there are five attributes that underpin general practice: person-centred, holistic care; access; co-ordination; continuity and community focus. Models that focus on access at the expense of other attributes may not provide the most effective and comprehensive care for patients;
- successful new models of general practice often focus on building relationships – between patients and professionals, between professionals within general practice and beyond, and between general practice and wider communities; and
- making changes to the model of general practice is complex and will take time, leadership and resources, which may require external support.

## Government and NHS must improve communication of health and care reforms

The House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee has published a report, [Integrated care: organisations, partnerships and systems](#), which looks at the way that care is being planned and integrated at a local level. It specifically examines the development of [Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships](#), Integrated Care Systems, Integrated Care Partnerships and Accountable Care Organisations (ACOs), which have arisen out of the [NHS Five Year Forward View](#).

The report supports the move towards more integrated, collaborative and place-based care, but argues that the Government and national bodies have yet to explain the case for change clearly and effectively. Lack of engagement with local leaders and overuse of jargon and acronyms has led to public misunderstanding and suspicion.

The report looks at ways that barriers to integrated care can be removed by the Government, such as:

- developing a national transformation strategy backed by secure long-term funding;
- committing to a dedicated, ring-fenced transformation fund;
- explaining the case for change clearly and persuasively, including why it matters to join up services for the benefit of patients and the public; and
- facilitating national bodies to work with representatives from across the health and care community.

Priorities for legislative change have also been outlined in the report and they include:

- a statutory basis for system-wide partnerships between local organisations;
- potential to designate ACOs as NHS bodies, if introduced more widely;
- changes to legislation covering procurement and competition; and
- merger of NHS England and NHS Improvement.

## Children consume more than a year's worth of sugar in 6 months

PHE has published new [data](#) which suggests that children in England have already consumed more than a year's worth of sugar in six months. Sugary soft drinks remain one of the main culprits, but other sources also contribute towards excess consumption.

Children aged four to ten years should have no more than the equivalent of five to six cubes of sugar each day, but are consuming on average 13 cubes. This means they are on track to consume around 4,800 cubes of sugar by the end of the year, more than double the maximum recommendation.

PHE's Change4Life campaign is urging parents to take action, by making simple changes to reduce the amount of sugar consumed by their children.

## Cross-government plan launched to support unpaid carers

DHSC has published a [two-year action plan](#) setting out a programme of work to support unpaid carers, ahead of the upcoming social care green paper.

The measures include:

- a new scheme to improve employment support for carers, promoting best practice for flexible working, to enable carers to continue to work alongside their caring role;
- a new £500,000 Carer Innovations Fund to promote creative and innovative ways to support carers; and
- funding for a review of best practice in identification of young carers and access to support.

## Meeting the health and wellbeing needs of young carers

The LGA has published a [guide](#) aimed at LAs to help them tackle inequalities faced by young carers. The report features case studies of good work that is being done in local areas, to inspire others to take a similar approach.

## Dementia risk now included as part of NHS Health Check

PHE has [announced](#) that healthcare professionals offering the NHS Health Check service will soon be giving advice on how to reduce dementia risk. It is estimated that over 850,000 people are living with dementia in the UK with little public understanding of how it's possible to reduce the risk. It is recognised that whilst the NHS Health Check focusses on reducing cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk, the advice for preventing CVD is much the same as for dementia.

Recent PHE [data](#) shows that over the last five years:

- over 14 million people (91% of the five-year eligible population) have been offered an NHS Health Check; and
- almost seven million people (48.7% of those offered) have had a health check.

## After a diagnosis of dementia: what to expect from health and care services

DHSC has published a [guide](#) aimed at people diagnosed with dementia and the people who care for them, which outlines the support they should expect from local services in England.

The guide includes information about:

- what is in a care plan;
- how health care and social care services can help;
- support available to family and friends who are carers; and
- how to take part in research.

## Number of elderly diagnosed with cancer set to increase by 80% in less than 20 years

Cancer Research UK has published a new report, [Advancing Care, Advancing Years: Improving cancer treatment and care for an ageing population](#) which highlights the needs of older patients with cancer.

The report highlights the urgent need for older patients, who are more likely to have complex health needs due to multiple conditions to be given better support. The figures show that each year, around 130,000 people aged 75 and over in the UK develop cancer. Due to an ageing population, this is projected to rise by 2035 to around 234,000.

The report calls on the health service to ensure they are prepared for the rising cases with more complex needs.

