

Public Health Bulletin

February 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	

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Alcohol

[The Impact of Alcohol on our Healthcare Services: Explained](#)

Institute of Alcohol Studies, February 2025, Youtube

[Alcohol health warning labels: a public health perspective for Europe](#)

WHO, 14th February 2025

“In the European Union the per capita alcohol consumption among adults (15+ years) in 2019 was twice the world average, with one in 19 adults dying from alcohol-attributable causes, and three out of every 10 alcohol-attributable deaths due to cancers.”

Cancer

[Cancer Medicines Outcomes Programme Public Health Scotland \(CMOP-PHS\) report](#)

Public Health Scotland, 11th February 2025

“The aim of this pilot work was to capture real-world evidence from Scotland on the use of lorlatinib monotherapy for treatment of anaplastic lymphoma kinase (ALK)

positive advanced non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC) patients previously treated with an ALK inhibitor.”

Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy activity

Public Health Scotland, 13th February 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.”

Cancer: People in UK’s poorest areas have longer waits for care and higher death rates

BMJ, 21st February 2025

“People living in the most deprived areas of the UK are much more likely to die from cancer, with death rates almost 60% higher than in the most affluent areas, a new analysis has found.”

Covid -19

Viral respiratory diseases (including influenza and COVID-19) in Scotland surveillance report

Public Health Scotland, 6th February 2025

“This weekly release by Public Health Scotland presents epidemiological information on respiratory infection activity, including COVID-19, across Scotland. Due to the dynamic nature of all datasets included in this report, figures contained within each update may be subject to change in future releases.”

Children & Young People

Protect your child against serious diseases

Public Health Scotland, 8th February 2025

“This guide is for parents and carers of children up to the age of 5 years. It provides information on the routine immunisations that are offered to help protect them from serious childhood diseases.”

Are noise-cancelling headphones to blame for young people's hearing problems?

BBC News, 16th February 2025

“Five NHS audiology departments have told the BBC that there has been an increase in the number of young people referred to them from GPs with hearing issues - only to find their hearing is normal when tested and it is their ability to process sound that is struggling.”

Future Minds: Why investigating in children's mental health will unlock economic growth

Centre for Mental Health et al, 2025

“More than one in five children and young people in England now have a diagnosable mental health condition... but the NHS is only able to support around 40% of those in need.”

'Life-changing' gene therapy for children born blind

BBC News, 21st February 2025

“An experimental trial of gene therapy has helped four toddlers - born with one of the most severe forms of childhood blindness - gain "life-changing improvements" to their sight, according to doctors at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London.”

Environment

[A PLACE FOR HEALTH: Building health and wellbeing in the places we spend time](#)

RSPH, 2025

“Over the coming year, RSPH will be publishing a series of reports setting out how places – from schools and workplaces to high streets and parks – can be reformed to deliver better health outcomes for the people who spend time in them.”

[Climate change and health: embedding ethics into policy and decision making](#)

Nuffield Council on Bioethics, 2025

“This report demonstrates that in developing policies and interventions to meet these goals, it is imperative to consider the intersections between climate and health, and to embed ethics from the outset.”

Dental Health

N/A

Drugs

[Evaluation of the National Drug Deaths Mission: Alcohol and Drug Partnership coordinator survey 2024](#)

Public Health Scotland, 18th February 2025

“This publication presents findings from an anonymous online survey of Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) coordinators, undertaken as part of the PHS evaluation of the National Drug Deaths Mission.”

Health & Social Care

What do we know about young people's interest in health careers?

OCED, 2025

“This report reviews the availability and comparability of data at an earlier stage of the education process of new health workers, focussing in particular on young people's interest in pursuing careers in health professions in OECD and non-OECD countries.”

Innovation for independence: A win-win for health and social care

Reform, 2025

“Emerging innovative technologies have the potential to significantly improve the delivery of social care in the short-term. This can be done via monitoring an individual's health and wellbeing, enabling earlier intervention, personalising care packages and in turn, boosting capacity.”

Finding a safe home after hospital:

National Housing Association, February 2025

“Drawing on a series of case studies, this report showcases how the NHS and supported housing providers are working together to remove barriers to finding a safe home and support people leaving hospital at the right time for their recovery.”

Health Inequalities

UK Poverty 2025

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 29th January 2025

“This report sets out the nature of poverty in the UK in the run-up to 2024's General Election. It also sets out the scale of action necessary for the Government to deliver the change it has promised.”

Are You talking CRAAP?

Information Literacy Group, 2025

“Demonstrating a checklist to appraise health information can be a useful way of showing how to check the key areas to decide how good or valid a source is. But there are so many out there! Which one should we use? Do we use different ones for different audiences or sources?”

Bold new collaboration to tackle health inequalities launches in three local areas in Scotland

Public Health Scotland, 24th February 2025

“The Collaboration for Health Equity in Scotland launches plans this week to bring about significant change to reduce health inequalities in three of Scotland’s local authority areas.”

Cancer: People in UK’s poorest areas have longer waits for care and higher death rates

BMJ, 21st February 2025

“People living in the most deprived areas of the UK are much more likely to die from cancer, with death rates almost 60% higher than in the most affluent areas, a new analysis has found.”

Health Protection

Scottish Vaccine Update

Public Health Scotland, 6th February 2025

“Welcome to the February edition of the Scottish Vaccine Update.

