
From: TheInformationPoint@kent.gov.uk [mailto:TheInformationPoint@kent.gov.uk]

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Tel: (01622) 694125,

Freecall: 7000 4125

E-mail: TheInformationPoint@kent.gov.uk

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Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Bulletin No. 34 / 20 August 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.

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Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Information

Date of next HOSC meeting: Friday 3 September 2010, 9.30 am.

Location: Council Chamber, Sessions House.

Main Agenda Items:

- 1) Update on SECamb's Make Ready Depot Programme.
- 2) The Future of PCT Provider Services and the Use of Community Hospitals

Internal Meetings:

HOSC Agenda Planning Meeting: Wednesday 1 September 2010, 10:00 - 12:00

Location: Darent Room, Sessions House.

The pre-meeting for the HOSC Meeting on Friday 3 September will take place prior to the above Agenda Planning Meeting: Wednesday 1 September 2010, 9:00 - 10:00, Darent Room, Sessions House.

Visits:

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

Health in Kent

Kent athletes represent the county at the British Transplant Games

Athletes from Kent, who have all had one or more organ transplants, are aiming to win big at this year's British Transplant Games, to represent the county and raise awareness of the value of organ donation.

See:

[Kent athletes compete at British Transplant Games](#)

Department of Health

Manual for cancer services

The Department of Health (DH) has released, for inclusion in 'Manual for Cancer Services' a draft version of the acute oncology measures for a three month consultation.

The consultation seeks views on a draft version of the acute oncology measures, for inclusion in the manual for cancer services. The manual will provide quality assurance and act as a driver for quality improvement in the commissioning and delivery of cancer services.

For all the relevant documents:

See:

[Draft Acute Oncology Measures](#)

Period of consultation: 19th August – 10th November 2010

NHS Bursary Scheme

The Department of Health (DH) has published the eleventh edition of the [NHS Bursary Scheme](#) which outlines the support arrangements for the academic years starting on or after 1 September 2010 and before 1 September 2011.

This edition, which is only available on-line, supersedes the tenth edition of the NHS Bursary Scheme.

Government

The government has published a [consultation on the new drug strategy](#) it intends to bring out later in the year. It sets out the key themes of its vision for drugs policy – which includes preventing drug taking, disrupting supply, strengthening enforcement, and promoting treatment.

Questions are asked around four key themes led by the following government departments:

- Department for Education: preventing drug use
- Home Office and Ministry of Justice: strengthening enforcement, criminal justice and legal framework.
- Department of Health: rebalancing treatment to support drug-free outcomes.
- Department for Work and Pensions: supporting recovery to break the cycle of drug addiction

Consultation period: 20th August – 30th September.

Secretary of Health Andrew Lansley has pledged to end most mixed sex hospital accommodation in England in all wards except intensive care and A&E.

Minister will introduce new NHS sanctions which will mean patients sharing sleeping, bathroom and toilet facilities only with people of the same sex. This could mean single rooms or whole wards occupied by men or women only, or mixed wards in which men and women are separated in bays or rooms.

Announcing the new measures, the Department of Health said it had new data suggesting tens of thousands of patients are still being placed in mixed sex accommodation every year "without clinical justification".

See:

[Pledge to end mixed sex hospital accommodation](#)

[NHS Confederation responds to mixed sex accommodation announcement](#)

NHS organisations will, for the first time, be named in this year's report on the uptake of NICE-approved drugs on the NHS in England, to be published in November.

The report will compare the actual use of medicines that have been positively appraised by NICE with an estimate calculated by the Institute.

It will name the NHS organisations involved, with data shown at Strategic Health Authority (SHA), Primary Care Trust (PCT) or cancer network level, depending on the level of usage and healthcare settings.

See:

[NHS organisations to be named in report into the uptake of NICE-approved drugs on the NHS](#)

Review of Clinical Excellence Awards

Minister of State for Health, Andrew Lansley has announced a review of the Clinical Excellence Awards which are awarded to consultants who are judged to have performed over and above the standard expected in their NHS role.

