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Sent: 29 May 2010 09:10

Subject: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Bulletin No. 22 / 28 May 2010

This bulletin is produced weekly by The Information Point

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Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Bulletin No. 22 / 28 May 2010

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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: 10 am, 11 June 2010

Location: Council Chamber, Sessions House

Main Agenda Items: Accessing Mental Health Services: Adult and Older People's Inpatient Services.

Health in Kent

Kent's new Emergency Centre tackles the volcanic ash crisis

Kent's new emergency centre, co-ordinated from new facilities at Invicta House, Maidstone, dealt with its first emergency caused by the aftermath of volcanic ash drifting across Europe which stranded thousands of travellers.

The new facility meant that the relief effort at Dover to care for those returning to the UK, could be properly co-ordinated in one place by a team of representatives from across the county, including Kent County Council's Emergency Planning Team, NHS, Port of Dover, JobCentre

Plus, Government Office for the South East, Red Cross, Salvation Army and transport operators working together to make sure those thousands desperately trying to return to the country were looked after and able to finally get home.

See:

[New Emergency Centre helps tackle volcanic ash crisis](#)

New equipment has been presented to members of the Accessible Club at Northfleet

Disabled young people from Northfleet Youth Centre will be given the chance to get on their bikes and have fun thanks to new equipment from the Variety Club Children's Charity.

The members of the Accessible Club at Northfleet Youth Centre have been presented with specially-adapted equipment by the Variety Club Children's Charity. The equipment which includes two trikes, a large scooter and a pedal kart will help the disabled youngsters who have physical and learning disabilities resulting in problems with balance, which prevents them using standard bikes.

See:

[Disabled young people get on their bikes](#)

Fostered children from outside Kent being sent to Thanet schools

Head teachers in Thanet are asking for urgent action to prevent large numbers of fostered children from outside Kent being 'dumped' in their schools. The children, from London boroughs cause problems and Thanet, a deprived area, has to divert large amount of resources to look after them.

The head teachers want the government to both investigate the issue and instigate a change in legislation to ensure the needs of individual children are being met. Kent County Council (KCC) said it shared the head teachers' concerns.

See:

[Thanet schools angry over 'dumped' foster children](#)

Department of Health

Publication of data on the use of deprivation of liberty safeguards

For the first time the quarterly activity data on the use of deprivation of liberty safeguards under the *Mental Capacity Act, 2005* has been published.

See:

[Briefing on Mental Capacity Act Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards – April 2010](#)
[Publication of MCA DOLS quarterly activity data](#)

Statistics on alcohol

The NHS Information Centre has published a statistical report 'Statistics on alcohol, England 2010' which presents a range of information on alcohol use and misuse which are drawn together from a variety of published sources and includes additional analysis undertaken by the NHS Information Centre for health and social care.

The report aims to present a broad picture of health issues relating to alcohol in England and covers topics such as drinking habits and behaviours among adults (aged 16 and over) and school children (aged 11 to 15), drinking-related mortality, affordability of alcohol and alcohol-related costs.

See:

[Statistics on Alcohol , England 2010](#)

Prescribing by dentists

The NHS Information Centre has published 'Prescribing by dentists, England 2009' which provides an overview of NHS prescriptions written by dentists and dispensed in the community. It is based on data supplied by the Prescription Services division of the NHS Business Services Authority.

The bulletin looks at national level data for 2009 in terms of prescription items and Net Ingredient Cost (NIC) and looks at changes since 2005.

See:

[Prescribing by dentists, 2009: England](#)

NHS dental statistics for England

The NHS Information Centre has published 'NHS Dental Statistics for England, Quarter 3, 31 December 2009', a report which considers NHS provisional dental activity in England under the contractual arrangements which came into effect on 1 April 2006. The latest activity information relates to the third quarter of 2009/10, up to and including 31 December 2009. Latest Patients Seen data relates to 24 month period ending 31 March 2010.

See:

[NHS Dental Statistics for England, Quarter 3, 31 December 2009](#)

Healthcare Travel Costs scheme

The Department of Health (DOH) has published '[Healthcare travel costs scheme: instructions and guidance for the NHS](#)'. The regulations governing the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme were amended on 7th April 2010. This guidance document has been updated to reflect these amendments, and also includes changes to reimbursement of the London Congestion Charge.

Annual seasonal influenza immunisation programme for winter 2010/11

A letter from the interim chief medical officer, the chief nursing officer and the chief pharmaceutical officer has been sent to health professionals, informing them about the annual seasonal influenza immunisation programme for winter 2010-11, including influenza immunisation for frontline health and social care staff, and the poultry worker immunisation.

