Wirral Intelligence Service

February 2024: Bulletin Supplementary Content

Contents

Adults, Children and Older People

We have to take it one day at a time: results of Age UK's research into the health and care of people aged 50 and over

[This report by Age UK](#) has the results of Age UK's polling and survey work on the following topics: caring for others; physical and mental health; access to NHS and social care services; community life and social contact; cost-of-living increases; and concern about winter. For each of these topics, the report includes data from both Age UK's national polling and its internally managed survey of people across the UK aged 50 years and over. The data paints a worrying picture for many older people, underlining the case for urgent investment and reform of the services and support people rely on as they age to sustain their health, wellbeing and independence.

The cost of breast cancer: modelling the economic impact to the UK

This [Demos research finds that breast cancer will likely cost the UK economy between £2.6 billion and £2.8 billion in 2024](#). It also estimates that wellbeing costs associated with the disease will amount to £17.5 billion in 2024. This report, supported by Breast Cancer Now, sets out how a number of critical interventions can mitigate the human and financial impacts of breast cancer. The economic modelling shows that higher levels of screening, more cancer nurse specialists, and better help for people returning to work would deliver the highest impact.

Health of the next generation: good food for children

The [Faculty of Public Health has led a coalition of health organisations and charities in publishing this report](). It calls on the government to protect the health and productivity of our next generation by expanding access to the Free School Meal programme, National School Breakfast programme, and the Healthy Start voucher scheme.

Improving the mental health of babies, children and young people: a framework of modifiable factors

The mental health of babies, children and young people influences their future mental health, as well as their current and future physical health, affecting their wider life chances and outcomes. The early part of the life course, from birth to young adulthood (0 to 25 years), provides important opportunities for promoting and protecting mental health. This [Department of Health and Social Care document]() aims to: highlight the wide range of modifiable factors that interact to influence the mental health of babies, children and young people; summarise these in a framework; and convey opportunities across the life course for promotion and prevention.

Wall-to-wall support: joining up public services and housing for vulnerable children, young people and families

[This Demos report argues that public services need to be more effectively joined up](). It finds that a lack of joined-up public services is costing government up to £4.3 billion every year. These costs are a direct result of additional use of government services, such as housing or health, by young people and families who did not access adequate support or early help when they needed it.

One hundred not out: a route map for long lives

This [International Longevity Centre UK (ILC) report]() sets out the challenges facing communities in an ageing world and includes a mix of next-step solutions, bolder ideas, and international examples that ILC believes could work to tackle them. The report is broken down into 11 chapters (including health and social care), each of which relates to a certain challenge our increasing life span will pose for government, industries, society and individuals.

Violence against women and girls Office for National Statistics

An update of [ONS current and future research and publications]() relating to violence against women and girls (VAWG).

State of ageing 2023

This [Centre for Ageing Better report]() aims to shine a light on the diversity and inequality among the country's older populations, including the growing financial pressures felt by many. It looks at housing, financial security, employment, and health and wellbeing.

Climate Crisis and Sustainability

Climate change: health effects in the UK

This is the [fourth Health Effects of Climate Change in the UK report](#), which provides evidence, analysis and recommendations based on climate change projections for the UK.

Communities

Independent review of English public libraries

The [review of libraries was published on 18 January](#), alongside the Government's response to the recommendations.

Do they care? Supporting us to care for each other throughout life

This [International Longevity Centre UK (ILC) briefing](#) highlights new analysis that shows that the average person in the UK spends more hours caring for others – by parenting, caring, and working unpaid in the home – than looking after themselves, and those on lower incomes are even more likely to neglect themselves.

Disabilities

Supported housing: Seventy-seventh report of session 2022-23

Supported housing provides housing with support to people with additional needs, including care leavers, and people with disabilities, mental health issues or addiction. This [House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts report](#) finds that the supported housing sector is facing many problems, such as poor-quality housing, fraud and lack of data, and that vulnerable people are at risk from these factors. More support and reform are needed to improve the quality and availability of supported housing.

