

Public Health Bulletin

March 2025



Public Health Reports Digest

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Welcome to the latest Public Health Reports Digest compiled by NHS Fife Library & Knowledge Service which highlights recent publications and journal articles which we hope you find of interest.

This Current Awareness Bulletin (CAB) is part of a national programme of bulletins produced in partnership by NHS boards across Scotland. Every attempt has been made to include and acknowledge the author and publisher within all links. The information contained in these bulletins is for educational purposes only. We have endeavoured to ensure the information is up to date and correct and that creator and publisher information is given where relevant. We make no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability or availability with respect to the links and information contained in these CABs. Any reliance you place on such information is therefore strictly at your own risk.

In the Media, Recent Reports, and From the Journals

Items from the media, recently published reports and articles from the journals are listed alphabetically in topic order.

Alcohol	Environment	Obesity & Healthy Eating	Sexual Health
Cancer	Health & Social care	Older People	Smoking
Children & Young People	Health Inequalities	Pharmacy	Suicide & Self Harm
Covid -19	Health Protection	Physical Activity	Woman & Infant Health
Dental Health	Medical Conditions	Population Statistics	
Drugs	Mental Wellbeing	Public Health	

Public Health Bulletin – March 2025

Alcohol

N/A

Cancer

Cancer in the UK 2025: Socioeconomic deprivation

Cancer Research UK, February 2025

“Stark differences between the most and least deprived continue to be seen across the cancer pathway, from prevalence of risk factors, cancer diagnosis, through to survival and mortality. Depressingly, cancer-related deaths are almost 60% higher in the most deprived areas of the UK than in the least deprived.”

Scientists discover how aspirin could prevent some cancers from spreading

Science Daily, 5th March 2025

“The scientists say that discovering the mechanism will support ongoing clinical trials, and could lead to the targeted use of aspirin to prevent the spread of susceptible types of cancer, and to the development of more effective drugs to prevent cancer metastasis.”

Journal Reference: Jie Yang, Yumi Yamashita-Kanemaru, Benjamin I. Morris et al. **Aspirin prevents metastasis by limiting platelet TXA2 suppression of T cell immunity.** *Nature*, 2025; DOI: [10.1038/s41586-025-08626-7](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-025-08626-7)

Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy activity

Public Health Scotland, 6th March 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) reports on systemic anti-cancer therapy (SACT) activity across NHS services in Scotland. Treatment activity includes the weekly number of appointments and the monthly and annual number of appointments and patients receiving treatment. The data has been visualised on a dashboard on the PHS website.”

Giving blood linked to lower risk of pre-cancer gene

BBC News, 11th March 2025

“People who give blood regularly are more likely to have genetic changes in their blood that could cut the risk of cancer developing, a study suggests. The researchers, from the Francis Crick Institute, say the findings are "fascinating" and could help understanding of how and why blood cancers develop.”

LUNGSCOT. How should Scotland respond to the challenge of lung cancer screening: A mixed methods feasibility study

Chief Scientist Office

Covid -19

N/A

Children & Young People

Children under eight should avoid drinking slushies, doctors warn

BBC News, 12th March 2025

“Children should completely avoid "slushy" ice drinks containing glycerol, which can make them very ill, until they are at least eight years old, say researchers calling for official health advice to change.”

More schools to be asked to supervise toothbrushing (England)

BBC News, 7th March 2025

“School and nursery staff in the most deprived areas of England will be asked to supervise young children while they brush their teeth, under a national toothbrushing programme.”

Poorest children missing more school and further behind after Covid

BBC News, 17th March 2025

“The poorest children are missing more school and falling further behind classmates, research shared with the BBC suggests.”

Teenagers exposed to 'horrific' content online - and this survey reveals the scale of the problem

Sky News, 19th March 2025

“Over half (55%) of the 1,000 students surveyed had seen sexually explicit or violent content that was inappropriate for their age, with some saying it appeared unprompted and "pops up randomly".

Environment

Lab-grown food could be sold in UK within two years

BBC News, 10th March 2025

“Meat, dairy and sugar grown in a lab could be on sale in the UK for human consumption for the first time within two years, sooner than expected. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is looking at how it can speed up the approval process for lab-grown foods.”

Policymakers must address the politics of climate crisis

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 10th March 2025

“The science on climate change is clear, but scientific consensus alone won’t solve climate change. Policymakers need to engage in complex confrontational politics if we want to secure the transition to net zero.”

Low carbon housing for people on low incomes

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 10th March 2025

“The Government has committed to delivering a warm homes plan, but what impact is the transition to ‘green’ housing likely to have on people with low incomes?”

How our noisy world is seriously damaging our health

BBC News, 16th March 2025

“The answer is noise - and its impact on the human body goes far beyond damaging hearing.”

Dental Health

Caring for smiles: Oral care for older people who need support – A guide for families and friends

Public Health Scotland, 4th March 2025

“This booklet has been developed for family members and close friends of people who depend on others to look after their oral health.”

More schools to be asked to supervise toothbrushing (England)

BBC News, 7th March 2025

“School and nursery staff in the most deprived areas of England will be asked to supervise young children while they brush their teeth, under a national toothbrushing programme.”

