

Public Health Bulletin

November 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.

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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 – November 2025

Alcohol

A Healthier Future: A long-term vision to tackle alcohol harm in the UK

Institute of Alcohol Studies, 2025

“This document, developed by a broad range of experts in alcohol policy, research, and treatment, offers a blueprint for achieving long-term progress.”

Cancer

Biggest prostate cancer screening trial in decades begins in UK

Sky news, 21st December 2025

“The £42 million Transform trial is funded by Prostate Cancer UK and the National Institute for Health and Care Research.”

Hundreds could benefit from life saving blood cancer treatment recommended by NICE

NICE, 25th November 2025

“People with a rare and aggressive blood cancer will benefit from a potentially life saving treatment, following NICE’s recommendation of a CAR-T (chimeric antigen receptor T-cell) treatment developed by a British spinout company.”

Covid -19

COVID-19 vaccine eligibility: changes over time

Public Health Scotland, 30th October 2025

“Viruses change over time and that means our public health response does too, which includes our vaccination programmes. Consultant in Public Health from our Vaccination and Immunisation Division, Dr Daniel Chandler, outlines changes to this year’s COVID-19 vaccination programme in our latest blog.”

Inquiry Module Reports

UK Covid-19 Enquiry, November 2025

“Inquiry reports are evidence-based documents that draw on the large amount of evidence gathered during the Inquiry’s investigations. The reports may contain references to death, illness, harm and suffering.”

Children & Young People

Boy with rare condition amazes doctors after world-first gene therapy

BBC News, 24th November 2025

“A three-year-old boy has astounded doctors with his progress after becoming the first person in the world with his devastating disease to receive a ground-breaking gene therapy.”

Adolescence lasts into 30s - new study shows four pivotal ages for your brain

BBC News, 25th November 2025

“The brain goes through five distinct phases in life, with key turning points at ages nine, 32, 66 and 83, scientists have revealed.”

Teenage Td/IPV and MenACWY Immunisation Statistics Scotland: School year 2024/25

Public Health Scotland, 25th November 2025

“Approximately two thirds of S3 pupils in 2024/25 received their Td/IPV and MenACWY vaccines and coverage increased slightly compared with the previous year.”

Environment

Climate change and mental health report

GOV.UK, 12th November 2025

“The climate change and mental health thematic assessment report synthesises the evidence base relating to climate change and mental health.”

Public opinion on the NHS net zero ambition: 5 years on, what has changed and why?

The Health Foundation, 6th November 2025

“5 years have passed since the NHS became the world’s first health care system to commit to net zero. 2040 is the target for net zero for emissions within NHS control, and 2045 for emissions it influences. These targets are a crucial part of the UK’s response to the health threats of climate change – a topic high on the agenda at COP30 (the United Nations Climate Change Conference) starting next week.”

Air pollution: effects on adverse birth outcomes

GOV.UK, 20th November 2025

“Given growing interest from the public and the government about the effects of air pollution on pregnancy and early life, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) requested that the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP) undertake work on this topic.

Dental Health

N/A

Drugs

N/A

Health & Social Care

From diagnosis to delivery: A framework for accelerating NHS productivity growth

The Health Foundation, November 2025

“This report explores our current understanding of NHS system productivity and the reasons behind faltering growth. It sets out how our four-driver framework will guide future recommendations.”

Why management matters so much for the success of the NHS 10 year health plan

King’s Fund, 4th November 2025

“This long read examines the current state of NHS management and how it needs to be strengthened and professionalised if it is to realise the ambitions of the 10 Year Health Plan for England.”

Health Inequalities

Poverty in Scotland 2025

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 6th October 2015

“Poverty is still too high, people are feeling overlooked and ignored by politicians - the next Scottish Parliament is vital for a better future for children in Scotland.”

