Daily health news from across the national and trade press from the All-Party Parliamentary Health Group

Today's Top Stories

Measles warning to young people at festivals after a series of outbreaks
Young people planning to go to festivals or other mass events are being warned to make sure they have been fully vaccinated after a number of measles outbreaks. Public Health England says anyone visiting a music festival should ensure they have had two shots of the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Some younger people may be at risk because they were not vaccinated as small children.
Guardian BBC Independent

Mother with hidden cancer dies after birth
A first-time mother whose pregnancy hid the symptoms of bowel cancer died ten weeks after giving birth to her daughter. Laurel Cohen, 38 and her baby had been judged healthy at every check-up and prenatal scan. When she began to experience abdominal pain and shortness of breath she assumed that it was a normal part of her pregnancy. However, in her 35th week of the pregnancy she took time off work, complaining of abdominal pain and she was admitted to the Royal Free Hospital, London. Mrs Cohen died on 26th July last year.
Times Telegraph

CCG in the North West proposes a temporary ban on non-urgent operations and fertility treatment to ‘balance the books’
Some patients in Merseyside needing hip operations or cataract surgery, could be denied access to treatment for four months. St Helen’s Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) could become the first in the country to temporarily suspend all non-essential hospital referrals by GPs in an attempt to balance its books. Patient groups have warned that cancer is often picked up during non-essential treatment, saying lives could be put at risk. The CCG - recently rated ‘Inadequate’ by NHS England - admits the move ‘will not be popular’, but it is facing a £12.5m funding gap over the next year.
Telegraph Pulse
Other Health News

Morriston Hospital’s £6.6m Cardiac Unit opens in Swansea
A £6.6m extension to a Swansea hospital’s cardiac intensive care unit opens today; work on the extension started in September 2015. The new extension was built with the aim of keeping surgery waiting times down.

BBC

Retailers have been caught selling e-cigarettes to under-18s
Almost 40% of retailers targeted in an operation by Trading Standards in England were caught illegally allowing under-18s to buy e-cigarette products. Children aged 14 to 17 were sold vaping devices by 246 of the 634 retailers visited between January and March 2016. The question of the safety of e-cigarettes featured in the APHG’s recent joint publication with the Health Foundation: “A healthier life for all: the case for cross-government action.”

BBC

Change alcohol advice to show benefits of moderate drinking, Camra tells Government
The Government is being urged to hold a new consultation on alcohol consumption, after a new study by The Campaign for Real Ale (Camra) reveals that most people believe drinking in moderation is part of a healthy lifestyle. A survey of more than 2,000 adults found that over half disagreed with official health guidelines, and thought that they should be the same for men and women. Camra say scientific studies have shown that moderate drinking can have a protective effect against various health problems, including cardiovascular disease, cognitive decline and certain forms of cancer and that the Department of Health should therefore launch a public consultation on whether existing guidelines on drinking are “fit for purpose.” The question of safe alcohol consumption levels featured in the APHG’s recent joint publication with the Health Foundation: “A healthier life for all: the case for cross-government action.”

Independent

NHS spends £26m on gluten-free food
The NHS spent £26 million prescribing gluten-free food for people with allergies and coeliac disease last year, according to official figures. A total of 1.7 million prescriptions were written for gluten and wheat-free products such as bread, pasta and biscuits, the Health Service Information Centre said.

Times

One in five Britons skip meals so they can binge drink, study finds
According to the annual Benenden National Health Report, one in five people eat less than they need to in a bid to cut down their calorie intake, so they can drink more. Those aged 25 to 34 are the most likely to skip a meal in favour of alcoholic beverages later in the day, with 40 per cent disclosing they had done so.

Telegraph

Study showing decline in canine fertility may have human implications
Britain’s dogs are becoming less fertile with environmental chemicals being implicated in the change. The study may throw some light on fertility changes in human males.

Guardian
Capita charging bereaved families £50 for access to deceased patient records
Capita is charging the maximum legally chargeable fee for bereaved families to access the medical records of their deceased relatives, drawing criticism from GP leaders. Primary Care Support England, whose services have been outsourced to Capita since the end of last year, holds the records of all patients who are not registered with a GP practice, or who have died.

Pulse

Social prescribing scheme does not cut GP workload or improve patients’ health
Referring patients for social activities such as gardening or cooking does not cut subsequent GP consultations, or improve patients’ health outcomes, according to the evaluation of a pilot scheme conducted at 22 of the 43 GP practices in City and Hackney CCG. The GP academics who lead the study, found that the patients referred to ‘link workers’ in the practice - who referred them on to programmes involving gardening or cooking, for example - continued to have higher GP consultation rates and to use more prescription medicines a year after referral, compared to the control group. It comes as the Government is looking to increase the amount of social prescribing available for patients.

Pulse

Academics warn of danger facing specialist child nursing education
Plans to move towards more generic nursing degrees could be very damaging for specialist child nursing qualification, child nursing teachers have told Nursing Times. The warning comes from a new UK-wide group of children’s nursing academics, set up to give a stronger voice to the specialism in policy-making.

Nursing Times

Some senior nurses may need ‘change of thinking’ to meet revalidation requirements
Nurses in non-patient facing jobs who believe they have a “clinical practice gap” may need to change the way they view their role in order to meet new competency revalidation requirements, according to Gil Ramsden, lead nurse for Leeds West Clinical Commissioning Group.

Nursing Times

Audit reinforces importance of Parkinson’s nurses
Most patients with Parkinson’s disease have access to a specialist nurse, but around 25% remain unable to contact them between reviews, according the largest audit of its kind, which is a cause for concern.

Nursing Times

Trusts may have failed to report hundreds of mental health patient deaths to coroners
Hundreds of patients who died while being detained under the Mental Health Act could have been denied inquests, it has emerged after the HSJ uncovered discrepancies in official data. By law, all deaths in state detention should be examined by a coroner. However, inconsistencies between official data on deaths reported to coroners in England and Wales and notifications sent to health regulators by NHS trusts, suggest coroners may not have conducted inquests into every death.

HSJ
Choice of a non-doctor to run radiology school was “ill conceived,” says Royal College of Radiologists
The Royal College of Radiologists (RCR) has criticised Health Education England’s (HEE) decision to appoint a non-doctor to lead a regional training school for radiologists. The College voiced its concerns after HEE, the national education and training body, offered the post of Head of the Yorkshire and the Humber School of Radiology to a radiographer, rather than a radiologist, who is a specialist doctor by training.

BMJ

International News

One drug offers new hope for treating three killer infections
One drug, codenamed GNF6702, can treat three deadly and neglected infections - Chagas disease, leishmaniasis and sleeping sickness - animal studies have shown. It has been described as offering “new hope” for tackling the parasitic infections which affect millions of people in the poorest parts of the world. The discovery, reported in the journal Nature, was made after researchers tested three million separate compounds made by the pharma company Novartis.

BBC

APHG Health and Employment Event - full transcript now available
The transcript of the APHG's joint event with the Employment Related Services Association (ERSA), The Vital Link between Employment and Good Health: keeping people with health problems in work and getting them back into the workforce, is now available on our website. You can find it here.

New APHG blog on The Health Hub
Helen Gilburt, Fellow in Health Policy at The King’s Fund, has written a very informative blog in relation to the APHG's joint meeting with The King's Fund on 14th June. The blog is entitled Integrating physical and mental health – moving the agenda on from parity to equity. It can be found on our website here.

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