

Public Health Bulletin

July / August 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	

Public Health Bulletin – July 2025

Alcohol

N/A

Cancer

Increasing cancer prevalence – the story behind the projections

Public Health Scotland, 24th June 2025

“In this joint blog, two of our Consultants in Public Health Medicine, Professor David Morrison, Director of the Scottish Cancer Registry and Dr Fatim Lakha, explore the seemingly paradoxical good news within Scotland’s rising cancer statistics – and what it means for our future health and care system.”

Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapy activity

Public Health Scotland, 17th July 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. The data has been visualised on a dashboard on the PHS website.”

Survival rates for most deadly cancers making little progress, experts warn

BBC News, 13th August 2025

“The number of people surviving cancer has improved hugely in the past 50 years, but experts warn progress has been uneven with some cancers with the worst survival rates falling further behind.”

Covid -19

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

Public Health Scotland, 17th July 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

Update on measles in Scotland - ensure everyone in your family is fully protected

Public Health Scotland, 14th July 2025

“As measles cases continue to increase across the world, including in England where outbreaks continue, Public Health Scotland (PHS) is continuing to encourage the public to take up the offer of the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine. Having two doses of the MMR vaccine is the best way to be fully protected against measles.”

Children with Life-Limiting Conditions and Palliative and End-of-Life Care Needs

National Child Mortality Database, 10th July 2025

“This NCMD thematic report aims to analyse deaths of infants, children, and young people with life-limiting conditions and palliative and end of life care needs. It presents national findings on children with life-limiting conditions and analysis on the learning from the child death reviews on service provision.”

Children with Life-Limiting Conditions and Palliative and End-of-Life Care Needs

NCMD, 10th July 2025

“The report makes recommendations for improvements in commissioning services, access to medicines and professional training.”

Environment

Uncover the insights that matter

Skills for Health, (sign up to download)

“This report presents an analysis of the current workforce challenges and opportunities across the UK, showcasing best practices and actionable insights to drive real change. It serves as both a call to action and a source of solution.”

Dental Health

N/A

Drugs

Ketamine helped me escape my negative thoughts - then it nearly killed me

BBC News, 5th July 2025

“Small amounts of the Class B drug can give a sense of euphoria and excitement, while large amounts can lead to a state known as the "K-hole," where users feel detached from reality - an out-of-body-type experience.”

Evaluation of the National Mission on Drug Deaths: Lived experience survey

Public Health Scotland, 15th July 2015

“This publication presents findings from a survey of individuals with experience of using drugs, undertaken as part of the PHS evaluation of the National Drug Deaths Mission.

The survey aimed to explore: their views on the support currently available to them, including from Alcohol and Drug Recovery Services. their views as to whether the support offer from services has got better or worse over the last two years.”

Reaching the right voices: SDF's approach to the National Mission evaluation

Public Health Scotland, 15th July 2025

“This guest blog explores the approach and reflections from Samantha Stewart, Research and Peer Engagement Senior Officer at SDF, alongside peer researchers, who facilitated the completion of a survey across Scotland, the findings of which are published today in the Evaluation of the National Mission on Drug Deaths: Lived experience survey.”

Health & Social Care

Artificial intelligence use in NHS communications

NHS Confederation, 23rd June 2025

“How NHS communications professionals are adopting AI tools and what is needed to enable safe, ethical and confident use.”

Infrastructure and innovation: Getting the NHS and social care ready for AI

King's Fund, 25th June 2025

Here we try to answer the question: what infrastructure needs to be in place to ensure that AI can be used in the health and care sectors? Informed by conversations across health and social care with staff, suppliers, researchers and patients, we consider what's needed for not only the technical infrastructure, but also the wider environment and system capabilities.

Using Discrete Event Simulation to explore "what-if" waiting list scenarios in NHS Scotland

Public Health Scotland, 30th June 2025

This publication explores the usability of the discrete event simulation method for modelling NHS Scotland planned care waiting lists, given the data available.

Poverty, pay and the case for change in social care

The Health Foundation, July 2025

“Levels of poverty among the UK residential care workforce and the impact of raising the wage floor.”

