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## Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Bulletin No. 10 / 5 March 2010

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### Rural health and well-being conference

The Healthy Communities Programme of the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) will host a joint conference, chaired by John Craven, and in partnership with the Department of Health, Department for Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Commission for Rural Communities (CRC) on the subject of rural health and wellbeing on 17 March, 2010.

Last year a survey by IDeA looked at the most pressing issues affecting the health of rural communities.

Some of the results showed that three top issues that impact on the health or rural communities are:

- access to services (75.6 per cent)
- demographic change (58.5 per cent)
- transport (53.6 per cent).

The survey asked how great a concern rural health inequalities are amongst local partners:

- 63.4 per cent said that they are a significant concern
- 19 per cent a very significant concern
- 17 per cent not a significant concern.

See:

[Healthy rural communities – a national viewpoint](#)

### Healthcare workers (duty of co-operation) regulations 2010

The Department of Health (DOH) are consulting on '[The healthcare workers \(duty of co-operation\) regulations, 2010](#)' which will impose duties on designated bodies sharing information about the conduct or performance of health care workers to protect patient safety. The regulations require appropriate safeguards in place when relevant information is shared.

The consultation follows the publications of the Tackling Concerns Locally Information Management Subgroup Report which was published in March 2009. The proposed regulations have been developed following the recommendations and conclusions of the stakeholder subgroup.

For all the relevant documents:

See:

[Healthcare workers \(duty of co-operation\) regulations 2010](#)

**Consultation began: 5 March 2010**

**Consultation closes: 4 June 2010**

### **Consultation on proposed changes to the laws governing powered mobility scooters & powered wheelchairs.**

The Department for Transport (DfT) has launched a [‘Consultation on proposed changes to the laws governing powered mobility scooters & powered wheelchairs \(DfT-2010-10\)’](#) which proposes changes to laws governing powered mobility vehicles’ and views on possible changes to the regulations that govern their use.

The aim of any reforms taken forward following this consultation will be to deliver cost-effective improvements to the safety of mobility vehicle users, pedestrians and other road users, while supporting continued mobility for disabled people.

See also:

[Consultation on proposed changes to laws governing powered mobility vehicles](#)

[Written Statement: Public consultation on proposed changes to the laws governing powered mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs](#)

**Launch date: 3 March 2010**

**Closing date: 28 May 2010.**

### **Consultation to enable people a wider choice when registering with a GP**

The Department of Health (DOH) has launched a consultation [‘Your choice of GP practice: a consultation on how to enable people to register with the GP practice of their choice’](#) which looks at proposals to allow people a greater choice when registering with a GP practice.

The consultation is seeking responses from a wide range of stakeholders, including patients and the public, GPs and other NHS staff.

**Launch date: 4 March 2010**

**Closing date: 28 May 2010**

### **Social Enterprise Pathfinder Programme**

A report by the Department of Health (DOH) [‘Leading the way through social enterprise: the Social Enterprise Pathfinder Programme evaluation’](#) highlights some of the key findings of the evaluation of the programme which was established in 2006 to better understand social enterprise in health and social care.

See also:

## **Carers in the region**

The Department of Health (DOH) has commissioned the Centre for International Research on Care, Labour and Equalities (CIRCLE) at Leeds University to produce a set of 9 regional factsheets on carers. These factsheets include data on the number and characteristics of carers in each region as well as information about carer health and well-being.

See:

[Regional factsheets on carers](#)

## **Reshaping the Access to Work programme**

At an exhibition to mark the 40 anniversary of the *Chronically Sick and Disabled Act*, Jonathan Shaw, the Minister for Disabled People has announced a re-shaping of the Access to Work programme to ensure that it meets the needs of people with mental health conditions and learning disabilities.

The initiative includes ambitious new targets to help more people with mental health conditions and learning disabilities in the workplace. From April this year, 2,000 people with learning disabilities and up to 1,500 people with mental health conditions will be guaranteed places on the Access to Work programme, which funds practical support in the work place for all disabled people and people with mental health conditions, to help them stay in work.

