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Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Bulletin No. 51 / 18 December 2009

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Hospital cleaners are worth more to society than bankers, a study suggests.

The research, carried out by think tank the New Economics Foundation, says hospital cleaners create £10 of value for every £1 they are paid. It claims bankers are a drain on the country because of the damage they caused to the global economy. They reportedly destroy £7 of value for every £1 they earn.

Meanwhile, senior advertising executives are said to "create stress". The study says they are responsible for campaigns which create dissatisfaction and misery, and encourage over-consumption. And tax accountants damage the country by devising schemes to cut the amount of money available to the government, the research suggests. By contrast, child minders and waste recyclers are also doing jobs that create net wealth to the country.

Read the full report: [A Bit Rich: Calculating the real value to society of different profession.](#)

Local authorities, health trusts and care providers in England are being urged to work with housing organisations in a more integrated way to ease social care demands.

A [report by the Chartered Institute of Housing](#) (CIH) sets out how better partnership working can help support care closer to home, give people more independence and deliver greater efficiencies. It is supported by the Department of Health's housing learning and improvement network and endorsed by the NHS Alliance and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS).

The report says that with each care home admission costing £40,000 per year, and the number of people aged 85 and over to rise by 184% to 2.3 million by 2036, the demand on the health and care system of an increasingly diverse and ageing society will increase dramatically.

Read the full report: [Transforming housing, health and care – making it happen](#)

See also:

[Greater social care co-operation urged](#)

Sir Roger Singleton, the Government's Chief Adviser on the Safety of Children and Chair of the Independent Safeguarding Authority has published [‘Drawing the line: a report on the Government's Vetting and Barring Scheme’](#), a series of recommendations on how best to change the rules governing the Government's Vetting and Barring scheme to ensure it strikes the right balance between offering protection without being overly burdensome.

The report confirms that the scheme is right not to intervene in private arrangements made between parents and friends, but where organisations make decisions on which adults should work with their children, the requirement to register should apply if the contact is sufficient to allow a relationship of trust.

This view is backed up by a National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations survey, which found that 76 per cent of parents agreed that when parents were unable to select personally those caring for their children those adults should be required to register.

(See:

[Written Ministerial Statement: vetting and barring](#)

[Chief adviser publishes report on Government's vetting and barring scheme](#)

[Foreigners exempt from checks to stop child abusers, watchdog warns](#)

On the second anniversary of the Children's Plan, Children's Secretary Ed Balls and Culture Secretary Ben Bradshaw have announced a review of the rules governing child performance. Sarah Thane, former chair of the Royal Television Society and former advisor to Ofcom, will review the 40 year old rules governing child performance, which has been decided upon after wide ranging, informal discussions which found that existing regulations are outdated, and that there is a need for a broader review of the overall framework both in terms of legislation and child protection issues.

This review coincides with the independent report into [‘The impact of the commercial world on children's wellbeing: report of an independent assessment’](#), by David Buckingham, which argues that the debate about the impact of the commercial world on children is a polarised one, between those on the one hand who see children as victims, and others who see all children as confident and media-savvy.

The Children's Secretary has also launched a new [Children's Plan website](#): which includes case studies and a video showing how the Children's Plan has made differences to practitioners, parents, children and young people over the past two years. A new blog area will allow users new opportunities to share thoughts and see other users' comments.

(See:

[Written Ministerial Statement: Children's Plan](#)

[Children's Plan Two Years On: next steps to achieve outstanding children's services](#)

[The impact of the commercial world on children's wellbeing: report on an independent assessment](#)

[Ed Balls orders review of child protection rules for reality shows](#)

Ann Keen has announced that the NHS is on track for the virtual elimination of mixed-sex wards from hospitals across England.

A new report [‘Delivering Same Sex Accommodation: the story so far’](#) has just been published giving the details.

Also see the [NHS press release](#).

American research published in the journal Archives of Internal Medicine indicates that [CT scans](#) may pose a much bigger radiation danger and a higher risk of cancer than first supposed, and argues that some scans may be triggering cancer in as many as one in 80

patients. Although such a level of risk is far higher than the one in 1,000 odds that are generally quoted, CT scans are far more routinely offered in America than in Britain however.
(See also:
[CT scans 'could raise the risk of cancer'](#))

A study published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health argues that [childhood obesity epidemic](#) could be levelling off in affluent homes but rising among those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Experts argue that people who are less well off tend to be wary of health messages telling them what to do - regarding it as "nanny-statism". The research looked at the dataset taken from the Health Survey for England between 1995 and 2007 and calculated that obesity levels among children are set to "increase considerably" overall by 2015, echoing trends seen in other research. Last week, data on more than a million children, as part of the Government's National Child Measurement Programme, found almost one in four boys and more than one in five girls are overweight or obese at the start of their school life. In addition, a further 35 % of boys and 31 % of girls in their last year of primary school also have weight problems, equating to almost one in three, the figures for England revealed. As these figures have hardly changed in the last few years, suggesting drives to cut obesity rates have not yet had an impact.

The Department for Health (DOH) have published the ['The NHS operating framework for England for 2010/11'](#) which sets out the priorities for the NHS for the year ahead.

The five priorities in the operating framework are:

- improving cleanliness and reducing healthcare associated infections.
- improving access through achievement of the 18-week referral to treatment pledge and improving access (including at evenings and weekends) to GP services.
- keeping adults and children well, improving their health and reducing health inequalities.
- improving patient experience, staff satisfaction, and engagement; and

preparing to respond in a state of emergency.