General practice - disease prevalence data visualisation

Public Health Scotland, 8th July 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland shows a data visualisation of Disease Prevalence data from 1 April 2022 to 1 April 2025 extracted from General Practices in Scotland through the Primary Care Information Service (PCIS).”

Race inequalities for NHS staff: Looking back on the WRES data

King’s Fund, 18th July 2025

“Many working in health care and health care policy will have been eagerly awaiting the publication of the government’s 10 Year Health Plan. Its launch possibly meant other issues received less attention, such as the publication of the NHS Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) 2024 data in late June.”

Why wait? Why community settings should be a good starting place for physician assistant careers.

The King’s Fund, 29th July 2025

Health Inequalities

Nearly all large families on low incomes trapped in hardship by cost of living pressures

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 10th July 2025

“The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) surveyed families in the bottom 40% of incomes and found no improvement in how they were coping on JRF’s key measures of hardship compared to the year prior. Over 7 million low-income families are still going without essentials, like food, heating and basic toiletries.”

Geographic inequalities in premature mortality

The Health Foundation, 8th July 2025

“Our research explores why premature mortality is more common in some areas than others. We look at the role of socioeconomic factors as well as ethnicity and being born outside the UK. We also look at how much inequality is left unexplained, pointing to other potential factors at play.”

Public health: inequalities and prevention

UK Parliament, 25th July 2025

“How can we address growing public health challenges? How can we mitigate health inequalities and ensure fair and timely access to healthcare?”

Health Protection

Premature babies to be immunised against winter virus

BBC News, 19th July 2025

“Thousands of premature babies in the UK can now be protected against a common winter virus which can cause a dangerous lung infection, and sometimes kill.”

Update on measles in Scotland - ensure everyone in your family is fully protected

Public Health Scotland, 14th July 2025

“As measles cases continue to increase across the world, including in England where outbreaks continue, Public Health Scotland (PHS) is continuing to encourage the public to take up the offer of the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine. Having two doses of the MMR vaccine is the best way to be fully protected against measles.”

Medical Conditions

Shifting to prevention: how integrated care systems can tackle cardiovascular disease

Kings Fund, 16th July 2025

“Integrated care systems (ICSs) need to take a ‘whole-system’ approach to CVD prevention based on co-ordinated action from all local partners, including strengthening efforts to reduce smoking and obesity. This will require closer partnership working between the NHS, public health teams and local government.”

UK-first scheme aims to cut cardiac arrest deaths

BBC News, 23rd July 2025

“During the call, staff in the East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST) control room will coach them on cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) via a video streaming platform.”

Scottish stroke improvement programme, Annual report 2025

Public Health Scotland, 12th August 2025

“In Scotland in 2024, 11,341 people had a final diagnosis of stroke, compared to 11,137 in 2023. Of these, 9,625 (84.9%) were ischaemic, a clot in the brain, while 1,560 (13.8%) were due to intracerebral haemorrhage, a bleed, while 156 (1.4%) were cause unknown.”

Mental Wellbeing

N/A

Obesity & Healthy Eating

Proposed National Good Food Nation Plan

Public Health Scotland, 27th June 2025

“The proposed national Good Food Nation Plan has been laid before the Scottish Parliament. It sets out over-arching Outcomes; the range of targets and indicators used to gauge progress towards achieving them; and details of food-related policies and initiatives from across the Scottish Government.”

Older People

Geographic inequalities in premature mortality

The Health Foundation, 8th July 2025

“Our research explores why premature mortality is more common in some areas than others. We look at the role of socioeconomic factors as well as ethnicity and being born outside the UK. We also look at how much inequality is left unexplained, pointing to other potential factors at play.”

Scottish Hip Fracture Audit, Reporting on 2024

Public Health Scotland, 5th August 2025

“This report provides information about how well the standards of care were adhered to between January 2024 to December 2024. The report also contains details of the measures that the SHFA uses to highlight differences in care and outcomes, between Scottish hospitals, referred to as key performance indicators or KPIs.”