Environment and Place

'Better Friends'

This [new report from the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces](#) details the activities, character, memberships, partnerships and influence of the movement of over 7,000 local Friends Groups across the UK. The report shows how vital Friends and environmental volunteer groups are for our green spaces.

Prevention in health and social care: healthy places

This [House of Commons Committee report](#) makes a number of recommendations to government on preventative measures that can contribute to healthy placemaking, including in relation to housing conditions, developing healthier homes, health promotion and integrated care, town planning and tacking wider health inequalities in the built environment.

Health

•Hepatitis C in England and the UK

Latest UKHSA hepatitis C virus (HCV) reports and supporting documents, for England and the UK.

A new lease of life: three steps to success for the NHS

This Social Market Foundation briefing argues that the current model of care is not meeting modern health care needs. It proposes a new model to increase efficiency, shifting care away from the district general hospital towards fewer, specialist teams, more neighbourhood care and greater transparency.

Patient-initiated follow-up: does it work, why it matters, and can it help the NHS recover?

The NHS's elective recovery strategy includes a target of moving 5% of outpatient attendances to patient-initiated follow-up (PIFU) pathways by March 2025. But what exactly is PIFU? As the NHS prepares to scale it up nationally, this Nuffield Trust explainer details what it is, the problems it could solve, and what is known so far about how well it works.

Blocked ears – blocked access: the crisis of NHS ear wax removal in England

Increasingly, GP practices are no longer offering ear wax removal services. This report, Royal National Institute for Deaf People, analyses Freedom of Information requests sent to all 42 integrated care boards (ICBs), the commissioners of most NHS services, in England. Results show that less than half of ICBs are commissioning ear wax removal services in line with NICE guidelines. Findings also show that most ICBs commission some services but people can only access them if they live in certain parts of the ICB area, and at least seven ICBs commission no ear wax removal services at all

Health hubs: a community-centred prevention initiative to address health inequalities

This NHS Providers briefing explores what health hubs are, how they can improve access to services for groups facing health inequalities, and the role of trust leaders in their development.

Positive Voices 2022: survey report

Positive Voices is a nationally representative survey of patients attending HIV specialist care in England, Wales and Scotland. The UK Health Security Agency survey includes patient-reported data on: HIV knowledge, diagnoses and treatment; health conditions and medication; health care use and satisfaction with HIV specialist services and GP services; health-related quality of life and wellbeing; general health and health-related behaviours; stigma and discrimination; housing, employment and finances; met and unmet health and social care needs; and the impact of Covid-19.

Opposition Day Debate on NHS dentistry

This Nuffield Trust briefing was sent to all members of parliament with the key facts on the subject of NHS Dentistry and the possible actions to take. Before Christmas they also published a new report, Bold action or slow decay?, which described the extent of the NHS dentistry crisis and set out a series of options to improve the current model.

Doing more for less? A mixed-methods analysis of the experience of primary care networks in socio-economically deprived areas

Primary care networks (PCNs) are a major vehicle for government investment in general practice, worth £2.4 billion in 2023/24. However, this Health Foundation research shows that poorer areas in England are missing out on funding and additional primary care staff because the greater health needs of their populations are not adequately taken into account by current funding arrangements.

Patients at the centre: integrating primary and community care

The quality and accessibility of healthcare services profoundly impact the lives of a country's citizens. A well-integrated system of primary and community care is a critical part of these services. This report published by Integration of Primary and Community Care Committee, Report of Session 2023-24 (15 Dec 2023) examines how we can ensure that primary and community healthcare services are readily available and seamlessly integrated, to provide holistic care for individuals and communities. It is well known that the NHS faces major challenges, particularly within primary care. Originally devised to treat individual conditions, the NHS now serves a population which is living longer and includes many people with multiple health issues, requiring complex and continuous care. The NHS has failed to improve its organisational structure, funding mechanisms, infrastructure, and workforce to meet this challenge. As a result, it is ill-equipped to meet current healthcare demands, and its long-term sustainability is threatened

Policy position: sexual health

This Association of Directors of Public Health report outlines a number of national and local recommendations for providing access to high-quality sexual and reproductive health services for all, and reducing the transmission of sexually transmitted illnesses (STIs).

