

**From:** TheInformationPoint@kent.gov.uk [mailto:TheInformationPoint@kent.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 02 October 2010 08:45  
**Subject:** Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Bulletin No. 40 1st October 2010

This bulletin is produced weekly by The Information Point  
**Tel:** (01622) 694125,  
**Freecall:** 7000 4125  
**E-mail:** [TheInformationPoint@kent.gov.uk](mailto:TheInformationPoint@kent.gov.uk)  
For our full range of information products please [Visit our K/net pages](#)

## Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Bulletin No. 40 / 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010

*If you would like to receive further information, please telephone or email the appropriate contact officer responsible. Alternatively, contact Tristan Godfrey on 01622 694196 or email [tristan.godfrey@kent.gov.uk](mailto:tristan.godfrey@kent.gov.uk).*

### Index

[Care Quality Commission](#)  
[Department of Health](#)  
[Government](#)  
[Health in Kent](#)  
[Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Information](#)  
[Other Health Information](#)  
[Parliament](#)

### Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Information

**Date of next HOSC meeting:** Friday 8 October 2010, 10.00 am .

**Location:** Council Chamber, Sessions House.

**Main Agenda Items:**

- 1) Pain Management Services
- 2) South East Coast Ambulance Service - Current Developments

To see the publicly available information, follow the link :

<http://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieAgenda.aspx?A=3348>

**Visits:**

**HOSC Members' Visit to Disablement Service Centre, Gillingham:** 20 October 9.30 - 12.00.

### Health in Kent

**Thousands of inappropriate or hoax calls are being made to an ambulance service, figures have revealed.**

South East Coast Ambulance Trust received a total of about 4,000 hoax or abandoned calls at its Sussex control centre from April 2009 to July 2010.

It said abandoned calls include people hanging up or making calls from a phone box to report non-existing accidents. A spokeswoman said the control centre received a total of 334,000 calls over the same period.

## Department of Health

**The Department of Health (DH) has published 'The Week' Issue 164, 17 - 23 September 2010**

The week provides need-to-know news, consultations and events for chief executives and their teams. It provides links to more information and resources, highlighting areas for action.

See:

[The Week. Issue 164](#)

**The Department of Health (DH) has released up dated guidance 'Essence of Care 2010: benchmarks for the fundamental aspects of care'.**

Following a consultation in 2009, the guidance has been refreshed and now contains 12 benchmarks which aim to support localised quality improvement, by providing a framework of established and refreshed points of reference for local front line care across a range of care settings

To access all the relevant reports

See:

[Essence of Care](#)

**The Department of Health (DH) has, for the first time, decided to allow all pregnant women to receive flu vaccine.**

The one-off move was decided as the swine flu virus, which is more risky for pregnant women than others, is likely to be still circulating. The vaccine will offer protection against that and two other flu strains.

Vaccine will also be offered to the normal target groups, so that as well as pregnant women, it will be offered to the over 65s, people with conditions such as diabetes and health workers.

See:

[Pregnant women to be offered seasonal flu jab](#)

**The Department of Health (DH) has released a leaflet advising about the common side effects and reactions which could occur in babies and young children after vaccination.**

The leaflet 'What to expect after vaccination' is intended for nurses and other immunisation practitioners to download and print out for parents and guardians when their children are being immunised.

See:

[What to expect after vaccinations](#)

**From 1<sup>st</sup> October, an extra £50 million funding made available by the Department of Health, will enable cancer patients to have greater access to the cancer drugs which their doctor recommends.**

The funding follows the announcement made in July by Minister of State for Health Andrew Lansley of forthcoming funding to be made available to help thousands of patients get increased access to innovative new cancer drugs that extend life or improve quality of life.

The funding, available from 1<sup>st</sup> October until the end of March 2011, will be facilitated by clinically led panels in each region which will both offer advice from patients' cancer specialists, and also enable doctors to both decide how this funding is spent for their patients locally.

See:

[£50 million kick-starts greater access to cancer drugs](#)

### **Payment by results**

The Department of Health (DH) has produced a guide as an introduction for newcomers to PbR, from NHS health professionals, managers and administrators, to people engaged in academic study and interested members of the public.

See:

[A simple guide to Payment by Results.](#)

## **Government**

### **The Government has launched an update of the existing implementation plan for the National Dementia Strategy.**

The report '[Quality outcomes for people with dementia: Building on the work of the National Dementia Strategy](#)' stresses that the key purpose of this revised implementation plan is to set out for health and social care localities and their delivery partners:

- the Department of Health's role and its priorities during 2010/11 for supporting local delivery of and local accountability for the implementation of 'Living Well with Dementia – A National Dementia Strategy'
- the Strategy's fit with the new vision for the future of health and care as set out in the White Paper Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS
- its fit with the consultation document Liberating the NHS: Transparency in outcomes – a framework for the NHS.

See:

[Quality outcomes for people with dementia: Building on the work of the National Dementia Strategy Revised dementia plan](#)

### **The Home Office is to extend to a further 11 police forces, the scheme that allows parents to find out whether people with access to their family are sex offenders.**

The child sex offender disclosure scheme, which allows members of the public to check whether people who have contact with their children are a possible risk will be increased to cover 24 areas, with the remaining police forces coming on stream next year. The scheme works by the police passing on information to keep a child safe.