Pharmacy

Monthly prescribing activity data

Public Health Scotland, 8th July 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) presents data for medicinal items prescribed by NHS prescribers in Scotland and reimbursed by the NHS. Open Data files are available for items prescribed or dispensed in April 2025. An accompanying interactive dashboard is also available.”

Monthly prescribing activity data, Data for May 2025

Public Health Scotland, 12th August 2025

“This release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) presents data for medicinal items prescribed by NHS prescribers in Scotland and reimbursed by the NHS. Open Data files are available for items prescribed or dispensed in May 2025. An accompanying interactive dashboard is also available.”

Physical Activity

Breaking down barriers: A tiered approach to getting Scotland moving

Public Health Scotland, 18th June 2025

“Following the publication of the Physical Activity Referral Standards from Public Health Scotland (PHS) in 2022, the tiered approach to Scotland’s physical activity interventions has been revisited to help healthcare professionals plan and provide physical activity.”

Daily steps and health outcomes in adults: a systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis. Ding, Ding et al. *The Lancet Public Health*, Volume 10, Issue 8, e668 - e681

Population Statistics

Scottish pregnancy, births and neonatal data dashboard

Public Health Scotland, 1st July 2025

“A new home for maternity and neonatal data visualisations.”

Accident and emergency

Public Health Scotland, July 2025

Children with Life-Limiting Conditions and Palliative and End-of-Life Care Needs

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“This NCMD thematic report aims to analyse deaths of infants, children, and young people with life-limiting conditions and palliative and end of life care needs. It presents national findings on children with life-limiting conditions and analysis on the learning from the child death reviews on service provision.”

Hospital Standardised Mortality Ratios, April 2024 to March 2025

Public Health Scotland, 12th August 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 April 2024 to March 2025.”

Public Health

Consultation: Shaping our Strategy and the future of Scotland's health

Public Health Scotland, 11th July 2025

“Stakeholders across Scotland are invited to support the development of Public Health Scotland’s new strategy for 2025-2035.”

The state of medical education and practice in the UK, Workplace experiences 2025

General Medical Council, August 2025

“The vision of a health system that supports doctors to deliver high quality patient care is one we all share. But it cannot be realised without a clear understanding of where the issues lie, and concerted, sustained action to address them.”

Sexual Health

Meningococcal B (MenB) vaccine to protect against gonorrhoea

Public Health Scotland, 16th July 2025

“This leaflet provides information on the meningococcal B (MenB) vaccine that is being offered to eligible adults to help protect them against gonorrhoea. Sexual health clinics will assess eligibility for the vaccine.”

Teenage pregnancies, Year of conception, ending 31 December 2023

Public Health Scotland, 29th July 2025

“The teenage pregnancy rate in Scotland increased slightly from 25.5 per 1,000 women in 2022 to 25.8 in 2023. This is equal to 3,801 teenage pregnancies in 2023 (76 more than in 2022).”

Smoking

The sale of illegal cigarettes signals a deeper problem with UK high streets

BBC News, 3rd July 2025

“This is now a familiar story being repeated across Britain. In April, the National Crime Agency (NCA) raided hundreds of high street businesses, many suspected of being supplied by international crime gangs. Trading Standards teams have also found a thriving trade in illicit tobacco.”

Is Australia’s vape ban working?

BMJ 2025; 390 doi: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.r1643> (Published 12 August 2025)

“A year after Australia severely restricted the sale of e-cigarettes, vaping seems to be declining among adolescents. But enforcement of the ban is proving challenging.”

Suicide & Self Harm

N/A

Women’s & Infant Health

Health in the early years (HEYS) dashboard

Public Health Scotland, 1st July 2025

“This quarterly release by Public Health Scotland (PHS) of the Health in the Early Years in Scotland (HEYS) Dashboard presents data on measures related to breastfeeding and early child development in Scotland.”

Premature babies to be immunised against winter virus

BBC News, 19th July 2025

“Thousands of premature babies in the UK can now be protected against a common winter virus which can cause a dangerous lung infection, and sometimes kill.”