

Public Health Bulletin

May 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.

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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

Drugs and alcohol workforce: knowledge and skills framework

Scottish Government, 28th April 2025

“This framework sets out to practitioners, commissioners, managers and service providers the knowledge and skills required by the drugs and alcohol workforce to support the consistent delivery of high-quality services.”

Making a change booklets

Public Health Scotland, 2025

“Making a change. Helping you make positive choices about the amount you drink.”

Cancer

Head and neck cancer Quality Performance Indicators

Public Health Scotland, 20th May 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) summarises recent national performance, measured using the national Quality Performance Indicators (QPIs) relating to the diagnosis and treatment of cancer of the head and neck.”

Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy activity

Public Health Scotland , 29th May 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.”

Covid -19

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

Public Health Scotland, 8th May 2025

“Public Health Scotland (PHS) continue to consider timely ways to provide the public with official statistics. Between April and October 2025, Public Health Scotland (PHS) will update the narrative report once a month.”

Children & Young People

Young people caught in crosshairs of health and disability reforms

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 6th May 2025

“The Pathways to Work green paper proposals will impact young people already experiencing high levels of hardship, undermining the policy intent that underpins the Youth Guarantee.”

A healthy diet in childhood is linked to starting menstrual periods later, regardless of BMI or height

Science Daily, 6th May 2025

“Eating a healthy diet as a child is linked to girls having their first menstrual period at an older age than those who consumed a less healthy diet, according to a new study.”

Article reference: C P Davis, S Fest, K Cushing-Haugen, T W Kensler, J E Chavarro, H R Harris. Dietary patterns and age at menarche in a prospective study of girls in the USA. *Human Reproduction*, 2025; DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/humrep/deaf072>

Unlocking the potential of young people furthest from the labour market

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 6th May 2025

“This report gives 4 key policy principles to help young people furthest from the labour market into good-quality, sustained employment.”

Child obesity clinics seeing BMIs over 50

BBC News, 13th May 2025

“A disproportionate number of children referred to NHS excess weight clinics in England are from the most deprived areas, and a significant number are neurodivergent or have other health conditions, a study has found.”

Environment

Imagining a net zero NHS of the future

The Health Foundation

“Use this interactive hypothetical scenario to encourage thinking and discussion about the possible future of our health system. This is not a prediction or vision for the future, but is designed to highlight questions for us all to think about today...”

Dental Health

N/A

Drugs

Drugs and alcohol workforce: knowledge and skills framework

Scottish Government, 28th April 2025

“This framework sets out to practitioners, commissioners, managers and service providers the knowledge and skills required by the drugs and alcohol workforce to support the consistent delivery of high-quality services.”

Health & Social Care

Digitising the NHS and adult social care, What could it cost?

The Health Foundation, 8th May 2025

“A shift from analogue to digital is at the heart of the government’s ambitions for NHS reform in England. The forthcoming NHS 10-year plan and the 2025 Spending Review, as well as the Casey Commission into social care, offer an opportunity to achieve a step-change in digitisation, improving productivity, patient experience and outcomes, and staff experience.”

Support for paramedic, nursing and midwifery students: academic year 2025 to 2026

Scottish Government, 18th April 2025

“This booklet provides information for students on pre-registration nursing, midwifery and paramedic science degree programmes in Scotland.”

Adult social care funding pressures: 2023–35

The Health Foundation, 15th May 2025

“Estimated costs to meet growing demand and improve services in England.”

Health Inequalities

Health inequalities in health protection report 2025 (England)

UK Health Security Agency, 27th May 2025

“Health inequalities in health protection have a high human cost across people and place. They have a wider societal impact, including on health services and economic productivity. The causes of and solutions to addressing health inequalities are often systemic, structural and complex.”

Health Protection

JCVI advises changes to childhood vaccinations in Scotland

Public Health Scotland, 15th May 2025

“Following a detailed review by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), the UK’s independent expert group on vaccines, Public Health Scotland (PHS) is working with the Scottish Government and colleagues across NHS Boards to make some changes to Scotland’s childhood vaccination programme.”

Medical Conditions

Bridging the great divide: coordination of primary and secondary care in the management of chronic disease

The Health Foundation, 15th May 2025

“Not enough is known about the best models for achieving high-quality, coordinated chronic disease care at the primary–secondary care interface, or what is required to support the development of such models.”

The key to spotting dyslexia early could be AI-powered handwriting analysis

Science Daily, 14th May 2025

“A new study outlines how artificial intelligence-powered handwriting analysis may serve as an early detection tool for dyslexia and dysgraphia among young children.”