Transforming health and wellbeing services through population health management

A rising number of NHS organisations are combining traditional approaches – responding to illness where it occurs – with population health approaches that seek to better understand, target and prevent illness. This NHS Confederation report explores four case studies where population health and population health management approaches have been developed in recent years and show demonstrable benefits.

Suicide prevention: resources and guidance

Range of content to help local authorities, public healthcare professionals, police forces and others to prevent suicides in their areas.

Health Behaviours

Creating a smokefree generation and tackling youth vaping

This consultation has concluded with the large majority of responses supported the government proposal to create a smokefree generation. Read details.

Adult oral health survey 2021

A report on the main findings of the 2021 Adult Oral Health Survey.

Substance misuse treatment in secure settings: 2022 to 2023

Statistics for alcohol and drug misuse treatment in prisons and other secure settings from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS).

Substance misuse treatment for young people: 2022 to 2023

Alcohol and drug treatment data for young people under 18, from the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS).

Helping people in alcohol and drug treatment services into work

Summary of effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and qualitative findings from the Individual Placement and Support - Alcohol and Drug (IPS-AD) study.

Youth vaping in England

In England, e-cigarettes that contain nicotine cannot be legally sold to under-18s. Despite this, the rate of vaping (the use of e-cigarettes) among young people is increasing. This House of Commons Library briefing considers the potential causes, implications and the government's policy response.

A formal evaluation of the impact of interventions aimed at vaccine uptake and vaccine confidence by Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) health and care professional networks

This report by Faculty of Public Health outlines research overseen by the Faculty of Public Health, funded by Public Health England, and delivered by the University of Hertfordshire. It explores how voluntary health networks supported vaccine uptake in the community and how this support was received.

We are family: delivering more smokefree families in England

This Future Health report finds that there are an estimated 1.8 million households in England with children where someone smokes. The research commissioned and funded by Kenvue applauds the recent government announcements on reducing smoking for future generations, but argues that more immediate action is needed to reduce the costs and impacts of families with children where someone smokes.

Inequalities

Health inequalities, lives cut short

This [Institute of Health Equity (IHE) report](#) confirms that a million people in 90% of areas in England lived shorter lives than they should between 2011 and the start of the pandemic. Using several published Office for National Statistics data sources, the IHE made these calculations from the number of excess deaths (the increase in the number of deaths beyond what would be expected) in the decade from 2011 in England.

Statement | Health inequalities legal duties

NHS England has published its first [Statement on Information on Health Inequalities](#) which sets out its views on how ICBs, trusts and foundation trusts should collect, analyse, publish and use information on health inequalities. These NHS bodies have a legal duty to review the extent to which they have done this in their annual reports.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on women, employment and health inequalities

There has been a major impact from the Covid-19 pandemic on women in general, but also specifically for women of working age and in the workforce. [This explanatory note from Public Health Wales](#) and accompanying infographic look at the major identified impacts of the pandemic on women of working age, while also considering existing inequalities related to employment. It uses the lens of a health impact assessment, which identifies both positive and negative health and wellbeing impacts, and highlights the equity impacts on different population groups.

Mental Health

Gambling treatment need and support: prevalence estimates

[Estimates of the number and rates of adults who gamble who might benefit from treatment or support in each local authority in England](#).