See:

[Minister sets targets to help people with mental health conditions and learning disabilities](#)

## **Collection of essays from IDeA 'The social determinants of health and the role of local government'**

The think-tank IDeA have published a collection of essays 'The social determinants of health and the role of local government' which assesses what local government can do to tackle the social conditions that lead to health inequalities.

See:

[The social determinants of health and the role of local government](#)

## **New guidance to help GPs make an early diagnosis in cases of cervical cancer**

Following the findings of the working group Advisory Committee on Cervical Screening (ACCS) who looks at the management of young women with gynaecological symptoms, new guidance has been produced to help GPs identify symptoms and make an early diagnosis on young women suffering with cervical cancer.

The ACCS working group found that women who visited their GP with abnormal bleeding experienced delay in diagnosis because they did not receive a full pelvic

examination. The guidance provides GPs with an easy to follow algorithm to help in the management of these young women with a re-emphasis on the existing NICE guidelines around gynaecological symptoms.

See:

[New guidance to help early diagnosis of cervical cancer in young women](#)  
[Clinical practice guidelines for the assessment of young women aged 20-24 with abnormal vaginal bleeding](#)

### **Autism strategy: 'Fulfilling and rewarding lives, the strategy for adults with autism in England'**

Care Services Minister Phil Hope has launched the first strategy to help adults with autism in England live independently in a society that understands them. was launched today by Care Services Minister Phil Hope.

The strategy, ['Fulfilling and rewarding lives, the strategy for adults with autism in England'](#) sets a clear framework for all mainstream public sector services to support adults with autism and is backed up by the *Autism Act 2009*, the first ever condition specific legislation aims to be a foundation for culture change, designed to start fundamental a fundamental change in public services helping adults with autism to find work and live independent lives.

See also:

[Fulfilling and rewarding lives: the strategy for adults with autism in England 2010'](#)  
[Autism Strategy Impact Assessment](#)  
[Fulfilling and rewarding lives: the strategy for adults with autism in England](#)  
[NICE to play key role in national autism strategy](#)

### **DOH leaflet: 'The Nursing Roadmap for Quality'**

'The Department of Health (DOH) has published a leaflet ['The Nursing Roadmap for Quality: a signposting map for nursing'](#) designed help nurses and their teams understand the elements of the quality framework that relate to nursing practice.

The leaflet is designed to:-

- inform nurses and their teams of their role in supporting quality improvements against the seven elements of the quality framework.
- provide a 'one-stop shop' for key resources, which nursing teams can use to further demonstrate their added contribution to quality.
- reinforces the need for nurses to identify ways to reduce waste and repetition, by contributing to the quality and productivity challenge.

### **Enhanced recovery**

The Department for Health (DOH) has published a letter ['Enhanced recovery'](#) which is a model of care that has the potential to have a significant impact in delivering the Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention (QIPP) programme.

### **Survey for new online service NHS MidLifeCheck**

A survey for the new on-line service NHS MidLifeCheck indicates that in regard to health and wellbeing, people in Britain are 'all talk and no action'.

The survey indicated that despite almost half of adults (46 %) believing they need to think more about leading a healthy lifestyle, the same amount (47 %) admit to spending a lot more time talking about getting healthy than actually doing anything about it, while a third of adults (33 %) say they wouldn't even know where to start.  
See:

[Brits are 'all talk-no action' when it comes to their health](#)

### **Frontline care: report by the Prime Minister's Commission on the Future of Nursing and Midwifery in England, 2010'**

The report 'Frontline care: report by the Prime Minister's Commission on the Future of Nursing and Midwifery in England, 2010' explores how the nursing and midwifery professions could take a central role in the design and delivery of 21st century services. The report builds on Lord Darzi's 2008 report of the NHS Next Stage Review, High Quality Care for All, and considered all branches of nursing as well as midwifery, in all settings, services and sectors within and outside the NHS.

