

September 2017

PSNC Briefing 076/17: 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.

Nasal spray effective at protecting vaccinated children from flu

Public Health England (PHE) has published [new data](#) which shows that the flu vaccine nasal spray reduced the risk of vaccinated children getting flu by 65.8% during 2016/17 in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Other facts included in the data are:

- effectiveness of flu vaccine in younger vaccinated adults aged 18 to 64 years reduced the risk of flu by 40.6% during 2016/17;
- in 2016/17, PHE did not find that the vaccine was significantly effective in protecting against influenza for the over 65s; and
- the lower effectiveness in the older population this season highlights the need to continue to expand the programme among the young, as by protecting them, this also indirectly protects those at high-risk of flu.

Jenny Harries, Deputy Medical Director for PHE said: “It is good news that last winter children were particularly well protected against flu with the vaccine nasal spray. We know children can spread flu more than others and if we can keep them well it means that the infection is less likely to pass to those who are at high risk. We also saw the risk of flu fall by over 40% in vaccinated adults under 65 allowing more people to stay well last winter.”

Sexual health, reproductive health and HIV: commissioning review

PHE and the Association of Directors of Public Health, supported by NHS England and NHS Clinical Commissioners have published a [report](#) highlighting the findings of a survey of local authorities (LAs), Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and NHS England.

The survey, carried out in 2016, looked at the variability in implementation of the commissioning arrangements introduced for sexual and reproductive health and HIV to provide a clear picture and highlight challenging areas within the commissioning framework.

There were six key themes that were consistently found within the survey responses:

- fragmentation of commissioning;
- ensuring access to services, particularly for those at greatest risk;
- contracting problems including cross-charging for patients attending services outside of area;
- workforce concerns – clinical expertise both in service delivery but also in commissioning;
- increasing demand for some services; and
- financial pressures due to reductions in budgets – particularly in LAs.

Stocktake of local mental health prevention planning arrangements

PHE has published a high-level [summary](#) of how the promotion of mental health and prevention of mental ill-health is incorporated in planning processes in local areas. The research was undertaken by the King's Fund and commissioned by PHE and looked at 35 local areas.

Key findings include:

- all 35 local areas had included promotion of mental health and/or prevention of mental health problems in their planning processes to some degree;
- the overall level of priority given to this varied significantly between sites; and
- there was also variation within sites, with different stakeholders placing greater emphasis on different levels of prevention.

NHS hospitals deeper in the red than reported, new report claims

The Nuffield Trust has published a new [briefing](#) showcasing the state of the NHS's finances and outlines the prospects for the next three to four years.

It analyses the accounts and financial data published by NHS regulators and warns that although trusts have repeatedly delivered large efficiencies, in recent years they have been relying increasingly heavily on one-off savings and paper-based savings from accountancy changes.

Key findings in the briefing include:

- even if trusts continue to make savings at a relatively high rate historically, they will still run up underlying deficits for the foreseeable future and will remain more than £2 billion in the red, in underlying terms, in 2021. This underlying deficit could be as high as £3.7 billion if inflation continues to rise faster than NHS regulators anticipated;
- NHS commissioners, the bodies responsible for passing on funding to trusts, will not have any room to give them more money due to their own budgets being squeezed; and
- the proportion of commissioners' funding which goes to hospital and other specialist care is set to rise from 63% to 65% in 2020, even though the NHS is supposed to be reforming itself to rely less on hospitals.

Reducing health inequalities in local areas

PHE has published a document, [Reducing health inequalities: system, scale and sustainability](#), which aims to support local action to tackle health inequalities. It helps local partners identify what specific interventions could measurably improve outcomes. It is also accompanied by a slide set.

Audiences for these resources include LA leaders, chief executives and other senior officers and councillors, as well as Directors of Public Health, public health specialists and health service commissioners.

Health Matters: Making cervical screening more accessible

PHE has published the latest [Health Matters](#), this time focussing on how to make cervical screening more accessible. The resource outlines how LAs, CCGs and GPs can all play a key role in raising awareness of cervical screening and encouraging women to attend screening.

It covers the human papillomavirus vaccination programme, the NHS cervical screening programme and how to address barriers to screening attendance.

Better mental health: JSNA toolkit

PHE has published a [toolkit](#) which signals the intent of the National Mental Health Intelligence Network's intent to support the development of mental health and wellbeing Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs).