Health Protection

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Immunisation Programme: A health impact assessment

Public Health Scotland, 18th November 2025

“This is a report of the findings from stakeholder engagement to identify potential impacts of the proposed RSV immunisation programmes on different population groups prior to their implementation in Scotland.”

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Immunisation Programme: A health impact assessment

Public Health Scotland, 18th November 2025

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Viral respiratory diseases in Scotland surveillance report

Public Health Scotland, 20th November 2025

“This weekly release by Public Health Scotland presents epidemiological information on respiratory infection activity, including COVID-19, across Scotland.”

Medical Conditions

Scottish Cardiac Audit Programme (SCAP)

Public Health Scotland, 11th November 2025

“The Scottish Cardiac Audit Programme (SCAP) was set up to improve care and outcomes for cardiac patients through the collection and use of data on the treatments they receive. This is the fourth annual report that summarises the statistics generated from these data.”

Stroke Care – State of the Nation Report 2025 (SSNAP)

HQIP, 13th November 2025

“This report from the Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme (SSNAP) is based on 92,414 patients who were admitted across 250 hospitals, 195 community services and 184 six-month follow-up providers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland with a stroke between April 2024 to March 2025.”

Boy with rare condition amazes doctors after world-first gene therapy

BBC News, 24th November 2025

“A three-year-old boy has astounded doctors with his progress after becoming the first person in the world with his devastating disease to receive a ground-breaking gene therapy.”

New sepsis guideline targets faster, tailored treatments to benefit patients

NICE, 20th November 2025

“The updated guidance for people aged 16 and over recommends using smaller amounts of intravenous fluid initially for those at risk of serious illness or death due to sepsis. Patients should be reassessed after every infusion, allowing clinicians to tailor treatment to each person’s condition.”

Mental Wellbeing

Climate change and mental health report

GOV.UK, 12th November 2025

“The climate change and mental health thematic assessment report synthesises the evidence base relating to climate change and mental health.”

Empowering minds. Transforming young women’s mental health: Learning from the Pilgrim Trust’s Young Women in Mind programme

Centre for mental health, 19th November 2025

“Empowering Minds is our evaluation of the Young Women in Mind programme, launched by the Pilgrim Trust in 2021 to address the worsening mental health of young women aged 16-25.”

Obesity & Healthy Eating

Government acts to tackle rising childhood obesity epidemic

GOV.UK 4th November 2025

“The government will underline its commitment to get children healthier and more active following new figures revealing the scale of the childhood obesity problem.”

Shaping healthier food environments for the next decade

Public Health Scotland 17th November 2025

“In collaboration with Public Health Scotland, Nesta, an innovation agency for social good, has today published two key publications which explore how Scotland’s planning system can be used to create healthier food environments and support efforts to reduce obesity and health inequalities.”

GLP-1 receptor agonists: a wake-up call for the food system, not a silver bullet for obesity

Samantha Field, Health Foundation Blog, 18th November 2025

“New weight loss medications won’t solve obesity alone, but could they spark the regulatory shift our food environment desperately needs?”

Obesity jab drug fails to slow Alzheimer's

BBC News, 24th November 2025

“Drug maker Novo Nordisk, external says semaglutide, the active ingredient for the weight loss jab Wegovy, does not slow Alzheimer's - despite initial hopes that it might help against dementia.”

Milkshakes and lattes to face sugar tax in UK

BBC News, 25th November 2025

“Pre-packaged milkshakes and coffees that are high in sugar will be hit with an extra tax from 2028, after the government said it was extending the tax on fizzy drinks to include milk-based products and lowering the point at which the tax kicks in.”

Older People

The Longest Wait

Age UK, 2025

“10 years ago, waiting 12 hours in A&E was a rarity. Now long waits are routine, happening during 1 in 10 major A&E attendances.”