## New measures announced to halve childhood obesity by 2030

DHSC has [announced](#) new proposals intended to halve the number of obese children by 2030. The newly published proposals build on previous measures and forms part two of the Government's [action plan](#) for childhood obesity.

The new measures include proposals to:

- prevent stores from displaying unhealthy food at checkouts or including it in buy-one-get-one-free deals;
- introducing clear, consistent calorie labelling on menus in restaurants, cafes and takeaways;
- banning the sale of harmful, caffeine-heavy energy drinks to children; and
- introducing new TV and online advertising restrictions – this could include extending the current advertising watershed and limiting adverts during children's programmes.

## Healthy weight, healthy futures: local government action to tackle childhood obesity

The LGA has published a new [report](#) to update a previous 2016 publication which highlights how local government is tackling childhood obesity. The report showcases different ways that local government is undertaking innovative approaches whether through restricting takeaway outlets or working proactively to consider health and wellbeing such as physical activity or food and diet.

The report suggests that the solution lies in developing a whole-system approach, which should now be prioritised. Although steps are being taken at a national level, this will largely be driven from initiatives at a local level, which, if successful, can benefit generations to come.

## Spotlight on the AHSN Network's collective impact and future plans

A new [guide](#) to the Academic Health Science Networks (AHSNs) has been published which highlights the impact of England's 15 Networks and their future plans.

NHS England formally approved for the second time a new five-year license for the AHSNs as part of its ambition to drive health innovation and stimulate academic growth.

The guide highlights the collective achievements of the AHSNs, which include:

- over 22 million patients benefited from AHSN input;
- over £330 million leveraged by AHSNs to improve health and support NHS, care and industry partners;
- over 330 innovations introduced through AHSN influence; and
- over 11,000 locations developing innovations supported by AHSNs.

The report also features case studies on seven of the AHSNs' programmes, which have been identified for national adoption and spread across Network in 2018-20. These are:

- Atrial Fibrillation (AF): sharing learning and spreading best practice from across the 15 AHSNs to reduce AF-related strokes;
- Emergency Laparotomy: a collaborative approach to improving standards of care for patients undergoing emergency laparotomy surgery;
- ESCAPE-pain: a group rehabilitation programme for people with knee and/or hip osteoarthritis, providing self-management support in the community;
- PINCER: supporting pharmacists and GPs to identify patients at risk from their medications and taking the right action; and
- PRReCePT: working with maternity units to use magnesium sulphate to prevent cerebral palsy in preterm labour.

- Serenity Integrated Mentoring: bringing together police and healthcare professionals to make a positive difference to the lives of people with complex mental health needs.
- Transfers of Care Around Medicine: help for patients who need extra support taking prescribed medicines when they leave hospital.

## Williams review into gross negligence manslaughter in healthcare

DHSC has commissioned a [review](#) led by Professor Sir Norman Williams which looks into gross negligence manslaughter in healthcare settings. The review was set up to look at the wider patient safety impact of concerns among healthcare professionals that simple errors could result in prosecution for gross negligence manslaughter, even if they happen in the context of broader organisation and system failings.

The review makes recommendations to support a more just and learning culture in the healthcare system. It covers:

- the process for investigating gross negligence manslaughter;
- reflective practice of healthcare professionals; and
- the regulation of healthcare professionals.

## Over half of acute trusts now successfully switched over to the NHS e-Referral Service

As the traditional paper method of sending referrals from GPs to acute hospital trusts is currently being phased out, more than 50% of trusts in England have switched to the NHS e-Referral Service (e-Rs) NHS Digital [said](#).

The new GP contract, which came into effect in April 2018, includes an investment of £10 million, which will help to support GP practices to implement e-RS in primary care.

For professional users, e-RS improves the efficiency of the referral management process by reducing the time taken to create and manage referrals and facilitating improved communication between primary and secondary care.

## Parkrun UK teams up with RCGP to ‘prescribe’ active lifestyles to patients and practice staff

A new [initiative](#) has been launched which sees GP practices ‘prescribe’ physical activity for their patients rather than medication. GP practices will be encouraged to develop closer links with their local parkrun to become certified “parkrun practices”, and health care practitioners will be able to signpost patients and carers to parkrun.

The initiative has a focus on those who are the least active and have long-term conditions.

## Cancer patients at increased risk of suicide

PHE has published new [figures](#) which show that patients with cancer in England are at an increased risk of suicide compared to the general population.

The first national study of its kind in England reveals cancer patients have a 20% increased risk of suicide, with the highest risk seen within the first 6 months of diagnosis. Additionally, cancers with poorer prognoses are associated with the highest risk, such as pancreatic, lung and stomach cancers.