The Mental Health and Wellbeing JSNA toolkit links mental health data, policy and knowledge to help planners understand needs within the local population and assess local services.

Mental health and behavioural conditions account for nearly one-in-three known fit notes

NHS Digital has published a [statistical publication](#), in collaboration with The Work and Health Unit, jointly sponsored by the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department of Health (DH). It presents data on electronic fit notes issued in GPs across England. The report covers the period from 1st December 2014 to 31st March 2017.

Key facts in the publication include:

- 1 fit note per 48 patients aged 18-65 years, was issued by GPs on average each month;
- 5% of fit notes reported were classified as 'may be fit for work', with 4 out of 5 of these recommending an adaptation in the workplace, working hours or duties; and
- 3% of fit notes with a known diagnosis were for mental and behavioural disorders compared to 18% for diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue.

New report reveals 'upselling' is fuelling the obesity crisis

The Royal Society for Public Health and Slimming World have published a [report](#) highlighting how consumer upselling is contributing to weight gain.

The two organisations conducted research to ask the general public about their experience of upselling – being persuaded to purchase something additional or more expensive than originally intended – and how often it occurs and in which setting it occurs.

The report includes responses from 2,055 UK adults and shows that consumers face an average of 106 verbal pushes towards unhealthy choices each year as they are asked if they want to upgrade to a large meal or drink and add extra toppings or sides to their order.

Key findings include:

- more than 78% of the public experience upselling at least once in a typical week;
- in the course of a week, upselling techniques used by businesses resulted in 34% of people buying a larger coffee than intended, 33% upgrading to a large meal in a fast food restaurant, 36% buying chocolate at the till at a newsagents or petrol station and 35% adding chips or onion rings to the side of their pub or restaurant meal;
- the average person consumes an extra 330 calories each week as a result of upselling, resulting in an estimated weight gain of 2.3kg over the course of a year; and
- young people are even more likely to be exposed to upselling, with 18-24-year olds experiencing it 166 times each year, nearly every other day, and going on to consume an extra 750 calories per week as a result.

1 in 10 men aged 50 have a heart age 10 years older than they are

PHE has conducted an [analysis](#) on its Heart Age Test, which is the only known way of measuring heart age, and has found that many people are at an increased risk of a potentially fatal heart attack or stroke.

The analysis is based on 1.2 million Heart Age Tests taken, of which 33,000 of those were by people aged 50. Out of all 1.2 million people who have taken the Heart Age Test, 167,000 (12%) had a heart age at least 10 years older than them. To date, the test has been taken 1.3 million times.

Additionally, PHE found that around half of those taking the test since it launched in February 2015 did not know their blood pressure numbers.

Sector-led improvement for public health, prevention and early intervention

The Local Government Association (LGA) has published a [prospectus](#) outlining the work they will do with PHE and the Association of Directors of Public Health to deliver sector-led improvement activity for public health, prevention and early intervention in 2017/18. This is part of the Care and Health Improvement programme, funded by DH.

The prospectus sets out:

- the programme of sector-led improvement support available through the LGA and partners;
- signposting to other support and resources available; and
- the early support arrangements for LAs with performance challenges in public health.

'Unrelenting pressure' on NHS staff spells trouble for cancer care, says Macmillan

Macmillan Cancer Support has published the findings of a [survey](#) of over 250 GPs and nurses working in primary care across the UK to assess the impact of workforce pressures on the delivery of care for cancer patients.

Key findings include:

- over a third (37%) of GPs and nurses surveyed said that existing workforce pressures meant that some cancer patients are attending A&E because they can't get help elsewhere;
- 44% of those GPs and nurses surveyed said pressures meant cancer patients were not always being treated as early as possible; and
- nearly a third (31%) reported that cancer patients do not have the support they need to regain a good quality of life after treatment because of pressures affecting the NHS workforce.

The charity is urging government across the UK to address these significant pressures and set out an ambitious vision to ensure that the NHS cancer workforce is equipped to meet future challenges.

Hunt: We will target medication errors next in the drive for patient safety

The Health Service Journal has published an [article](#) by Jeremy Hunt, in which he announces an initiative that aims to change culture and systems.