Obesity jab drug fails to slow Alzheimer's

BBC News, 24th November 2025

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Pharmacy

Drug Expenditure Dynamics 2000–2022

IQVIA, 21st October 2025

“Findings show that drug expenditures remain stable at about 15% of total healthcare spending across 12 major markets, ranging from 9% to 20%. Countries with lower overall health spending tend to have a higher drug share, while those with strong market access controls and price negotiations, such as the UK, have a lower share.”

Monthly prescribing activity data: Data for August 2025

Public Health Scotland, 11th November 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) presents data for medicinal items prescribed by NHS prescribers in Scotland and for medicinal items dispensed by NHS Scotland dispensers.”

Physical Activity

N/A

Population Statistics

Hospital Standardised Mortality Ratios July 2024 to June 2025

Public Health Scotland, 11th November 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) provides information on Hospital Standardised Mortality Ratios (HSMRs) which are updated on a quarterly basis and reflect the HSMR for the latest 12-month reporting period July 2024 to June 2025.”

How many people are waiting for NHS treatment in Scotland?

Public Health Scotland, 18th November 2025

Accident and emergency

Public Health Scotland, November 2025

Births in Scotland, Year ending 31 March 2025

Public Health, 25th November 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) reports on pregnancy, childbirth and the early care of babies born in Scotland. The health of a pregnant woman and her baby are closely linked and are influenced by numerous factors during pregnancy, childbirth and the early period after birth.”

Teenage Td/IPV and MenACWY Immunisation Statistics Scotland: School year 2024/25

Public Health Scotland, 25th November 2025

“Approximately two thirds of S3 pupils in 2024/25 received their Td/IPV and MenACWY vaccines and coverage increased slightly compared with the previous year.”

Public Health

Healthy Places, Inclusive Growth: Realising the potential of devolution

Growth and Reform Network, 2025

“This policy report focuses on the role of national government in creating the systemic conditions for integrating health and economic development at place level.”

Major UK project launched to tackle drug-resistant superbugs with AI

BBC News, 18th November 2025

“The UK is to use artificial intelligence (AI) to tackle the rising numbers of infections that have become resistant to treatment.”

Is the UK becoming the ‘sicker man’ of Europe?

King’s Fund, 13th November 2025

“The ‘sick man of Europe’, an epithet sometimes applied to the UK in the economic context, is used increasingly to describe the health of its population. The latest data from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) shows this epithet is even more fitting than before.”

Sexual Health

S1 pupils encouraged to take up the offer of the free HPV vaccine as new report shows uptake remains lower than pre-pandemic levels

Public Health Scotland, 25th November 2025

“Despite a slight increase in rates among S1 pupils in 2024/25 compared with the previous year, HPV vaccination uptake has gradually declined over the past 10 years. The latest data show that inequalities persist; with uptake rates lower among males, for certain ethnicities, and for pupils living in the most deprived, as well as the most remote, areas.”

Smoking

N/A

Suicide & Self Harm

National guidance for identifying and responding to a suicide cluster

Public Health Scotland, 25th November 2025

“Guidance for professionals.”

Women’s & Infant Health

New study shows long-term effectiveness of HPV vaccine

Public Health Scotland, 4th November 2025

“An encouraging new study by Public Health Scotland, in collaboration with the Universities of Edinburgh and Strathclyde, confirms the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine provides strong and sustained protection against cervical disease that can develop into cancer.”

Infant feeding statistics Financial year 2024 to 2025

Public Health Scotland, 11th November 2025

“There have been notable increases in breastfeeding - 69% of babies reviewed in Scotland in 2024/25 were breastfed for at least some time after their birth, compared with 63% in 2016/17.”

Air pollution: effects on adverse birth outcomes

GOV.UK, 20th November 2025

“Given growing interest from the public and the government about the effects of air pollution on pregnancy and early life, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) requested that the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP) undertake work on this topic.

Scotland to roll out 'simple' genetic test to help prevent deafness in babies

Sky News, 25th November 2025

“The test was piloted and implemented in Manchester and has now been successfully introduced by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHSGGC).”