

Public Health Bulletin

May 2026



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.

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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	

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Alcohol

N/A

Cancer

[Cancer in the UK: Overview, Report - April 2026](#)

Cancer Research UK, April 2026

“The report sets out the priority actions that Cancer Research UK know are vital to preventing cancer and improving cancer outcomes. It also highlights how data-led insights can strengthen our ability to beat cancer for everyone.”

[Ovarian cancer quality performance indicator \(QPI\) documentation, 1 October 2024 onwards](#)

Public Health Scotland, 12th May 2026

“PHS has an important role in developing national prospective audit data sets and data definitions in collaboration with Scotland's three regional cancer networks and the tumour specific QPI development groups.”

Riskiest skin cancer cases hit UK record high

BBC News, 22nd May

“The charity Cancer Research UK, external says too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light from the sun or sunbeds is part of the cause, with an estimated nine in every 10 cases thought to be avoidable.”

Daily pill doubles survival time for pancreatic cancer patients

BBC News, 1st June 2026

“A pill has been found to almost double the survival time for advanced pancreatic cancer patients, with experts describing the trial as a game changer. The drug, called daraxonrasib, appears to be a breakthrough in managing a disease that has the highest mortality rate of all major cancers.”

Children & Young People

Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), UK: May 2026

ONS, 28th May 2026

Estimates of young people (aged 16 to 24 years) who are not in education, employment or training, by age and sex. These are official statistics in development.

Environment

Let's talk ticks – Lyme disease awareness

Public Health Scotland, 13th May 2026

“May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month, and Dr Selene Huntley, Advanced Healthcare Scientist at Public Health Scotland, explains the best ways to prevent tick bites, top tips to remove them correctly, and the symptoms of Lyme disease to look out for.”

Dental Health

N/A

Drugs

Health & Social Care

Health Inequalities

Healthy life expectancy trends in the UK: a watershed moment

Health Foundation, 26th April 2026

“Deep inequalities in healthy life expectancy between affluent and deprived areas have widened. The gap between the most and least deprived deciles in England is now 19.4 years for males and 20.3 years for females.”

The UK is getting sicker, sooner-how do we reverse falling healthy life expectancy?

BMJ, 22nd May 2026

“The UK made significant gains on this measure from 1946 to 2010. But several recent reports have concluded we are now falling behind.² The health policy think tank the Health

Foundation, which produced one of the reports, has described the trend as a “watershed moment” for public health.”

Understanding local labour-market pressures to reduce child poverty in Scotland

JRF, 28th May 2026

“JRF commissioned the Fraser of Allander Institute (FAI) to answer a simple question: how many people want to work and how many jobs are available across all 32 local authority areas in Scotland.”

Health Protection

N/A

Medical Conditions

'I no longer feel asthmatic': more than a million people now using new style inhalers

NICE, 5th May 2026

“The change follows a landmark guideline published jointly in 2024 by NICE, the British Thoracic Society (BTS) and the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN).”

Mental Wellbeing

BRIEFING: RCN insight and analysis of high caseloads in community mental health settings

RCN, 27th April 2026

“This briefing provides an overview of evidence showing that high caseloads are now a widespread and escalating challenge in community mental health services across the UK. Drawing on a UK-wide survey of RCN community mental health nursing members, it highlights rising caseloads, growing time pressures, and workforce capacity gaps, and the impact these have on patient care.”

Stability beyond care

Centre For Mental Health, 11th May 2026

“Welfare advice should be a core part of every mental health service, not an optional extra. This briefing, commissioned by Citizens Advice, finds that welfare advice in inpatient and community mental health is essential to effective care and recovery.”

Mental Health: Self Harm 2025 National Report

Royal College of Emergency Medicine Quality Improvement Programme, May 2026

Obesity & Healthy Eating

N/A

Older People

N/A

Pharmacy

NICE approves Duchenne muscular dystrophy treatment givinostat after commercial deal sealed

NICE, 8th May 2026

“Around 530 people in England will benefit from access to the Duchenne muscular dystrophy treatment givinostat, following the successful negotiation of a commercial deal to make the medicine available on the NHS.”

Daily pill doubles survival time for pancreatic cancer patients

BBC News, 1st June 2026

“A pill has been found to almost double the survival time for advanced pancreatic cancer patients, with experts describing the trial as a game changer. The drug, called daraxonrasib, appears to be a breakthrough in managing a disease that has the highest mortality rate of all major cancers.”

Physical Activity

N/A

Population Statistics

N/A

Public Health

Healthy life expectancy trends in the UK: a watershed moment

Health Foundation, 26th April 2026

“Deep inequalities in healthy life expectancy between affluent and deprived areas have widened. The gap between the most and least deprived deciles in England is now 19.4 years for males and 20.3 years for females.”

Hantavirus cruise ship outbreak

Public Health Scotland, 14th May 2026

“There are currently no known cases of hantavirus in Scotland and the risk to the general public is very low.”

Sexual Health

Gonorrhoea and syphilis hit record levels in Europe

BBC News, 21st May 2026

“Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including gonorrhoea and syphilis have hit record levels in Europe, according to new data. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) said both diseases had reached their highest levels in over 10 years in 2024.”

Smoking

Tobacco and Vapes Act: What can UK learn from Australia’s nicotine crackdown?

BMJ, 8th May 2026

“To help make vaping less appealing to young people, UK ministers are being handed new powers to regulate the design and advertising of products containing nicotine, create a licensing scheme for selling them, and introduce further restrictions on where they can be used in public.”

Smoking, health and social justice

Royal Collage of Physicians, 6th May 2026

“The report examines the structural factors that contribute to smoking inequality, including the social determinants of health and the substantial influence of the tobacco industry. It reviews trends in smoking behaviour across numerous indicators of social disadvantage and protected characteristics, setting out over 30 recommendations for change.”

Analysing smoking harms: new statistics using up to date evidence

Public Health Scotland, 19th May 2026

“However, measuring the harms of smoking is complex. This is because smoking is linked to a wide range of diseases and conditions, many of which can also be caused by other factors unrelated to smoking.”

Suicide & Self Harm

Mental Health: Self Harm 2025 National Report

Royal College of Emergency Medicine Quality Improvement Programme, May 2026

Women’s & Infant Health

What would it take for the NHS to treat violence against women and girls as a public health emergency

King’s Fund, 19th May 2026

“Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is often discussed as if it sits solely in the realms of policing or criminal justice. Yet the physical and psychological consequences of VAWG endlessly show up across primary care, emergency departments, maternity and mental health services.”