Jeremy Hunt and the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer at NHS England will be launching an initiative focussed on reducing prescribing and medication errors. It will look at a number of areas such as improving how technology is used and understanding how best to educate and inform patients about their medicines.

New £13 million funding to help hospital A&Es prepare for winter

DH has [announced](#) that it has made available funds for emergency care in the latest wave of winter funding. A list of trusts eligible for the funding is available on the DH website.

Around £13 million has been awarded to improve patient flow through A&E and will be used to help hospitals finalise preparations ahead of winter, particularly to deal with the high demands expected.

The funding supports NHS England's wider plans to improve A&E performance by 2018.

New approach to preventing heart attacks and strokes

The NHS, working with PHE has announced a new drive to prevent heart attacks and strokes, saving thousands of lives by taking a more integrated approach to cardiovascular care.

New PHE data suggests that 9,000 heart attacks and at least 14,000 strokes can be prevented over the next three years with better detection and management of high blood pressure, high cholesterol and atrial fibrillation (AF).

NHS England, in collaboration with PHE has [written](#) to all 44 [Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships](#) (STPs) to draw attention to the new drive to prevent heart attacks and strokes. It is hoped that as a result, STPs will mobilise clinical leaders across their patch to drive improvements.

Atrial fibrillation prevalence estimates for local populations

PHE has published a [resource](#) which provides estimates of the number of people with AF in GP practices and CCG areas in England.

The resource can be used by healthcare professionals and commissioners of local services to view the variation in the condition across the area. It presents estimates for male, female and total population.

An analysis of the estimates highlights several key points:

- it is estimated that 1.4 million people in England have AF; this is estimated to be 2.5% of the population;
- AF prevalence is higher in men (2.9%) than in women (2%);
- AF prevalence increases with age; 2.8% of the total estimated AF in the population is likely to occur in people aged under 45, 16.6% in people aged 45-65 and 80.5% in people aged over 65; and
- across England, it is estimated that 425,000 people are living with undiagnosed and untreated AF.

Sugar reduction and wider reformulation

PHE has published an [interim review](#) which explains how the organisation is approaching its sugar reduction programme as part of its wider reformulation agenda.

Since PHE published its first technical report in March 2017, this review outlines the actions PHE has taken since April to September 2017 and covers the next steps for the next six months.

It covers the following aspects of the programme:

- progress on sugar reduction since March 2017;
- soft drinks;
- engagement with businesses providing food consumed out of the home; and
- the wider reformulation programme.

STPs in London: an independent analysis of the October 2016 STPs

The King's Fund and the Nuffield Trust have published a [report](#), looking at the content and themes of the five London STPs.

Commissioned by the Mayor of London, the report assesses the main issues and risks to be addressed across the plans and makes recommendations for the future of the STP process in London.

Key facts highlighted in the report include:

- all five STP areas are seeking to give greater priority to prevention and early intervention, while also strengthening and redesigning services delivered in primary care and the community. This includes more closely integrating NHS and social care services;
- ambitions to prioritise prevention and reduce inequalities need to be backed up by more detailed proposals on how this will be done. The role of the NHS in addressing people's non-medical needs and reducing inequalities should be more clearly defined;
- all STPs require capital investment to be delivered, amounting to £5.7 billion across London by 2020/21. It is unlikely that these resources will be available from national budgets; and
- health and social care professionals, patients and the public, local government and other partners must be meaningfully involved in developing the content of the plans and their implementation.

Health economics: evidence resource

PHE has published a [health economic evidence resource tool](#) which shows key cost-effectiveness and return on investment evidence underpinning public health interventions.

The tool covers different public health themes such as sexual health, alcohol misuse, NHS health checks and smoking and tobacco. It then covers activities relating to each theme and intervention types.

Workplace health needs assessment

PHE has published a [document](#) which employers can use to understand where to prioritise investment in staff health and wellbeing, when moving beyond the basic health and safety legislative requirements.

The document is a tested tool to carry out a workplace health needs assessment and is for employers of all types and sizes. It covers issues such as smoking, healthy eating, sleeping, and workplace health and illness.

HIV testing: encouraging uptake

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published a new [quality standard](#) focussing on interventions to improve the uptake of HIV testing among people who may have undiagnosed HIV.

Quality statements in the standard relate to hospitals and GPs in areas of high and extremely high HIV prevalence, HIV indicator conditions, regular HIV testing and people who may have been exposed to HIV.

