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Daily health news from the APHG

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## All-Party Parliamentary Health Group

**Daily Bulletin - Monday 13th March 2017 -**

health news from the national and trade press, including a round-up of the weekend's news.



### Today's health news - stories in full below

#### Health and Social Care

- Let NHS off £1,000 overseas doctors charge, urge health unions
- UK medicines regulator says it is 'impossible' to control illegal online pharmacies
- NHS could lose 25,000 workers because of EU vote
- Praised councils are actually failing their patients on integrated care claims Alzheimer's UK
- Ambulance services spend £2m-a-week bill on overtime pay
- Operations being delayed by missing patient records
- Three-way merger in North-West to create largest CCG in England
- Councils must agree targets for rapid help to hospitals, says NHS Providers
- Health visitors disappointed over failure to mandate four-month health check

#### Public health

- MPs to discuss reform of UK's abortion law
- Losing weight in old age 'not normal' and should be seen as a warning sign
- All women regardless of sexual orientation should have cervical screening say LGBT charities
- Schools to trial happiness lessons for eight-year-olds and teenagers to be instructed on combating anxiety
- Parents may still be putting babies at risk of cot death, charity warns
- New health warning over 'toxic' levels of vitamin D sold in supplements

#### Health and Social Care News

##### **Let NHS off £1,000 overseas doctors charge, urge health unions**

Two leading health unions are calling on the Home Secretary to make the NHS exempt from a new charge which will be payable on overseas doctors and nurses. The British Medical Association and the Royal College of Nursing say the Immigration Skills Charge, coming into effect in April, threatens NHS budgets. It will mean the NHS must pay £1,000 per year for any worker coming to the UK from outside the European Union. The Government has said it is committed to building home-grown skills.

[BBC](#)

##### **UK medicines regulator says it is 'impossible' to control illegal online**

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superbugs by fueling antimicrobial resistance, according to the authors of a recent study by Imperial College London which found that 45 per cent of digital pharmacies they tested would sell antibiotics to people in the UK without a prescription. However, It is “completely impossible” to control the vast numbers of unlicensed pharmacies illegally selling drugs online, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has warned. The MHRA said that last year they shut down 4760 websites selling medicines without a licence.

[Independent](#)

### **NHS could lose 25,000 workers because of EU vote**

Two fifths of EU citizens working in the NHS are thinking of leaving in the next five years, according to the largest survey of such staff since the Brexit vote. The poll, conducted for Channel 4's Dispatches programme, suggests that the NHS could lose 25,000 EU nurses and doctors. The survey also found that 70 per cent of EU NHS staff thought the referendum made the UK a less appealing place to work and 66 per cent were worried about their career in the UK. In the months since the referendum, figures from NHS Digital show that almost 5,500 EU staff have left their posts in England, an increase of more than 25 per cent on the same period in 2015.

[Times](#)

### **Praised councils are actually failing their patients on integrated care says Alzheimer's UK**

Councils praised by ministers as health and care success stories are failing vulnerable patients, according to the Alzheimer's Society. In a speech in December, Sajid Javid, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, said Oxfordshire and Northumberland were “strong examples” of where health and social care have been well integrated. However, charities have now highlighted failures in home care and dementia services in these areas. In Northumberland 44 per cent of dementia services inspected by the Care Quality Commission received ratings of “Requires Improvement” or “Inadequate”, while the figures for Nottinghamshire and Oxfordshire are 28 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively. In December, Oxfordshire had the eighth worst area for delayed transfers of care.

[Times](#)

### **Ambulance services spend £2m-a-week on overtime pay**

Ambulance trusts are now paying staff more than £2 million in overtime a week. More than £700 million has been spent on overtime by ambulance trusts over the past six years and the annual outlay has increased by nearly a fifth. A National Audit Office report published in January revealed that the number of calls and NHS 111 transfers to services rose from 7.9 million in 2009-10 to 10.7 million last year. It also found that only one ambulance service in ten was meeting crucial response targets, compared with nine in ten three years ago, while one in ten paramedic posts is vacant.

[Times](#)

### **Operations being delayed by missing patient records**

The NHS has cancelled or postponed more than 1,130 procedures in the past four years because patient records have gone missing. For example, the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust cancelled or postponed 205 operations because records could not be found on the day. A source at the trust has stressed that it is a small proportion of the total 440,000 elective procedures over the period. More than 21,840 medical files have also been recorded as temporarily missing or lost across the NHS, according to data released under Freedom of Information requests. The Liberal Democrats have said this situation is unacceptable and are calling for Government action. Morecambe Bay NHS Trust delayed 186 procedures for the same reason and the Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen Trust cancelled 86.