## The state of care in urgent primary care services

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has published a [report](#) on the state of care in urgent primary care services in England. The report presents an overview of inspection findings on NHS 111 services, urgent care/walk-in centres, GP out-of-hours services and the small number of GP practices that provide a walk-in service for patients not registered with them.

Key findings in the report include:

- overall, the quality is good, although one in ten services still require some improvement, particularly in initial assessment of people and timeliness of response to urgent needs;
- urgent care providers face pressures with staffing and workforce planning, which is compounded by the reality of unsocial working hours and high reliance on self-employed clinicians;
- many providers experience difficulties in accessing people's medical records;
- NHS 111 in particular has the potential to take pressure off the NHS, however it must be adequately resourced; and
- many people are not aware of the range of urgent care services available – there is a need for more public information and consistency of service provision.

## Digital change in health and social care

The King's Fund has published a [report](#) on the use of digital technology in health and social care, which suggests that the use of digital technology in health and social care can improve quality, efficiency and patient experience as well as supporting more integrated care and improving the health of a population.

The report discusses large-scale change in digital technology, shares practical learning from case studies and highlights key barriers to successful change as well as how these barriers can be mitigated.

## Media monitoring

**On Saturday 2nd, Sunday 3rd and Monday 4th June 2018, the following stories were published:**

- [The Telegraph](#) features part two of their '70 Ideas to Save the NHS' series. This week's segment includes 'sourcing home care for patients when they arrive at hospital', 'self-testing kits for HIV' and 'paramedics treating patients in A&E'.
- A tenth of us will have diabetes by 2030, reports [The Express](#). Recent figures, based on data from Diabetes UK and taken from a Parliamentary question asked by Labour MP Tom Watson, reveal that diabetes diagnoses will rise.

**On Tuesday 5th June 2018, the following stories were published:**

- Aspirin and antacids could cut risk of throat tumours. Giving high-risk patients a low dose of aspirin and an anti-acid reflux medication for seven years reduced their risk by a fifth, scientists from Cancer Research UK have said. Featured in [The Times](#) and [The Sun](#).
- PHE urge fans travelling to Russia for the World Cup to ensure they are up-to-date with their MMR vaccine, following large outbreaks of measles in Europe. In 2017, outbreaks affected more than 20,000 people in Europe, leading to 35 deaths. Featured in the [BBC](#) and [The Mail](#).

**On Wednesday 6th June 2018, the following stories were published:**

- [The Times](#) features an opinion piece which argues that the NHS won't learn how to spend effectively if funding is simply increased. The article references [research released from the Social Market Foundation](#), which sets out the scale of the challenge and offers solutions to make the service spend more effectively.
- Heart attacks are 65% more likely to be fatal in winter because the NHS is so overstretched, research from the British Cardiovascular Society suggests. Featured in [The Times](#), [The Express](#) and [The Mail](#).

**On Thursday 7th June 2018, the following stories were published:**

- Holidaymakers are being warned to check the rules on carrying medicines abroad to avoid falling foul of local laws. The Foreign Office said some commonly-prescribed medicines were 'controlled drugs' in certain countries, and travellers could risk a fine or imprisonment if they break the rules. Featured in the [BBC](#), [The Mail](#) and [The Sun](#).

- The Prime Minister will give the NHS a ‘significant increase’ in its budget as part of a ‘birthday present’ as it turns 70 in July, Jeremy Hunt has said. In an interview with [The Guardian](#), the Health Secretary revealed that the PM is ‘100% committed’ to the NHS and intends to increase funding to tackle chronic understaffing, improve care and cope with the ageing population. Also featured in the [BBC](#) and [The Times](#).

**On Friday 8th June 2018, the following stories were published:**

- Health spending in the UK is significantly behind other European countries, a report shows. As a percentage of GDP, the UK continues to spend less on health than Germany, Sweden, France and others. Featured in [The Mail](#).
- [The Mirror](#) features a piece on ‘England’s death hotspots’. Research by the Centre for Progressive Policy suggests that an NHS postcode lottery exists in England where up to 17% of the country, around 9 million people, are more likely to suffer avoidable deaths due to where they live.

**On Saturday 9th Sunday 10th and Monday 11th June 2018 the following stories were published:**

- [The Sun](#) reports that almost half of new parents have rushed their child to A&E for a minor illness in the last 12 months. These findings come from a study carried out on behalf of Nurofen for Children.
- [The Mirror](#) reports that rising fees for dental work are forcing patients to turn to GPs and A&E, where they can be treated for free.