Type 2 diabetes: prevention in people at high risk

NICE has published a [public health guideline](#) covering how to identify adults at high risk of type 2 diabetes.

The guidelines are aimed at commissioners, managers and a wide range of healthcare professionals as well as the public.

The guideline includes recommendations on:

- risk assessment and risk identification;
- physical activity;
- weight management and dietary advice;
- vulnerable groups; and
- metformin and orlistat.

Making sense of social prescribing

The University of Westminster has published a [guidance document](#) commissioned by NHS England focussing on social prescribing.

The guide reflects the latest information available on social prescribing; each section is a summary of a key aspect of social prescribing.

It covers: what is social prescribing; why do social prescribing; what do different models look like; what makes a good link worker; what makes a good referral; governance and risk management; and evaluation.

New report showcases how new care models are harnessing technology

NHS Confederation, NHS Clinical Commissioners, NHS Providers and the LGA have published [New care models: harnessing technology](#), which explores how five [vanguards](#) are implementing innovative digital technology solutions at the heart of a new approach to care. Key points in the report include:

- the vanguards show the potential for technology to enhance, rather than replace, existing services. This requires teams to think through how the solutions will support existing systems, processes and ways of working. Central to this is engaging staff in the development process, understanding how they work and want to work in future, and providing ongoing support and training;
- when it comes to harnessing technology, local areas should ‘steal with pride’ and make use of learning and evidence from other areas. The national health and care bodies have a key role to play in the dissemination of good practice; and
- new technological solutions need to be considered within the context of local needs, and anchored to wider change programmes across organisations and whole health and care systems.

Findings from CQC’s programme of comprehensive GP inspections

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has published a report, [The state of care in general practice 2014 to 2017](#), which provides a detailed analysis of the quality and safety of general practice in England.

The CQC has been conducting a programme of comprehensive inspections of GP practices and the analysis is believed to be the most detailed yet.

Key points in the report include:

- on first inspection, 79% of GP practices were rated as good and 4% were rated as outstanding overall;
- with re-inspections, this had improved to 86% rated as good and 4% outstanding overall; and
- one in ten practices needed to improve the quality of care, as 8% were rated as requires improvement and 2% rated as inadequate overall.

Promises to give people control of their care are being broken, new research finds

National Voices has published new [research](#) which assesses whether person-centred care is being delivered in health and care services in England.

The report collates patient and service user data and focusses on information, communication, involvement in decisions, care planning and care coordination.

Key findings in the research include:

- only 3% of people with one or more long term condition reported having a written plan for their care and support;
- 46% of inpatients said they did not get enough further support to recover or manage their condition after leaving hospital;
- 87% of general practice patients said their GP was good at listening to them; and
- family involvement is not central, and most carers need better support; only 23% of carers said they’d had a social care assessment.

Stop smoking services: models of delivery

PHE has published a document to support local healthcare commissioners and directors of public health when making decisions on the provision of local stop smoking services.

The tool, [Models of delivery for stop smoking services: options and evidence](#), describes interventions to support smokers to stop, evidence of effectiveness (service components) and sets out different models for delivering these interventions currently considered by LAs (service models). It also provides guidance on good practice for commissioning.

Access and waiting times in children and young people’s mental health services

The Education Policy Institute has published a [report](#) which examines new data on access to specialist treatment for children and young people with mental health problems and the waiting times they face.

Key findings highlighted include:

- over a quarter of children (26.3%) referred to specialist mental health services were not accepted in 2016/17, this represents over 50,000 children;
- there is considerable variation between providers, with some turning away less than 5% of referrals, while others turn away over half of young people; and
- the average of all providers' median waiting times for assessment has fallen from 39 days in 2015/16 to 33 days in 2016/17.

Social workers reveal the extent of social care problems

The Care & Support Alliance has published the [findings](#) of a survey of social workers which provides an insight into how many social workers feel about the frustrations of their day to day work.

There were 469 responses to the online survey, which shows:

- 68% of respondents said they felt expected by their managers to reduce the help on offer to people in need of social care;
- 81% of respondents said family and friends are being expected to provide more support to 'fill in' where care has been reduced;
- 72% felt that the support to take part in social and leisure activities was the type of help most commonly reduced; and
- 83% didn't think there was enough variety and quality of social care provision in their area.