See:

[The influenza immunisation programme 2010/11](#)

Abortion statistics 2009

The Department of Health has released Information on abortions carried out in England and Wales in 2009. The information is obtained from the abortion notification forms returned to the Chief Medical Officers of England and Wales.

See:

[Abortion statistics England and Wales, 2009](#)

NHS inpatient and outpatient waiting events

The Department of Health (DOH) has produced the latest quarterly national statistics on NHS inpatient and outpatient waiting events. NHS inpatient and outpatient waiting events figures for the quarter ending 31 March 2010 include data for England, Strategic Health Authorities, and NHS Trusts and PCTs.

See:

[NHS inpatient and outpatient waiting events, quarter ended 31 March 2010](#)

National audit of national kidney care

The Department of Health has published 'National Kidney Care Audit Vascular Access Audit Report, 2009' which argues that understanding the complexity of access and continuously measuring what the service is providing are crucial if we are to achieve the quality gains that we know are possible.

This national audit being undertaken by the Information Centre in partnership with the UK Renal Registry is playing a vital role in establishing reporting systems to provide that knowledge and understanding.

See:

[Kidney Care](#)

Government

The NHS in England is to be reorganised with Strategic Health Authorities downgraded, the government has confirmed.

The ten existing authorities plan health services and training for healthcare professionals. The Lib Dem manifesto described them as the [least effective part of the health service](#), and promised to abolish them.

The coalition government has now confirmed an independent board for the NHS which will set priorities. At a local level, groups of GPs will be asked to take on greater responsibility for organising care. The government is expected begin negotiations with the British Medical Association to allow that to happen.

A review of how an exemption from prescription charges for people with long-term medical conditions might be implemented has been published.

Professor Ian Gilmore's [review of charges](#) was submitted to ministers of the previous government in November, and has now been published. It calls for a broad definition of long-term and the patient's eligibility should be assessed by their GP. Exemption should last for three years and would relate to all the person's prescriptions, not just those relating to their particular condition.

See also:

[Review of Prescription Charges: Written Ministerial statement](#)

Poverty, worklessness and welfare dependency in the UK

The Government has published '[State of the nation report: poverty, worklessness and welfare dependency in the UK](#)' which sets out a comprehensive assessment of poverty in the UK in 2010. The Government will then use these findings to inform policy decisions as the Government works to committed aims of tackling poverty and improving life chances, to ensure that everyone has the best possible chance to fulfill their potential.

See:-

[State of the nation report: poverty, worklessness and welfare dependency in the UK](#)
[Reforms will tackle poverty and get Britain working again](#)

Crime reduction Minister aims to tackle drug misuse and the impact of drug-related crime

On a visit to Gravesend, the new crime reduction Minister James Brokenshire has argued that tackling drug misuse and reducing the impact of drug-related crime on communities is a key priority for the Home Office.

The minister met with local police in North Kent to see first hand the success they have had tackling prolific offenders with drug addictions and the results of successful community

engagement on the Kings Farm Estate during a walkabout. He also met with drug workers at the Horizon project, which provides support for drug users overcoming addictions, helping them turn away from crime.

See:

[New drugs minister visits North Kent](#)

Survey of progress in the second year of the 'Putting People First' programme

Findings from the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services and Local Government Association (LGA) survey of progress in the second year of the 'Putting People First' programme have found that there are wide regional variations in English councils' progress towards meeting the series of personalisation targets.

The survey found that nationally, councils were on course to miss the 30% milestone for personal budgets for all service users. However, when only users receiving ongoing care and support are considered, the target is likely to be met. Andrew Cozens, the Local Government Association's strategic lead for adult social care, said differences in councils' progress reflected different approaches to personalisation.

See:

[Progress in the delivery of Personal Budgets 2010](#)

[The state of personalisation](#)

Parliament

Statutory Instruments concerning the midwifery exemptions list

A letter sets out the situation regarding midwifery exemptions as a result of changes to the Statutory Instruments which come in to force on 1 June 2010. This includes advice from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency on the position of student midwives.

See:

[Implementation of Medicines for Human Use \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) Order 2010: midwives exemption list](#)

Care Quality Commission

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust are now compliant with CQC registration criteria

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has announced that that two conditions on registration, both relating to safeguarding vulnerable people who use the services of Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust, have been removed as the trust has provided evidence which meets CQC criteria.

Under new regulation criteria, since 1 April this year, all 378 NHS trusts who provide services in England are required to be registered with CQC, must show that they meet new essential standards of quality and safety, which CQC will constantly monitor.

See:

[CQC lifts conditions on registration for Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust](#)

Resignation of chief executive of the NHS Confederation

Steve Barnett has resigned as chief executive of the NHS Confederation, following a critical report of the Member Model Project, a plan to turn NHS employers into a provider of outsourced HR services for NHS trusts.