[Times](#)

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Three clinical commissioning groups in Merseyside have announced plans to merge, after NHS England "paved the way" for discussions to start. Liverpool, South Sefton and Southport and Formby CCGs said formal talks will begin in April, with the aim of joining up the organisations from 2018. The combined CCG would have the largest budget in the country, £1.2bn, according to the planned allocations for 2018-19. This would be slightly more than the planned allocation for Northern, Eastern and Western Devon CCG.

[HSJ](#)

### **Councils must agree targets for rapid help to hospitals, says NHS Providers**

NHS Providers has urged councils and NHS leaders to agree targets for short term reductions in hospital bed days, after the announcement of £1.2bn extra in social care funding for 2017-18. The umbrella body representing NHS trusts welcomed the extra funding announced in Wednesday's budget, but they have warned their members to start negotiating with local government partners now on how the money will be spent.

[HSJ](#)

### **Health visitors disappointed over failure to mandate four-month health check**

Health visitors have expressed disappointment that the Government has decided not to increase the number of visits young children should receive as a legal requirement in England, despite strong support for the change, according to a leading organisation representing the specialty.

[Nursing Times](#)

## **Public Health News**

### **MPs to discuss reform of UK's abortion laws**

Under an act passed in 1861, women using pills at home to terminate an unplanned pregnancy can still be jailed for life in the UK. Now MPs are to discuss for the first time decriminalising women who attempt to induce their own abortion. Diana Johnson, MP for Hull North, will introduce a Ten Minute Rule Bill in the House of Commons today calling for the scrapping of section 58 and 59 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861, which make abortion a criminal offence.

[Guardian Times](#)

### **Losing weight in old age 'not normal' and should be seen as a warning sign**

Losing weight in old age is "not normal" and it could be a sign of malnutrition or cancer, experts have warned. The study by the Malnutrition Task Force follows official figures which show a tripling in the number of patients admitted to hospital suffering from malnutrition. Charities have claimed cut backs to services such as meals on wheels are fuelling the rise, though officials say some of the rise is due to improvements in recording such data.

[Telegraph Times](#)

### **All women regardless of sexual orientation should have cervical screening say LGBT charities**

Women who are in relationships with other women are often wrongly told they do not need a cervical screening test, say LGBT groups such as the National LGBT Partnership. This results in half of all eligible lesbian and bisexual women have never had a smear test. Cervical cancer charities say all women, no matter their orientation, should have regular cervical screening, because of they are still at risk of acquiring the humanpapilloma virus (HPV).

[BBC](#)

### **Schools to trial happiness lessons for eight-year-olds and teenagers to be instructed on combating anxiety**

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projects to be funded by the Department for Education (DfE). The Department is inviting providers to bid for multimillion-pound contracts to offer mental health training in more than 200 schools.

[Guardian](#)

#### **Parents may still be putting babies at risk of cot death, charity warns**

Parents are still putting babies at risk of cot death by putting them to sleep on their stomachs or sides, research suggests. Experts said around half of parents are unsure of the basic steps they can take to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) - also known as cot death. The charity Lullaby Trust polled 500 parents of children under two and found that four in 10 were unsure whether babies should sleep on their front or not. More than half thought it was fine for babies to sleep on their sides, or did not know whether this was the case. However, when babies sleep on their backs, the chance of SIDS is reduced six-fold, research suggests.

[Telegraph](#)

#### **New health warning over 'toxic' levels of vitamin D sold in supplements**

Hundreds of people in the UK are regularly taking toxic overdoses of vitamin D in supplements bought online, according to one of Britain's leading testing laboratory. Pills containing up to 2,250 times the recommended dose of the vitamin are putting people at risk of heart and kidney problems, according to the NHS laboratory, which said it sees two to three overdose cases every week.

[Independent](#)

## **Contact details for the APHG**

**Judith Abel, Manager All-Party Parliamentary Health Group**

Tel: 020 7202 8580

[judith.abel@healthinparliament.org.uk](mailto:judith.abel@healthinparliament.org.uk)

**Ryan Duncanson, Researcher/Project Coordinator, Health and Energy Safety**

Tel: 020 7202 8577

[Ryan.Duncanson@PolicyConnect.org.uk](mailto:Ryan.Duncanson@PolicyConnect.org.uk)

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