Reaching out: improving the physical health of people with severe mental illness

People living with severe mental illness face a 15–20-year shorter life expectancy than the general population. This is largely due to physical illnesses that could be prevented or treated. One of the ways to tackle this unacceptable inequality is by ensuring that everyone with severe mental illness is supported to access an annual physical health (PHSMI) check. This [Centre for Mental Health report with Equally Well UK, commissioned by NHS England](#), explores how new investment has been used around the country to improve outreach services and increase uptake of the PHSMI check.

The burnout report

This [new benchmark Mental Health UK study](#), to be conducted annually, explores the experience and prevalence of high or extreme pressure and stress in people's daily lives, and the factors that contribute towards or alleviate the risk of burnout.

Policy

The state of the state 2024: by the people who use it and the people who run it

This report, from Reform, produced in partnership with Deloitte, explores key issues facing the UK government and public services. The report is based on an exclusive Ipsos public poll, and more than 100 interviews with public sector leaders. It identifies NHS waiting lists as a key public priority for improvement (72% respondents) along with the cost of living (77%), but also found pessimism that it will probably get worse (59%) over the next few years.

The health policy year in 12 charts 2023

Covid-19 has dominated health policy since 2020. But in 2023 new themes of industrial action, the cost-of-living crisis and sustained performance pressures took its place. From January to December 2023, here Kings Funds Siva Anandaciva's recaps of some of the key health policy events of the past year.

Great government: public service reform in the 2020s

This Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) report examines the state of the state by focusing on the challenges facing the NHS, schools and the justice system in the UK, which the next government will need to address, and sets out a plan for progress. It suggests that even if the next government matched previous rates of improvement, it would take nearly 10 years to recover levels of access in the NHS, up to 7 years to return to previous performance on the education attainment gap, and a decade to clear the courts backlog.

Poverty

Ending child poverty: why and how

In this comprehensive guide, the Child Poverty Action Group authors set out the evidence of the extent of child poverty and its impacts on children. They explore how the social security system can help families on low incomes, and learn from what other countries have done to tackle child poverty. They then detail the priorities for action: the steps the government must take to help reduce child poverty. The book finishes by imagining a society without child poverty, and the opportunities that would unleash for all the UK's children.

Guide on fuel poverty in Cheshire and Merseyside supports locals at high risk

The guide offers a step-by-step description of how Cheshire and Merseyside ICS worked with local trailblazer sites to identify patients at highest risk of fuel poverty and offer them targeted support. Feedback suggests that the work is actively transforming how community teams support their patients and service users.

Inequalities Amplified. The alarming rise of child poverty in the UK

More than 4.2 million children in the UK are growing up in poverty, this is a number that has been rising over the last decade and is forecast to grow even further. Failure to disrupt and reverse this trend will have profound impacts on individual life chances, have intergenerational effects and exacerbate structural racialised inequalities. This report brings together the expertise of three organisations: Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), Runnymede Trust and Women's Budget Group to understand why Black and minority ethnic children are more likely to grow up in poverty, how this links to wider racial and gender disparities and what can be done to reduce child poverty and create a more equal society. It highlights relevant literature and draws on the real-life experiences and reflections of Black and minority ethnic parents living on a lower income in London.

Social Care

HomeFirst is a multidisciplinary and highly specialised team of therapists, care assistants and adult social care staff who work together to enable people to be discharged from hospital quickly and continue their recovery and rehabilitation in their own surroundings. Since late 2022, this service has supported over 1000 discharges and seen the number of domiciliary care packages decrease from 270 to less than 20 in the last 12 months. Read the case study.

Social care funding reform in England: choices for the next government

As the next general election approaches, political parties are developing manifestos for government. Neither Labour nor the Conservatives have yet set out detailed plans on social care. This Health Foundation long read sets out the main options for reforming the funding system for social care in England, including those often proposed by political parties. It also outlines the basic features of each policy approach and estimates their potential costs. It starts with a summary of the rationale for funding reform.

Hot weather and health: exploring extreme heat in adult social care

Older adults and those with health conditions are at risk of mortality during heatwaves. The research explores the experience of those who care for them.