Mr. Barnett, who has been in post since February last year, was previously chief executive of the Confederation's subsidiary NHS Employers and is a former deputy director of HR for the NHS. The project, which cost £3.4 million, was dropped in March due to lack of interest from NHS trusts, and concerns from the Department of Health about conflicts of interest in the way contracts were negotiated.

See:

[NHS Confederation chief resigns over failed HR project](#)

Shaping the Care Quality Commission

The work of the Care Quality Commission (CQC), as the regulator for all health and social care in England, affects everyone in the country, and as such, CQC believe that involving the people who use the care services will then help to improve services for everyone.

To shape this work, CQC have set up panels to include a wide range of people from across the services they regulate, and to provide views and feedback essential to shaping services. Some examples of these include:

- Mental Health Improvement Board.
- People with Learning Disabilities Advisory Panel
- Carers Advisory Panel
- Service User Reference Panel (SURP)
- SpeakOut network
- LINKs advisory group
- Registration Involvement Group (RIG)

For a full overview of CQC specialist groups:-

See:-

[Shaping CQC](#)

New guidance from the Care Quality Commission regarding restrict of individual rights under the *Mental Health Act*

As part of their remit to monitor the use of the *Mental Health Act* and protect the interests of people whose rights are restricted under that Act, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has published new guidance 'What to expect if your rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act'.

See:

[What to expect if your rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act](#)

Report calls for improvements in health care for adult prisoners

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) have published a new report which calls for improvements in health care for adults in the prison system.

The report findings was based on a sample of 21 Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) that commission health care for prisons and compare the 2008/09 results with those from an earlier 2007/08 study.

Key points are:

All 21 providers show progress in:

- embedding management and clinical governance systems
- electronic information management

However, the report also reveals that PCTs need to improve in these areas:-

- how they ensure care is centred on patients' needs
- arrangements for health care around transfer and release
- the provision of drug treatment systems

For all the relevant documents:

See:

[New report on health care in prisons](#)

Other Health Information

The Food Agency annual report of incidents

The Food Agency has published the '[Annual report of incidents 2009](#)', which provides details of more than 1,200 investigations into food incidents, detailing the cases and the action taken to protect consumers, as well as outlining proposals for the future.

The report indicates that there were 1,208 incidents last year, a slight decrease from 1,298 in 2008, although the total figures have remained relatively constant for the past four years. The incidents included the high profile case of salmonella associated with some eggs from Spain and a successful prosecution of people operating an unapproved meat plant in West Yorkshire..

The report also gives a breakdown of incidents by category, with the major categories being: microbiological (18% of incidents), environmental contamination (17%), natural chemical contamination (12%) and on-farm incidents (12%).

See:

[Incidents report published](#)

Improvements in water quality at bathing sites in England

The Environment Agency has announced plans to tackle sources of pollution and further improve water quality at over 160 bathing sites around England backed by a £4bn investment by the water industry.

Last year, 98 per cent of bathing waters passed mandatory EU water quality checks, but a revised Bathing Water Directive will require even tougher standards from 2015.

See:

[Environment Agency announces bathing water quality improvement plans](#)

Survey of social workers and police officers indicates they feel powerless to intervene in child neglect

The charity Action for Children has warned that a survey of social workers and police officers in the UK to gain an understanding of the issues and challenges these professionals face when tackling child neglect, indicates that both social workers and police officers have felt powerless to intervene in cases where they have suspected a child is being neglected.

See:

[Social workers and police 'powerless' to intervene in cases of neglect, warns Action for Children](#)

Residential care home workforce development: a study

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation have published a report by a team from the University of the West of England, Bristol, and the University of Warwick.

examining the best way of meeting the future needs of older care home residents.

Exploring evidence from an in-depth study of three residential homes, [the study](#) confirms that training care staff in basic clinical skills can enhance health and social care provision for older people in residential homes.

See:

[Residential care home workforce development: The rhetoric and reality of meeting older residents' future care needs](#)
[summary version](#)

A new report suggests that more than 10% of British residents often feel lonely.

The increase in social networking and Internet communications and the pressures of modern life are causing there to be less face to face social interaction causing loneliness and isolation.

[*The Lonely Society?*](#) suggests that social networking sites undermine social skills and the ability to read body language, 35% would like to move closer to their families, and almost 20% feel that they spend too much time communicating with friends electronically rather than meeting up with them.

Also see:

[‘Britain in the grip of epidemic of loneliness’](#)

Guide for overview and scrutiny committees

The think tank IDeA has produced a guide for overview and scrutiny committees [‘Adult safeguarding scrutiny guide, April 2010’](#) which is designed to assist overview and scrutiny committees (OSCs) play a central role in strengthening the way in which the views and concerns of local communities are represented.

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