(See also:

[The NHS operating framework for England for 2010/11: press release](#))

The Department of Health (DOH) have published the second edition of ['Cancer commissioning guidance'](#). The guidance, part of the Cancer Reform Strategy has been developed to support world-class commissioning of cancer services across the NHS. Set out in a simple to use format, the guidance offers key issues and questions that commissioners and cancer network teams will want to take into consideration when assessing health needs, reviewing services, developing their contract service specifications and monitoring performance.

(See also:

[Cancer commissioning guidance - second edition: press release](#))

The Department of Health (DOH) have published ['The Health and Social Care Act 2008: code of Practice for health and adult social care on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance'](#). The Code of Practice comes into force on 1 April 2010 for the NHS and October 2010 for all other registered providers, and is designed to help providers of health and adult social care to plan and implement how they prevent and control infections, by setting out the registration requirement for cleanliness and infection control.

The document takes account of responses to the consultation on the draft Code of Practice and related guidance that ran from 13 August to 6 November 2009, and a response to this consultation will be published in early 2010.

(See also:

[The Health and Social Care Act 2008: Code of Practice for health and adult social care on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance: press release.](#)

The Department for Health (DOH) have published a consultation report [‘Prioritising need in the context of Putting People First: a whole system approach to eligibility for social care: consultation report on revised guidance on Eligibility Criteria for Adult Social Care, England 2009’](#) which is a summary of the consultation responses on the draft revised guidance on social care eligibility. The revised guidance will replace the 2003 Fair Access to Care Services guidance and aims to support fair and transparent implementation of eligibility criteria, within the new policy context of personalisation and prevention set out in Putting People First.

(See also:

[Response to the consultation on the revision of the Fair Access to Care Services guidance to support councils to determine eligibility for social care services: press release](#)

In a letter Professor D.M. Salisbury informs healthcare professionals of the decision by Secretary of State for Health Andy Burnham to extend the [swine flu vaccination programme](#) to children between the ages of six months and five years, and that, at the end of last week, the licence was amended to allow a one dose schedule in children A (H1N1) swine flu influenza: phase two of the vaccination programme; children over 6 months and under 5 years.

Also:

The Department of Health (DOH) have published guidance on [H1N1 Virus \(Swine Flu\) Advice for PCTs and Primary Ophthalmic Services](#) contractors.

The Department of Health (DOH) have published guidance on [‘Developing psychosocial resilience: how to cope in a crisis’](#) which provides a stepped model of care for staff that is sensitive and responsive to their needs before, during and after emergencies. It will ensure that staff are prepared to cope with long-sustained demand.

The Department for Health (DOH) have published [‘The story so far: Delivering same-sex accommodation progress report’](#) which provides a snapshot of progress towards the goal of all but eliminating mixed sex accommodation in NHS hospitals and other settings of NHS-funded care. It describes investment in new and improved facilities supported by the £100 million Privacy and Dignity Fund; practical support for organisations via reviews, resources and sharing good practice; initiatives to engage patients/service users and staff; support for design innovation for new-build and refurbished hospitals; levers and incentives to ensure trusts continue to provide same-sex accommodation as an integral part of their package of high quality services.

A report [‘Aiming High for Disabled Children Improving Data’](#) commissioned by the Department of Health to explore how data on disabled children is collected, managed and used at a local level. The focus of the research was fieldwork across eight health economies in England, underpinned by a review of peer-reviewed literature. The report of the research project sets out key findings on:

- the definitions of disability used by different agencies and services
- the information about disabled children that is captured.
- how such information is collected and stored.
- how such information is shared.

(See:

[Department of Health: Aiming High for Disabled Children Improving Data](#)

The chief medical officer for England, [Sir Liam Donaldson is to retire.](#) His time in office will be remembered for work on reforms including the introduction of smoke-free public places and his handling of high-profile health issues such as the Alder Hey children's hospital scandal and the MMR panic.

In his resignation letter to the cabinet secretary and head of the civil service, Sir Gus O'Donnell said: "I have been immensely privileged to serve in this post over the past nearly 12 years. I have been pleased to see many of my policy recommendations – stem cell research, smoke-free public places, reforms to the General Medical Council, changes to consent for organ and tissue retention and the creation of the Health Protection Agency – carried forward into legislation.

E-Politix.com report that the King's Fund argue that older people face [institutional ageism](#) in the NHS, nowhere more so than in mental health. The King's Fund argue that Government policy needs to shift its focus, giving detailed attention to the health needs of older people and developing a comprehensive approach. In addition, the mental health of older people, not just dementia, must be made a national priority for the NHS. The cost of doing nothing is unsustainable.

England's Chief Medical Officer Sir Liam Donaldson has warned that [parents who allow their children alcohol at home](#) may be increasing the chances of future drinking problems. Evidence showed that letting children taste alcohol to ready them for adulthood could lead to binge drinking in later life.

New official guidance says under-15s should drink no alcohol, with under-17s drinking only under supervision.

E.Politix.com report that [Neuroblastoma](#), a rare cancer of the sympathetic nervous system, is to be the subject of clinical trials using monoclonal antibody therapy. Currently, the NHS treat Neuroblastoma with a mixture of chemotherapy, surgery and radiotherapy, with a current survival rate between 20 and 30%. In the United States, a treatment called 3F8 monoclonal antibody therapy is now available, and although the UK does not offer this facility, clinical trials in the United Kingdom have begun, using monoclonal antibody therapy.

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