As part of the drive to protect children from harm, the Lucy Faithful Foundation has set up a new website '[Parents Protect](#)' which is designed to answer questions about child sexual abuse, to answer questions and give parents and carers the required information.

See:

[Child sex offender disclosure scheme](#)

## **Parliament**

### **Lords Hansard**

**Summer Recess 2010 - Written Answers and Statements Week beginning 27<sup>th</sup> September 2010.**

## [Prisons: Mental Health](#)

Question asked by Lord Ouseley

### **Vulnerable elderly people are being unfairly forced to pay for health care**

Stephen Dorrell, the new chairman of the House of Commons health committee, says that patients with conditions such as dementia used to get free care in NHS geriatric hospitals, but the number of places has fallen by nearly 80% in the UK over the past 20 years

He said this had pushed people into the means-tested social care system where they were often charged for treatment.

[In an interview with the BBC](#), Mr Dorrell said he was speaking about a specific group of patients whom he believes the NHS has turned its back on. As well as dementia patients this includes people such as stroke victims and those with Parkinson's disease who struggle to get the NHS to pay for medical treatment they receive.

## Care Quality Commission

### **New regulations will give The Care Quality Commission (CQC) more powers to close unsatisfactory homes**

Over the past year the CQC has shut 34 care homes and eight agencies, as a result of either legal notices or enforcement action

CQC chief executive Cynthia Bower says that new regulations coming into effect under the Health and Social Care Act 2008 would give inspectors even more power to deal with service providers who fall short of the mark. Wider enforcement powers that come into effect on 1 October include the ability to issue on-the-spot fines warning notices and the suspension of registration.

LGC is a subscription periodical, if you would like a copy of this article, please contact The Information Point

See also: [Tough new registration system](#)

### **CQC interim chair Dame Jo Williams has been appointed to the role permanently following the publication of a Commons Health Committee report.**

Commenting on her appointment as chair of the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Dame Jo Williams said:

"I am absolutely delighted to be appointed chair of CQC. But I don't underestimate the challenges that lie ahead.

"The Commission will perform a vital role as the landscape of the NHS changes and the financial situation becomes more difficult

See:

[Dame Jo Williams' reaction to her appointment as CQC chair](#)

## Other Health Information

### **Defra is promoting the Eat Seasonably campaign which is aimed at encouraging people to eat more seasonable fruit and vegetables and grow their own.**

Caroline Spelman said that "Choosing seasonal foods can contribute towards a healthy diet, and can help the local environment and our farming industry." Further information is available on the [campaign's website](#)

**The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has released a report which argues that since the 1980s, obesity has spread at an alarming rate, and examines this global epidemic.**

The report 'Obesity and the economics of prevention: fit not fat' argues that changes in food supply and eating habits, combined with a dramatic fall in physical activity, have made obesity a global epidemic.

Across OECD countries, one in 2 adults is currently overweight and 1 in 6 is obese. The rate of overweight people is projected to increase by a further 1% per year for the next 10 years in some countries.

See:

[Obesity and the economics of prevention: fit not fat: press release](#)

[Health: OECD says governments must fight fat](#)

**LGC report that the findings of a recent LGC survey indicate that the transfer from GPs to councils of commissioning responsibilities could be problematic.**

The transfer of commissioning responsibilities is part of the coalition government's reorganisation of the NHS, but a recent LGC survey indicates that 82% of respondents said their authority would be interested in providing commissioning support to GPs as part of the reform programme that will abolish primary care trusts from 2012.

See:

**Commissioning role for councils may fall flat LGC 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010**

See also

Concerns over GP commissioning (LGC 29<sup>th</sup> July 2010)

If you would like a copy of this article, please contact The Information Point (01622) 694125 or 7000 4125

**US research indicates that a faulty male gene could help explain some cases of unexplained male infertility.**

The research focused on a gene already known to be active in sexual development in both men and women, and linked to physical defects in the development of sexual organs. Although mutations of the gene were found in a small percentage of infertile men, the findings suggest that, even where there is no physical evidence of a problem, defects in the gene may be hampering the ability to make sperm.

Male infertility appears to be more common within certain families, and this leads scientists to believe that there may be a genetic root for some cases, but only a handful of gene mutations which might be responsible have actually been found.

See:

[Male infertility gene discovered](#)

**The Guardian reports that the British Medical Association (BMA) have submitted a response paper to Government, which argues that the NHS White Paper 'Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS' is a radical shakeup of the NHS which threatens its future, may not improve patient care and could usher in a two-tier health service.**

The BMA response to the White Paper is a strongly worded intervention against the proposed NHS re-organisation, and argues that the key plans of Minister of State for Health, Andrew Lansley, are potentially damaging, risk setting groups of clinicians against each other and are not a good use of public money when the NHS has to save £15bn-£20bn.

The submission argues that 'Changing the status of existing NHS providers to foundation trust status has already threatened the character and ethos of NHS provision. Further moves towards the

deployment of corporate entities would threaten the stability of the NHS and the security of its employees and their terms and conditions of service'.

See:

[NHS reform is a 'slash-and-burn approach', says doctors' union](#)

[BMA critical of health service shake-up](#)

[TheInformationPoint@kent.gov.uk](mailto:TheInformationPoint@kent.gov.uk)

**Tel: (01622) 694125; Fax (01622) 694127; [Visit our Knet pages](#)**