The review which will be led by the independent review body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration (DDRB), has been commissioned by all four UK health departments, and the Minister argues that savings can be redirected into patient care.

See:

[NHS consultants could see bonuses curbed in a review](#)

Parliament

House of Lords: Summer Recess 2010

Written Answers and Statements

[Monday 16 August 2010](#)

[Gulf War Illnesses](#)

Question asked by Lord Morris of Manchester.

[Health: Cancer](#)

Question asked by Lord Crisp.

[Health: Insurance](#)

Question asked by Lord Crisp

[Homelessness: Rough Sleepers](#)

Questions asked by Lord Patten

Care Quality Commission

Care Quality Commission annual report and accounts 2009/10

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has published their annual report '[Focused on better care: annual report and accounts, 2009/10](#)' which gives an overview of the challenges and achievements of CQC's first year of operation.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) have joined together with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to create guidance for inspectors and assessors to help to ensure robust scrutiny of human rights issues within CQC's essential standards of quality and care.

CQC are consulting on this guidance which is designed to enable inspectors and assessors to refer to it when providers are monitored according to our standards and registration requirements.

Included in the new guidance is:

- an overview of how our essential standards relate to equality and human rights law and what inspectors and assessors should do if they think it has been breached.
- information about equality and human rights for each of the key sections of our essential standards.
- detailed charts which map the equality and human rights dimensions of the essential standards.

See:

[Consultation on equality and human rights guidance](#)

Consultation period: 19th August – 12th November 2010

Other Health Information

NHS Confederation consultation

The NHS Confederation has released a consultation paper '[Liberating the NHS?: analysis and questions on the White Paper](#)' which provides an NHS Confederation analysis of the Government's health reform proposals and calls for members' views on the health white paper and associated documents.

The health White Paper represents one of the most significant reforms of the NHS in its history, proposing radical changes to where power sits in the system, realigning the existing hierarchy and moving from quasi-markets that to full-blooded market mechanisms with limited system management.

The White Paper also represents an attempt to change the nature of political involvement in the detailed management of the system and the way that the NHS is held to account for its performance, and also in the very large structural reorganisation of the NHS.

See:

[Liberating the NHS? NHS Confederation seeks members' views on white paper](#)

Consultation period: 18th August – 24th September 2010

HSJ readers opportunity to help with Dr. Foster Good Hospital Guide

Health Service Journal (HSJ) readers have been given the exclusive opportunity to help determine the metrics which will be used in this year's Dr Foster Hospital Guide, which measures the performance of all English acute trusts using a series of metrics developed by Imperial College London and through dialogue with other academic bodies, including the US Agency for Healthcare Research Quality.

This is the first time Dr Foster has made the methodologies it intends to use to produce the guide's results [available for pre-publication comment and consultation](#).

See:

[Dr Foster consults on the Good Hospital guide](#)

The consultation runs until 31 August.

Study suggests that green leafy vegetables seem to be particularly important in terms of preventing diabetes.

Researchers from Leicester University in an analysis of data relating to fruit and vegetable intake from the studies of 220,000 adults in total have found that a diet rich in green leafy vegetables may reduce the risk of developing diabetes. The study found that only food including spinach and cabbage was found to have a significant positive effect, as a portion and a half a day was found to cut type 2 diabetes risk by 14%.

Overall, the study found that eating more fruit and vegetables in general was not strongly linked with a smaller chance of developing type 2 diabetes but 'there was a general trend in that direction'.

See:

[Green leafy veg 'may cut diabetes risk'](#)

Royal College of Psychiatrists report on revalidation

The Royal College of Psychiatrists has published '[Revalidation and guidance for psychiatrists](#)' which is the process by which doctors will have to demonstrate to the General Medical Council (GMC) that they are up to date and fit to practise and that they are complying with the relevant professional standards.

The report defines re-licensing and re-certification, the key elements in the process of revalidation together with the aims of revalidation, and also details how psychiatrists will be able to evidence meeting revalidation standards.

The Institute for Employment Studies has published 'Flexible Nursing Report for NHS Professionals' which focuses on flexible resourcing of nursing staff in the National Health Service (NHS) through the three main types of temporary nursing staff; bank nurses, agency nurses and nurses provided through NHS Professionals.