Supervised toothbrushing for children to prevent tooth decay

GOV.UK, 7th March 2025

“Programme will reach up to 600,000 children in most deprived areas.”

Drugs

N/A

Health & Social Care

Social care 360: workforce and carers

The King's Fund, 3rd March 2025

“Between 2022/23 and 2023/24, the vacancy rate fell from 9.9% to 8.3% and the number of vacancies fell from 152,000 to 131,000. There was a continued gap

between the vacancy rate in adult social care, the wider unemployment rate (4.1%), and the vacancy rate in the wider economy (2.8%).”

Health Inequalities

Surviving on breadcrumbs: resourcing radical hope

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 27th February 2025

“This reflection looks at new research on the scale and nature of efforts across the UK to build alternative futures. How can wealth holders like JRF do more to better support and shield this essential work?”

Transport: key points

Scot PHO, March 2025

“Transport has both positive and negative effects on health and health inequalities through multiple pathways.”

The health of women from ethnic minority groups in England

The King’s Fund, 6th March 2025

“1 in 4 women in England is from an ethnic minority group, of whom many are migrants. Women from ethnic minority groups experience inequalities in health, and in access to, and experience of, health care services.”

How racism affects health

The Health Foundation, 11th March 2025

“This report finds large and unacceptable variations in people’s experience of the building blocks of health according to ethnicity.”

Health Protection

Laboratory reports of norovirus in Scotland Up to week ending 2 March 2025

Public Health Scotland, 6th March 2025

“This report presents provisional information on weekly numbers of laboratory reports of norovirus in Scotland from ISO week 27 to ISO week 26 of the following year to capture the winter peak of seasonal activity.”

Guidance for the public health management of MERS-CoV infections

Guidance for Health Protection Teams (HPTs)

Public Health Scotland, 17th March 2025

“This document sets out the public health response to Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) infection in Scotland. It is for use by NHS health protection teams, Public Health Scotland (PHS) and other stakeholders to inform planning and response to MERS-CoV.”

Medical Conditions

Scottish Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) screening programme statistics

Year ending 31 March 2024

Public Health Scotland, 4th March 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) provides an annual update on the Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) screening programme in Scotland. This programme aims to reduce the number of deaths caused by abdominal aneurysms in men aged 65 and over.”

Mental Wellbeing

Resources to help meet young mums' mental health needs

Mental Health Foundation, Last accessed April 7th 2025

“Young mums are at a higher risk of experiencing mental illness during pregnancy and after birth and are more likely to face additional challenges.”

Mind the age gap: making mental health matter across the life course

ILC, 2025

“As increased longevity continues to reshape our societies and demographics, mental ill health is a huge barrier to realising the opportunities of longer lives.”

Obesity & Healthy Eating

N/A

Older People

Caring for smiles: Oral care for older people who need support – A guide for families and friends

Public Health Scotland, 4th March 2025

“This booklet has been developed for family members and close friends of people who depend on others to look after their oral health.”

Pharmacy

NHS to offer take-at-home tablet for MS

BBC News, 12th March 2025

“Thousands of NHS patients in England with multiple sclerosis (MS) will soon be offered a "take at home" tablet to manage their condition, sparing them hospital visits for injections or infusions.”

Prescribing practice and dispensing pharmacy open data: Data for October to December 2024

Public Health Scotland, 18th March 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) contains data on prescribing activity in the community in an open data format.”

Community pharmacy contractor activity: Data for October to December 2024

Public Health Scotland, 18th March 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) provides Community Pharmacy activity and direct pharmaceutical care services data. The data is in two formats - Open Data and an interactive dashboard.”

Physical Activity

N/A

Population Statistics

Transport: key points

Scot PHO, March 2025

“Transport has both positive and negative effects on health and health inequalities through multiple pathways.”

NHS waiting times - 18 weeks referral to treatment: Quarter ending 31 December 2024

Public Health Scotland, 18th March 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) reports on completed patient pathways that are fully measurable against the 18 weeks Referral to Treatment (RTT) standard (90% of patients being treated within 18 weeks of referral) up to 31 December 2024.”

Public Health

Digital Inclusion Action Plan: First Steps

GOV.UK, 26th February 2025

“We’re making sure everyone can be included in our digital world.”

Better homes, Better Lives

Centre For Aging Better, February 2025

“The role of home improvement services in boosting the nation’s health and wellbeing.”

Action for healthier working lives

The Health Foundation, 10th March 2025

“8.2 million working-age people report having a long-term health condition that limits their ability to work. While employment rates for this group have improved in recent decades, only half are in work today. Each year, over 300,000 people leave their jobs and end up out of the workforce entirely with work-limiting health conditions.”

Sexual Health

N/A

Smoking

Sons worst affected by smoking in pregnancy – study

BBC News, 12th March 2025

“University of Aberdeen researchers looked at data from 500,000 people around the UK to assess genetic links. They said the results indicated that men born to women who smoked through pregnancy were more likely to die younger if they went on to smoke themselves.”

Tobacco: preventing uptake, promoting quitting and treating dependence

NICE, 4th February 2025

“This guideline covers support to stop smoking for everyone aged 12 and over, and help to reduce people's harm from smoking if they are not ready to stop in one go.”

Suicide & Self Harm

N/A

Women's & Infant Health

Sons worst affected by smoking in pregnancy – study

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