**On Wednesday 13th June 2018 the following stories were published:**

- Simon Stevens has pledged to reduce the number of ‘long stay’ patients in hospitals by a quarter. Nearly 350,000 patients spend at least three weeks stuck on a ward each year, taking up one fifth of all beds. Featured in [The Telegraph](#) and [The Mail](#). This was also featured in [The Times](#), where it was said action on this would be needed now to avoid another winter crisis.
- The measles outbreak in England has shown no signs of slowing as cases have shot up by a third. PHE confirmed that there are nearly 600 confirmed cases, with an extra 147 recorded in the last three weeks. Featured in [The Mail](#).
- High blood pressure at the age of 50 increases a person’s risk of dementia by 45%, a new study has suggested. Research published in the European Heart Journal found that study participants had a greater risk even if they did not have other heart-related problems. The association was seen at aged 50, but not at 60 or 70. Featured in [The Independent](#), [The Guardian](#), [The Times](#), [The Express](#).

**On Thursday 14th June 2018 the following stories were published:**

- Immigration rules to be relaxed for non-European Union (EU) doctors and nurses. The Government is to relax immigration rules to allow more non-EU skilled workers into the UK. Featured in the [BBC](#).
- People who have type 2 diabetes are almost a third more likely to develop Parkinson’s disease, a study has found. Researchers from UCL say that the risk increases almost fourfold if patients aged between 25 and 44 are diagnosed with diabetes. Featured in [The Times](#).

**On Friday 15th June 2018 the following stories were published:**

- The [BBC](#) reports that the number of people waiting for a hospital operation England is at its highest for more than a decade. Also covered by [The Mail](#).
- The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges is recommending that patients should challenge doctors over the treatment they are offered as part of a programme designed to reduce over-medication, reports [The Times](#).

**On Saturday 16th, Sunday 17th and Monday 18th June 2018, the following story was published:**

- The HPV vaccine has been so successful in cutting cancer-causing infections among young women, it is now expected that the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation will advise that the jab is offered to boys too. This story has been covered by the [Times](#), [Telegraph](#), [Mail](#), and [BBC](#).

**On Tuesday 19th June 2018, the following stories were published:**

- [The Mail](#) reports that a significant number of women are being prescribed valproate which can cause serious birth defects. There is concern that women of childbearing age have not been warned of the risks by healthcare professionals.
- The Office for National Statistics has confirmed that the lifespans of people in Britain have stopped increasing, reports [The Mail](#).

**On Saturday 23rd, Sunday 24th and Monday 25th June 2018, the following story was published:**

- Two in five health supplements may not contain what they claim on the label, research suggests. Results from the British Herbal Medicine Association study suggest 30-40% of milk thistle and echinacea supplements sold in shops did not contain the active ingredient as described on the label. Featured in [The Telegraph](#).

**On Tuesday 26th June 2018, the following stories were published:**

- A joint letter to the editor of The Guardian, from the Patients Association, Diabetes UK, NPA and others, calls for an end to inequalities in health characterised by variations in life expectancy. The organisations suggest a test of the forthcoming long-term NHS plan will be whether the poorest patients and communities benefit from the new investment promised. Published in [The Guardian](#).
- The BMA have called for girls and boys to be given the HPV vaccine while at primary school. Currently the vaccine is only offered to girls from the age of 12, despite its effectiveness among both sexes. Featured in [The Telegraph](#) and [The Mirror](#).

**On Wednesday 27th June 2018, the following stories were published:**

- The BMA has called for a cap on the number of patients seen by GPs each day. Medics said they were too often expected to have up to 70 consultations a day and that this is not safe for them or for patients. Doctors are hailing the system in Sweden where GPs see just 13 patients daily. Featured in [The Telegraph](#) and [The Mail](#).
- Independent analysis produced for the [BBC](#) found that seven in ten adults do not meet the recommended guidelines in relation to diet, physical activity, drinking and smoking. Experts suggest the Government should tax and regulate more to encourage people to be healthier.

**On Friday 29th June 2018, the following story was published:**

- Regularly seeing the same doctor can halve death rates as the GP will know the patient better and the patient is thought to be more honest and trusting of the GP's advice. The RCGP has said that workload pressures mean that practices cannot always offer this. This story was covered by [The Times](#), [The Telegraph](#), [The Mirror](#), [The Guardian](#), the [BBC](#), [The Sun](#) and [The Mail](#).

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