The report also examines flexible working arrangements for permanent nurses within the NHS and in addition, the report considers:

- the levels and trends in the use of bank and agency nurses and nurses provided through NHS Professionals and the levels and trends in flexible working arrangements for substantive staff.
- the profile of the temporary nursing workforce and the profile of permanent staff with flexible working arrangements.
- the costs and benefits of using bank and agency nurses and flexible contracts
- the impact of bank and agency and flexible working arrangements on patient safety and patient care
- how an effective balance is determined between the use of the substantive and temporary nursing workforce
- potential areas for new primary research in order to address current knowledge gaps.

See:

[Flexible nursing: report for NHS professionals](#)

The NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement has released '[Market research for online communities in the NHS: a report to the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement](#)' which was researched by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES).

The report was commissioned when market research to support the development of a 'National Ideas Platform' was required, prompted by the recognition that networking and the sharing of knowledge are ways in which ideas and technologies diffuse through the NHS, alongside an acknowledgement that NHS staff often report frustration at the lack of knowledge sharing across the NHS.

See also:

Commentary paper from Bow Group focuses on the five themes in the NHS White Paper

The think tank Bow has published commentary paper '[Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS' - Opportunities and Challenges](#)' which evaluates the Government's NHS White Paper 'Equity and Excellence: liberating the NHS' by focusing on five prevailing themes: _

- The GP commissioning revolution.Q
- Quality and outcomes.
- Public health and prevention.
- Efficiency savings and QUANGOs.
- Value and innovation.

See:

['Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS' - Opportunities and Challenges](#)

A YouGov poll indicates that respondents want smoking in cars carrying children to be banned.

A YouGov poll for the UK Faculty of Public Health (FPH) found 74% support for banning anyone from smoking in a car with children with 10% against and 11% undecided. The faculty, which represents public health specialists in the NHS, academia and local government, said that although politicians may be concerned about legislating to curb behaviour in 'private space' adherence to seatbelt laws shows people would accept it. Second-hand smoke can be 27 times more toxic in a car than a smoker's home.

See:

[A YouGov poll indicates that three-quarters of Britons want smoking in cars carrying children to be banned](#)

GPs may be able to identify potential long-term benefits claimants before they start claiming benefits, new research shows.

The research, published in the British Medical Journal, has found that the [number of GP visits to patients](#) suffering from mental health issues rises significantly in the three years before they stop working and start claiming benefits. The findings could help target patients before they become dependent on benefits and keep them in work.

New research shows that smoking rates among young people have fallen since the legal age for buying cigarettes rose from 16 to 18.

The research, produced by University College London, shows that the [smoking rate has dropped from 24% to 17% among 16-18 year olds](#) while the smoking rate for those over 18 remains unchanged. Experts say that the majority of longterm smokers start smoking by the age of 19 and that this group is more likely to develop cancer or other smoke-related illnesses.

Meanwhile a poll carried out by YouGov shows that 75% of the population want [smoking to be banned in cars that carry children](#)

World Health Organisation announces end of flu pandemic

The Director General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) has announced that from 10 August 2010, the world was no longer in a flu pandemic.

The announcement was made following a meeting of its Emergency Committee, which reviewed global epidemiological data indicating that the flu virus, worldwide, is transitioning towards seasonal flu characteristics and patterns of transmission.

See:

[WHO announces the end of the influenza pandemic](#)

Study indicates that fear of falling increases risk of falls in the elderly

A study published in the British Medical Journal indicates that being frightened of falling over is likely to increase an old person's risk of having a fall, and the link remains even when the patient is not high risk.

The study, which involved five hundred Australians aged 70-90 questioned about exercise levels and incidental activity, as well as taking tests for depression and anxiety. All the participants also underwent extensive medical and psychological checks before being assessed for their actual risk of falling.

During the year-long study, 43% (214) reported one or more falls, and the researchers said anxieties should be taken into account when assessing someone's risk of falling.

See:

[Fear of falling 'boosts elderly's fall risk'](#)

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