This edition focuses on sexual health related vaccine programmes which include: human papilloma virus (HPV) hepatitis A virus (HAV) hepatitis B virus (HBV) mpox (monkeypox) gonococcal (4MenB)”

[Exploring the success of Scotland’s older adult RSV vaccine programme – and why this matters to us all](#)

Public Health Scotland, (Blog) 14th February 2025

“Scotland has broken important new ground in protecting the population against respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) infection. A study published today and authored by a team from Public Health Scotland (PHS) and the University of Strathclyde, shows that the new RSV vaccine has significantly reduced hospital admissions for eligible older adults in Scotland.”

Medical Conditions

[Physician's medical decisions benefit from chatbot, study suggests](#)

Science Daily, 10th February 2025

“A study showed that chatbots alone outperformed doctors when making nuanced clinical decisions, but when supported by artificial intelligence, doctors performed as well as the chatbots.”

Reference Available: Ethan Goh, Robert J. Gallo, Eric Strong, et al, [GPT-4 assistance for improvement of physician performance on patient care tasks: a randomized controlled trial](#). Nature Medicine, 2025;

[New treatment may offer quick cure for common cause of high blood pressure](#)

Science Daily, 10th February 2025

“A revolutionary new treatment called Targeted Thermal Therapy (Tripel T) offers a safer, faster alternative to surgery for patients with high blood pressure caused by Primary Aldosteronism, a hormonal disorder.”

Reference Available: Giulia Argentesi, Xilin Wu, Alexander Ney, et al. [Endoscopic, ultrasound-guided, radiofrequency ablation of aldosterone-producing adenomas \(FABULAS\): a UK, multicentre, prospective, proof-of-concept trial](#). The Lancet, 2025

'Life-changing' gene therapy for children born blind

BBC News, 21st February 2025

“An experimental trial of gene therapy has helped four toddlers - born with one of the most severe forms of childhood blindness - gain "life-changing improvements" to their sight, according to doctors at Moorfields Eye Hospital in London.”

Epilepsy AI tool detects brain lesions doctors miss

BBC News, 24th February 2025

“An artificial-intelligence tool can detect two-thirds of epilepsy brain lesions doctors often miss, say the UK researchers who have developed it, paving the way for more targeted surgery to stop seizures.”

Mental Wellbeing

Future Minds: Why investigating in children's mental health will unlock economic growth

Centre for Mental Health et al, 2025

“More than one in five children and young people in England now have a diagnosable mental health condition... but the NHS is only able to support around 40% of those in need.”

Obesity & Healthy Eating

N/A

Older People

N/A

Pharmacy

Monthly prescribing activity data, Data for November 2024

Public Health Scotland, 11th February 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) presents data for medicinal items prescribed by NHS prescribers in Scotland and reimbursed by the NHS, for November 2024. The data is in two formats - Open Data and an interactive dashboard.”

Physical Activity

N/A

Population Statistics

Hospital Standardised Mortality Ratios, October 2023 to September 2024

Public Health Scotland, 11th February 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 October 2023 to September 2024.”

Past and projected period and cohort life tables: 2022-based, UK, 1981 to 2072

Office for National Statistics, 14th February 2025

“Boys born in the UK in 2023 can expect to live on average to age 86.7 years and girls to age 90.0 years based on projections of cohort life expectancy, which take into account future improvements in mortality.”

Accident and emergency

Public Health Scotland, February 2025

“This section focuses on statistics on accident and emergency (A&E) departments across Scotland. We also provide information about other urgent and unscheduled care services and pathways.”

Congenital conditions in Scotland 2021 to 2022

Public Health Scotland, 25th February 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) is focused on congenital conditions. It provides information on the number of babies with congenital conditions among pregnancies ending in Scotland between 2021 and 2022.”

NHS waiting times – diagnostics

Public Health Scotland, 25th February 2025

“This quarterly release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) relates to the number of waits for one of eight key diagnostic tests ongoing at 31 December 2024 and the lengths of wait experienced so far.”

Public Health

Norovirus hospital cases reach highest level ever

BBC News, 20th February 2025

“There are a record number of patients in hospital with Norovirus in England. Data from NHS England showed 1,160 patients a day on average were in hospital with the vomiting bug last week – double the level at the same period last year.”

Sexual Health

Scottish Vaccine Update

Public Health Scotland, 6th February 2025

“Welcome to the February edition of the Scottish Vaccine Update.

This edition focuses on sexual health related vaccine programmes which include: human papilloma virus (HPV) hepatitis A virus (HAV) hepatitis B virus (HBV) mpox (monkeypox) gonococcal (4MenB)”

Smoking

'Alarming' rise in strong illicit nicotine pouches

BBC News, 5th February 2025

“High strength nicotine pouches that are being sold illegally in the UK could cause inadvertent overdosing and harm to teenagers and young adults, experts have warned.”

Suicide & Self Harm

N/A

Women's & Infant Health

Beware ill-fitting menstrual cups, warn doctors

BBC News, 11th February 2025

“Although exceedingly rare, a poorly positioned cup inside the vaginal passage can press on other nearby structures, such as ureters - tubes carrying urine to the bladder, according to Danish doctors quoted in the [British Medical Journal](#).”

Fun first foods: An easy guide to introducing solid foods

Public Health Scotland, 25th February 2025

“This booklet gives information on the different stages of weaning with tips, advice and recipes.”

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