Public Health Bulletin
October 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. 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

N/A

Cancer

Innovations in population-based cancer screening programmes: Key considerations for effective implementation

European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, 21st September 2026

"Cancer screening can reduce cancer morbidity and mortality by identifying early abnormalities, before they cause signs and symptoms."

First personalised cancer vaccine cuts risk of disease returning in major trial

BBC News, 23rd October 2026

“The vaccine, called Intismeran, uses the same mRNA technology as some Covid jabs. It is personalised to each patient, using information from their own tumour to help train their immune system to recognise cancer cells and target them if they return.”

Children & Young People

Baraniuk C. Meningitis B vaccine: **Only a quarter of year 13 school leavers in England get jab** BMJ 2026; 395 :e101035 doi:10.1136/bmj-2026-101035

How to build young people’s health and participation in work and education

Health Foundation, September 2026

“Our recommendations focus on prevention: helping young people stay engaged, tackling health barriers early and recognising that needs vary widely, both between individuals and across different points of a young person’s life.”

Cut screen time in classrooms to avoid long-term health issues, clinicians urge

BBC News, 13th October 2026

“The clinicians said they are prescribing glasses, hearing aids and speech therapy to children "for a problem that is unintentionally being made worse in our schools"

Environment

Marina Romanello , Wenjia Cai , Anthony Costello , Maria Walawender , Cathryn Tonne (2026) **The urgent role for health professionals in accelerating mitigation and adaptation to climate change.** *The Lancet Public Health*, Vol 11 (11)

Dental Health

N/A

Drugs

Ketamine: Understanding the risks to reduce harm

Public Health Scotland, 14th October 2026

“In this blog, Ruairi O'Brien, Senior Health Improvement Officer at Public Health Scotland (PHS), explains why raising awareness of ketamine-related harms matters and how informed conversations can help people access the support they need.”

Health & Social Care

N/A

Health Inequalities

Poverty in Scotland 2026

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 5th October 2026

“With targets missed and poverty too high, radical change is needed. Local government needs to play a bigger role in poverty reduction, both in their delivery and in a healthier relationship with the Scottish Government.”

How Community Wealth Building can help prevent poverty and reduce health inequalities

Public Health Scotland, 9th October 2026

“This Challenge Poverty Week, I want to highlight the opportunity that Community Wealth Building presents to reduce poverty and improve health in Scotland. This is prevention in action, which sits at the heart of Public Service Reform.”

Mental Health Inequalities in Scotland: An exploration using the Scotpho mental health profiles.

Scotpho, October 2026

“Tackling the wider factors affecting mental health – e.g., by considering mental health implications in social security, education, employment, and planning policies, as well as in health policies – can help prevent conditions developing, and can be more effective than treating conditions once they arise.”

Health Protection

Baraniuk C. Meningitis B vaccine: **Only a quarter of year 13 school leavers in England get jab** BMJ 2026; 395 :e101035 doi:10.1136/bmj-2026-101035

How surveillance is helping prepare for Scotland’s winter respiratory season 2026

Public Health Scotland, 8th October 2026

“This year, we’re introducing activity thresholds for community acute respiratory infection (CARI) data. These thresholds show whether levels of respiratory infections are at expected levels or higher than usual among people attending GPs.”

Medical Conditions

HIV in Scotland

Public Health Scotland, 29th September 2026

“This annual release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) presents an update on Scotland's progress towards human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) transmission elimination targets by providing data on the uptake of HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), HIV testing, HIV diagnoses, access to specialist HIV care and uptake of anti-retroviral therapy (ART) in Scotland.”

'I could go to work again': prescriptions for NICE-recommended endometriosis and fibroid tablets soar

NICE, 26th October 2026

“Prescribing of NICE-recommended tablets for endometriosis and fibroids has more than tripled in a year across England, giving thousands of additional women another option to manage painful and debilitating symptoms.”