What does the public think about the NHS?

The King's Fund has published a [report](#) based on a survey it commissioned on the public's attitude to the NHS. It asked whether the public believes the NHS should be maintained, what they see as their responsibility when it comes to their own health and whether they want a say in how decisions that affect the NHS are made.

Key findings highlighted include:

- 77% of the public believe the NHS should be maintained in its current form. This level of support has remained consistent over almost two decades despite widespread social, economic and political change;
- 66% of adults are willing to pay more of their own taxes to fund the NHS, underlining growing support among the public for tax rises to increase NHS funding;
- 67% think that treatments and services should only be available on the NHS if they are available to everyone and not dependent on where people live, while 31% think that treatments and services should be based on local need; and
- 65% believe that keeping healthy is primarily down to the individual, with just 7% placing this responsibility with the NHS.

Smoking quit rates highest in 10 years

Cancer Research UK has published the [findings](#) of a study from University College London which suggests that nearly 20% of quit attempts were successful in the first half of 2017, an increase from an average of 15.7% over the last decade.

The report was published alongside the launch of the Government stop smoking campaign, [Stoptober](#).

Media monitoring

Tuesday 29th August 2017

- [The Telegraph](#) has reported on a new study by the University of Manchester whose findings recommend that patients should be given regular urine tests to ensure they are taking medication to identify those patients who are ignoring prescriptions and encourages greater compliance. This was also covered by the [Daily Express](#).
- [The Guardian](#) has reported on a medical study conducted in Boston which has revealed that anti-inflammatory injections could lower the risk of heart attacks and may slow the progression of cancer, in what researchers say is the biggest breakthrough since the discovery of statins. This was also covered by the [BBC](#), and the [Daily Express](#).
- [The Sun](#) has reported on plans by the American FDA to reduce the levels of nicotine in cigarettes in order to make them less appealing to consumers. If successful in reducing addiction levels, such measures may be adopted in the UK.
- [The Daily Express](#) has reported that arthritis sufferers who take ibuprofen are at a greater risk of high blood pressure and strokes. The warning was issued yesterday by scientists during a conference in Barcelona on cardiovascular disease. Delegates were told new research has revealed that ibuprofen – one of the most widely prescribed drugs in the world – increased blood pressure more than other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.

Wednesday 30th August 2017

- [The Daily Mail](#) and [Telegraph](#) have both reported on plans from MedExpress to start delivering drugs by drone in the UK following some successful trials.
- [The Guardian](#) and [Daily Mail](#) have reported that NHS England has secretly pledged additional funding to CCGs which establish panels of doctors to review GP referrals to hospital – with the intention of reducing the overall number of referrals.

Thursday 31st August 2017

- The NHS has offered recruiters £100 million over three and half years to boost GP numbers in England, the [FT](#) reports. Meanwhile, [The Times](#) suggests that plans for GPs to monitor colleagues' referrals could pose a safety risk.
- [The Times](#) reports on failings by ambulance services and call handlers leading to deaths and interventions by coroners.
- [The Telegraph](#) reports on signs of heart failure in obese toddlers.
- [The Guardian](#) highlights a Nuffield Trust study, suggesting a hidden overspend of £3billion between NHS Trusts, making it 'next to impossible' to reach financial targets.
- A ComRes poll has found nine in ten MPs believe the care system is not fit for purpose, the [Mail](#) reports.

Friday 1st September 2017

- [The Telegraph](#) has reported on how the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence has rejected the anti-cancer drug Fulvestrant due to a lack of evidence that it can extend lives. This is despite trials showing the drug stalls the cancer's growth by around three months. This was also covered by [The Daily Mail](#).
- [The Guardian](#) also reported on NHS plans to spend £100 million bringing in 3,000 GPs from abroad to help boost numbers in the UK. Recruitment agencies will earn £20,000 for each GP they succeed in placing in a family doctor practice in England as part of the NHS England initiative to boost the number of GPs by 5,000 by 2020. This was also covered by the [BBC](#).

Saturday 2nd September – Monday 4th September 2017

- The main story is the call from NHS Providers for the NHS to receive a £350 million cash injection to enable it to cope through the winter. This is covered by the [Daily Mail](#), [Guardian](#), [Telegraph](#), [Times](#), [BBC](#) and [ITV](#).