Which challenges must be overcome to stop health care staff leaving?

Difficulties in retaining health care staff are not just a problem for the UK. After recent reports highlighted the magnitude of the challenge of retaining medical workers, a new BMJ article from Lucina Rolewicz, Rachel Hutchings, Billy Palmer and Janet Alexis De los Santos describes five reasons why health care staff across different countries might be leaving their work. It also argues how nations across the globe must have retention strategies for the specific staff challenges they face.

The Care Act 2014 and unpaid carers: a handy summary

This Local Government Association summary is designed to support councils to prepare for Care Quality Commission (CQC) assessment as it relates to unpaid carers. CQC assessments will focus on how well councils are carrying out their statutory duties under the act, in line with new powers set out in the Health and Care Act 2022 regulations.

Social care, housing, health and winter: autumn survey report 2023

In this Association of Directors of Adult Social Services survey, almost two-thirds (63 per cent) of social care leaders say that community-based care and support is not widely available in their local area. Just under half (49 per cent) of adult social care directors indicated that in their area there is only limited availability of preventive services focused on reducing the number of avoidable admissions to hospital and residential care. It concludes that improving care at home, more sheltered, extra care and dementia-focused housing, investment in crisis resolution intermediate care, and better information and advice for older and disabled people would prevent many from needing hospital or residential care, reducing pressures across health and social care every winter.

State of caring 2023: the impact of caring on health

This Carers UK report finds that caring responsibilities for relatives or friends who are older, disabled or seriously ill are having a significant impact on people's capacity to work and earn a full-time wage. The research shows that 40% of unpaid carers providing high levels of care are giving up work to care, while 22% are reducing their working hours.

The public's perspective: the state of health and social care

This Healthwatch England report, looking at health and social care from the public's perspective, warns that we risk 'a two-tier health and care system' unless the NHS takes faster action to tackle access issues. The report examines ten key areas of care, including GPs, dentists, hospitals and social care, based on the experiences of 65,000 patients. While much of the support the NHS provides is good, the research has found that accessing this support in the first place remains the biggest challenge people face.

Wider Determinants

Healthy places, prosperous lives

The IPPR report finds that there is a stark divide in health and wealth throughout the UK, leaving many health black spots as health inequalities cluster in the same places. Poorer and sicker areas are getting poorer and sicker the most quickly. The UK now has among the largest health inequalities of any advanced economy, with one in every four people in England and Wales who are economically inactive living in the unhealthiest 50 local authorities.

Moving to healthy homes

This [Health Foundation briefing](link) examines the problems caused by 'non-decent' housing, overcrowding and access to housing. It sets out the health case for change, outlines the principles to create healthy homes (including through the Decent Homes Standard), and calls for a long-term strategy to ensure healthy homes for all.

Socially Determined

[Polling by the Fairness Foundation and Opinium](link) finds that people do recognise the importance of tackling the underlying 'social determinants' of poor health such as poverty, poor housing and pollution, rather than focusing on individual choices and healthcare services, and suggests that an increased awareness of structural influences on health might be due to their personal experiences of health issues. The survey aimed to find out whether people recognise the impact of social factors on health outcomes when they are presented with specific case studies, and how they compare the impact of those factors to individual choices and healthcare services. It also looked at how attitudes vary based on people's background, beliefs and personal health, and views on the role of the state in addressing health inequalities. We found that 50% of people believe that their or their families' health has been negatively affected by their economic situation, while a similar proportion cite the negative health impacts of their job. This may help to explain why respondents tended to place more emphasis on social determinants than on individual responsibility when asked to identify the causes of five case studies of ill health.

If you have any local information, research or reports you think useful to share then get in touch wirralintelligenceservice@wirral.gov.uk or if the bulletin has been passed onto you and you would like to subscribe please [complete this form](link).

Thanks, John