See:

[Prime Minister's Commission on the Future of Nursing and Midwifery in England sets out the way forward for the future of the professions](#)

[Call for nurses, midwives and health service boards to restate their commitment to high quality care](#)

A report '[Valuing increased cycling in the Cycling Demonstration Towns](#)' indicates that an unprecedented investment in cycling has improved the public's health in six Cycling Demonstration Towns, and has had a positive impact on its most inactive citizens.

The new analysis of research conducted in partnership with the National Obesity Observatory and Sustrans, shows the impact an increase in cycling has had on public health, with a 10 % reduction in the number of people classified as physically inactive.

See also:

[More people get on their bikes thanks to investment in cycling](#)

### **Paper from the think tank IDeA ' The role of culture and sport in supporting adult social care to deliver better outcomes'**

The think tank IDeA in partnership with The National Culture Forum has published a paper '[Role of culture and sport in supporting adult social care to deliver better outcomes](#)'. The paper aims to enable better engagement with, and understanding of, the social care sector. |

The paper is intended to help improve the lives of older and vulnerable people by engaging with the right partnerships and with strategic commissioning processes, and explaining better the contribution the sector can make.

In addition, the paper intends to introduce adult social care providers, particularly commissioners, to the opportunities and benefits of the culture and sport sector.

### **Additional funding for the Better Communication Stammering Information Programme,**

Schools Secretary, Ed Balls has announced funding to help finance a new centre which will provide early intervention and support for children and young people who stammer. The funding, part of the Government investment to implement the action plan Better Communication Stammering Information Programme, is supporting the ARSC (Association for Research into Stammering in Childhood) Appeal for a new centre of excellence in West Yorkshire to complement the existing Palin centre in London.

The programme is designed to equip the education work force with skills to support children who stammer; engaging speech and language therapists; encouraging better collaboration across different sectors of the children's workforce services; and to make sure strategies are in place to help prevent any discrimination or disadvantages these children may face.

See:

[More support and new centre for children who stammer](#)

### **The cost of implementing the Laming review of child protection in England has been highlighted.**

The first findings of a Loughborough University study into the recommendations (published last year) indicate the proposals could cost councils £250m each year, and require 6300 more social workers. This is broadly in line with research published by the [Local Government Association](#) that while many of the recommendations in Lord Laming's report were already standard practice in most councils, more money and more staff would be required to implement the changes in their entirety.

See also:

[\*The Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report  
Cost of Laming recommendations highlighted\*](#)

### **The DCSF has published a report which follows up families who have been involved in a Family Intervention Project.**

FIPs tackle issues such as domestic violence, school absenteeism, addiction and anti-social behaviour, and this is the [first report](#) to include information on families between 9 and 14 months after an intervention has finished.

The results show big reductions of over 50% in these issues for families who have completed an FIP.

### **Children have expressed their views to the national Children's Rights Director in a new report on their rights and responsibilities.**

[\*Children on Rights and Responsibilities\*](#) identifies protection from abuse and the rights to education and being kept alive and well as some of the things that children feel all young people should have the right to. They also identified the right not to be bullied and the right to keep in touch with parents, grandparents, and siblings.

The children consulted did also realise that with rights come the need for children to take responsibilities.

## **Attitudes to food technology**

A report [‘Food technologies: findings from the 2008 British Social Attitudes survey’](#) analyses and interprets data collected from a module of questions funded by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and fielded on the 2008 British Social Attitudes survey, the annual general population survey which seeks to analyse social, political and moral attitudes and how these have changed over time.

The research looked at people’s attitudes to emerging food technologies, including genetically modified (GM) food, high pressure treatment, gas filled packaging and hypothetical foods that have health benefits, and found that people’s knowledge of, and attitudes to, food technologies vary considerably.

See:

[Food technologies: findings from the 2008 British Social Attitudes survey](#)  
[British attitudes to new food technologies](#)

## **Active Lifestyle programme**

A new team of specially trained coaches, the Active Lifestyle Coaches are being deployed to help children become more active and set them on the path to a healthier future.

The new Active Lifestyle Coaches are people who the children know well, but are specially trained to motivate and help inactive children to do at least one extra hour of physical activity a week in addition to school PE.