Full reference: Sahana Rangasrinivasan, M. S. Sumi Suresh, Abbie Olszewski, Srirangaraj Setlur, Bharat Jayaraman, Venu Govindaraju. **AI-Enhanced Child Handwriting Analysis: A Framework for the Early Screening of Dyslexia and Dysgraphia**. *SN Computer Science*, 2025; 6 (5) DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s42979-025-03927-0>

Mental Wellbeing

Psychological therapies and interventions waiting times standard definitions: implementation guide

Public Health Scotland, 7th May 2025

“Implementation guide describing what counts psychological treatment or intervention.”

Mental health in and through work: findings from participatory arts-based qualitative research

Public Health Scotland, 27th May 2025

“This report outlines findings from participatory arts-based research which explores experiences of mental health, employment and economic inactivity.”

Obesity & Healthy Eating

Weight-loss drugs tested in head-to-head trial

BBC News, 12th May 2025

“The first head-to-head trial of two blockbuster weight-loss drugs has shown Mounjaro is more effective than rival Wegovy. Both drugs led to substantial weight loss, but Mounjaro's 20% weight reduction, after 72 weeks of treatment, exceeded the 14% from Wegovy, according to the trial's findings.”

Child obesity clinics seeing BMIs over 50

BBC News, 13th May 2025

“A disproportionate number of children referred to NHS excess weight clinics in England are from the most deprived areas, and a significant number are neurodivergent or have other health conditions, a study has found.”

Older People

N/A

Pharmacy

NHS Pharmacy First Scotland, 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2024

Public Health Scotland, 6th May 2025

“This regular release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) presents information on the number and characteristics of patients accessing NHS Pharmacy First Scotland and Community Pharmacy Unscheduled Supply (CPUS) services.”

Physical Activity

N/A

Population Statistics

UK mortality trends and international comparisons

The Health Foundation, 20th May 2025

“This briefing compares trends in mortality within the UK and with 21 high-income countries, based on new research by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.”

Accident and emergency

Public Health Scotland, May 2025

“This section focuses on statistics on accident and emergency (A&E) departments across Scotland.”

Public Health

Diverging paths: How other countries have designed and implemented assisted dying

Nuffield Trust, 9th May 2025

“What can the UK learn from other countries that have legalised assisted dying? This long read explores assisted dying policies across 15 jurisdictions in 9 countries, highlighting practical and operational differences in implementation, and how these systems have evolved.”

Tick talk – What to do if you get bitten

Public Health Scotland, 19th May 2025

“May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month, and Dr Selene Huntley, Advanced Healthcare Scientist at Public Health Scotland, shares what Lyme disease is, how it can be prevented by being tick aware, and how to spot symptoms if you have been bitten.”

Opening Statement for Module 7 of the UK COVID-19 Inquiry on behalf of Public Health Scotland

Public Health Scotland, 20th May 2025

“Module 7 of the UK COVID-19 Public Inquiry opened on 19 March 2024. This module will consider the policies and strategies of the UK Government and Devolved Administrations to support testing, tracing and isolation during the pandemic.”

West Nile virus detected in UK mosquitoes for first time

BBC News, 21st May 2025

“West Nile virus, which mainly spreads between birds but can also infect people if they're bitten by an infected mosquito, has been detected in UK mosquitoes for the first time, UK health officials say.”

Sexual Health

World-first gonorrhoea vaccine launched by NHS England as infections soar

BBC News, 21st May 2025

“England will be the first country in the world to start vaccinating people against the sexually transmitted infection gonorrhoea. It will not be available for everyone. The focus will mainly be on gay and bisexual men with a history of multiple sexual partners or an STI.”

What you need to know before doing your STI tests

Public Health Scotland, 26th May 2025

“This leaflet tells you about STI self-sample testing and what you need to know before taking your test.”

Smoking

Nicotine pouches helped me quit vaping – but now I'm addicted

BBC News, 21st May 2025

“Health experts say the pouches – small sachets that fit between the top lip and the gum, nicknamed "snus" by some teenagers - are addictive and may have other harmful side effects.”

Public Health Scotland welcomes ban on disposable vapes

Public Health Scotland, 30th May 2025

“Public Health Scotland (PHS) welcomes the latest steps to create a smokefree generation with the ban on the sale and supply of single-use vapes in Scotland, which comes into effect on 1 June 2025.”

Suicide & Self Harm

N/A

Women's & Infant Health

Big baby trial gives pregnant women more choice

BBC News, 7th May 2025

“The "big baby" trial aimed to find out if starting labour earlier than 38 weeks made it less likely for infants who appeared large in the womb to be born with shoulder dystocia, where the shoulder becomes stuck during delivery.”