- [ITV](#) has reported on a shortage of organs resulting in unnecessary deaths, as part of Organ Donation Week.

Tuesday 5th September 2017

- [The Sun](#) has reported that the Royal College of Nursing has threatened strike action this winter unless Theresa May lifts the public sector pay cap.

Wednesday 6th September 2017

- The Today Programme reported on staff shortages in the NHS, in the context of speculation on the public sector pay cap, also reported in the [Mirror](#) and elsewhere.

Thursday 7th September 2017

- The [Telegraph](#), [BBC](#) and [Times](#) have reported that 'cyberchondria' (internet searching and fitness trackers) is causing too many patients to book unnecessary NHS appointments.
- A British Medical Association ballot of GPs has found that more than half would consider temporarily suspending new patient registration as a form of industrial action to protest about what they say is a lack of Government support for their increased workloads. This has been reported by [The Times](#) and [Daily Mail](#).

Friday 8th September 2017

- [The Guardian](#) claims that new research shows that the drinks industry – and the public awareness bodies which they fund are misleading the public in regard to the link between alcohol and cancer. This was also covered in the [The Daily Mail](#).
- Former MP for Bath, Ben Howlett, has written an opinion piece in [The Guardian](#) on how the Government's plans to tackle European immigration will adversely affect DH's ability to recruit much needed talent.
- [The Times](#) reports that the number of suicides in the UK has fallen to a six-year low. According to the Office for National Statistics there were 5,688 suicides last year, about 200 fewer than the previous year.

Saturday 9th September – Monday 11th September 2017

- [The Telegraph](#) and [Daily Mail](#) reported a trail of a speech by Jeremy Hunt in which he intends to say that every NHS patient will be able to access their medical records and book an appointment with a GP via one app by the end of next year.
- [The Telegraph](#) reported that people with mental health problems face a postcode lottery for help, as a new analysis shows twice as many consultant psychiatrists are available in some parts of the country compared to others.

Tuesday 12th September 2017

- [The Daily Telegraph](#) reported that under new NHS plans aimed at preventing almost 25,000 heart attacks and strokes, shoppers could have their blood pressure checked at supermarket tills. Firefighters, teachers and office workers will also be trained to carry out tests, in a bid to identify thousands of people at risk of the major killers, and help relieve pressure on GP services. This was also covered by [The Times](#), and the [Daily Mail](#).
- [The Times](#) reported that the number of nurses specialising in dementia and other mental health problems in older people has been cut by a fifth since 2010. Psychiatric nurses treating older people have been among the hardest hit by a reduction in mental health staffing despite government pledges to prioritise the rise in dementia.

Wednesday 13th September 2017

- The Daily Mail claimed a victory in its campaign on sepsis, following a BBC Panorama programme. [The Mail](#) reports that pharmacists will be trained to spot sepsis.
- The Daily Telegraph's [front page lead](#) announced that the NHS fears the worst flu season in its history.

Thursday 14th September 2017

- The [Daily Mail](#) reported that the number of patients who have overdosed on painkillers has doubled in ten years due to overprescribing taking place.
- The [Daily Mail](#) reported Jeremy Hunt's comments from NHS Expo, where he said that patients may one day be diagnosed by computers rather than doctors.

Saturday 16th September – Monday 18th September 2017:

- The [Daily Mail](#) has reported on recommendations by PHE that 75% of food sold on the high street will be required to cut their content by 10% as part of an effort to tackle obesity.

Tuesday 19th September 2017:

- The [Guardian](#) has obtained data which shows that the NHS is spending almost £80 million a year hiring private ambulances to answer 999 calls and take patients to hospital for appointments.

Wednesday 20th September 2017

- [The Guardian](#) has reported on comments by the World Health Organization that there are not enough new drugs being developed to combat the risks of drug resistance. This was also covered by [ITV](#) and the [Daily Mail](#).
- The [BBC](#) reports that the life extending cancer drug – nivolumab – has been approved by NICE and will be made available to some patients through the Cancer Drugs Fund, while more evidence is gathered on its cost-effectiveness. The drug is already available in Scotland.

Thursday 21st September 2017

- [The Times](#) reports that women are seeking abortion pills online, for reasons ranging from controlling relationships to long distances to the nearest clinic.
- The Mail and others also [report](#) on draft NICE guidance on e-cigarettes.

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