The New Active Lifestyle programme will offer 20,000 children at all ages, the opportunity to take part in fun alternative activities such as break dancing, cheerleading, martial fitness, yoga or free running. Research indicates that children who are inactive are at risk of developing serious illnesses like heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers in later life. Being active is know also to help strengthen bones, improves coordination and helps improve self-esteem and confidence.

See:

[Inactive children get help to move more](#)

## **Sir Liam Donaldson new chairman of the National Patient Safety Agency**

Following an independent recruitment exercise conducted by the Appointments Commission, Sir Liam Donaldson has been appointed as the new chairman of the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA)..

Sir Liam is currently Chief Medical Officer for England, a post he has held for 12 years, in which he advises the Secretary of State for Health, the Prime Minister and other government ministers on all health-related issues.

See:

[Sir Liam Donaldson becomes new Chairman of National Patient Safety Agency](#)

## **Reforms needs to be able to provide long term affordable housing**

A Joseph Rowntree Foundation Viewpoint [‘How can we make the housing market more stable for vulnerable households?’](#) presents two different perspectives on the kinds of reforms needed to provide long-term, secure housing for the people least able to afford it.

The viewpoint was commissioned as part of the JRF Housing Market Taskforce programme, which aims to address the root causes of instability in the UK housing market, and argues that it is time to abandon the assumption that higher levels of home-ownership are good for society. Matthew Taylor, Chief Executive of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA), argues that the UK's 'obsession with home-ownership' creates social and economic divisions and instability, and we need a more balanced approach to different kinds of tenure.

See:

[How can we make the housing market more stable for vulnerable households?](#)

## **Future of social work**

E-PolitiX.com has published an interview with Rosie Varley, chairwoman of the General Social Care Council (GSCC), about the future for the social work profession.

See:

[A 'critical juncture' for social work](#)

## **Action to support the supply of medicine**

A summit hosted by Health Secretary Andy Burnham and Health Minister Mike O'Brien has agreed a package of tough new actions to ensure that NHS patients can get the medicines they need.

The summit was called to address current concerns about the difficulties with the supply of medicines, and actions that were jointly agreed between the delegates include:

- A more explicit duty for manufacturers and wholesalers to ensure that sufficient stocks of medicines are available to NHS patients.
- A series of targeted inspections by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Authority.
- Tougher standards for the issue of licences for medical wholesalers.
- Development of best practice guidance on how supply difficulties should be dealt with by doctors, pharmacists, manufacturers and wholesalers.

Targeted inspections will also mean that manufacturers and wholesalers will risk losing their licences and face prosecution if they breach legal duties on supply of medicines. Pharmacists and doctors risk being called to account by their professional bodies for breaching their ethical obligation to put patients first.

See:

[Tougher action to support medicines supply](#)

## **Invisible patients**

The Department of Health (DOH) have published the final report from the Health of Health Professionals Working Group. [‘Invisible Patients: report of the working group on the health of health professionals’](#), focuses on the health issues facing regulated health professionals and identifies some priorities for addressing them. In addition, the report looks at how ill health in health professionals may affect their professional

practice, the difficulties they face in seeking help and the role of the health profession regulatory bodies.

For all the documents:-

See:

[Invisible patients: the working group on the health of health professionals](#)

### **Young people's attitudes towards discussing sexually transmitted infections**

A Populus poll of over 1,000 young adults found that nearly three quarters (70 per cent) rank discussing sexually transmitted infections (STI) tests together as the most important sign that a new relationship will last. This has overtaken more traditional milestones such as meeting the parents (66 percent) or friends (40 percent).

The research was conducted on behalf of the 'Chlamydia: worth talking about campaign' which encourages sexually active under-25-year-olds to say 'yes' to chlamydia testing, and provide a snapshot of modern relationships in the UK, with young adults indicating that they thought getting past this milestone would result in a long-term relationship.

See:

[STI tests now a bigger milestone than meeting the parents](#)

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