Mental Wellbeing

Mental health crisis care: care of patients in emergency departments

Health Services Safety Investigations Body, 17th September 2026

“The findings in this report reflect whole-pathway pressures across urgent and emergency care, mental health, ambulance, police, community and commissioning systems, and are not intended as criticism of any single service or professional group.”

Independent review into mental health conditions, ADHD and autism: final report

GOV.UK, 9th October 2026

"Final report detailing the findings of the independent review into the prevalence and support for mental health conditions, ADHD and autism."

Mental Health Inequalities in Scotland: An exploration using the Scotpho mental health profiles.

Scotpho, October 2026

"Tackling the wider factors affecting mental health – e.g., by considering mental health implications in social security, education, employment, and planning policies, as well as in health policies – can help prevent conditions developing, and can be more effective than treating conditions once they arise."

Obesity & Healthy Eating

Scotland's new rules on promoting less healthy food and drink

Public Health Scotland, 1st October 2026

"Around two-thirds of all adults in Scotland (66%) are living with overweight, with almost one quarter (24%) of children measured in Primary 1 at risk of overweight or obesity. Children in the most deprived areas are twice as likely to be at risk of obesity as those in the least deprived areas."

Older People

A cycle of invisibility: how older people are overlooked in data and research

Centre for Aging Better, 17th September 2026

"Our new short report explores these data gaps that cause real issues for older people in daily life, as well as perpetuating the ageism that is so harmful to all of us."

Pharmacy

N/A

Physical Activity

N/A

Population Statistics

Prof Evangelos Kontopantelis PhD, Xingna Zhang PhD, Prof Mark Green PhD, Luke Munford PhD, Prof Benjamin Barr PhD, Prof Iain Buchan MD. (2026) **The north–south divide in English mortality, 1981–2024: a longitudinal population study.** *The Lancet Public Health*, Vol11 (11)

Generational differences in attitudes towards the NHS

King's Fund, 22nd October 2026

"Survey data gives us some insight into how satisfied the public is with the NHS, whether they support the idea of the NHS and how they think it should be funded. This survey data can be split by age and generation to see whether younger age groups differ from older age groups."

Public Health

What is compassionate leadership?

King's Fund, 3rd September 2026

"Compassionate leadership involves a focus on relationships through careful listening to, understanding, empathising with and supporting other people, enabling those we lead to feel valued, respected and cared for, so they can reach their potential and do their best work."

Meet the Menders: If our social fabric is frayed, who's fixing it?

Kinship Works for the JRF, September 2026

"For the past six months, Kinship Works has been working with the support of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. We set out to map the disciplines of civic renewal and their supporting professional architectures."

Prevention report

Royal College of General Practitioners, September 2026

"This report focuses on the important role general practice can play as part of this wider response, and the support needed to create the capacity for this work."

What Scotland and Greater Manchester are learning about prevention

King's Fund, 7th October 2026

"What does it take to shift public services toward prevention? We share reflections from Scotland and Greater Manchester on defining prevention, sharing power and learning across places."

Public Health Scotland responds to UK COVID-19 Inquiry Module 6 report

Public Health Scotland, 20th October 2026

"Public Health Scotland (PHS) notes the publication of the Module 6 report from the UK COVID-19 Inquiry, which examines the impact of the pandemic on the UK care sector."

Sexual Health

N/A

Smoking

N/A

Suicide & Self Harm

N/A

Women's & Infant Health

Understanding Black Maternal Mental Health In The UK

Fivexmore, September 2026

"The findings reveal a significant gap between the mental health difficulties women experienced and the recognition and support they received. But they also show what good care can look like: when healthcare professionals listen, respond with compassion and create space for women to feel safe, understood and taken seriously."

'I could go to work again': prescriptions for NICE-recommended endometriosis and fibroid tablets soar

NICE, 26th October 2026

“Prescribing of NICE-recommended tablets for endometriosis and fibroids has more than tripled in a year across England, giving thousands of additional women another option to manage painful and debilitating symptoms.”