Public Health England
COVID-19: reducing transmission - what you can do to help
Advice on how you can help reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).
Details

Public Health Matters: Behind the headlines: Counting COVID-19 deaths
Professor John Newton explains why PHE have taken the approach it has to date and how this will change data moving forward.
Details

Duncan Selbie's Friday Message - 14 August 2020
This week’s message focuses on transmission of COVID-19 in schools, Bedford Borough's COVID-19 'deep dive', an updated method to count daily deaths linked to COVID-19, the annual Congenital Anomaly Statistics report, and PHE's evidence review on sleep and health.

Department of Health and Social Care
Covid-19: guidance for supported living
This guidance sets out key messages to assist with planning and preparation in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic so that local procedures can be put in place to minimise risk and provide the best possible support to people in supported living settings. It also covers safe systems of working, and how infection prevention and control and personal protective equipment applies to supported living settings.
Details

NHS Test and Trace service to strengthen regional contact tracing
NHS Test and Trace and Public Health England will extend its partnership with local authorities in order to reach more people testing positive and their contacts to stop the spread of COVID-19, the government has announced.
This new way of working will give local areas dedicated ring-fenced teams from the national service. These dedicated teams of NHS Test and Trace contact tracers will focus their work on specific areas, alongside the relevant local public health officials to provide a more tailored service.
Details

Test and Trace service reaches more than 250,000 people since launch
Data from the 10th week of the NHS Test and Trace operation show it is reaching over 79% of all those who test positive, and 83.4% of their contacts where contact details were provided, with a rise of 12% more people getting tested compared to the previous week.
Meanwhile, the Isle of Wight Council and Newham Council are trialling the revamped NHS Test and Trace app.
Residents in both council areas will receive unique codes to download the app via email or post. The three-week trial will monitor the performance of the new app before it is rolled out nationwide. The app will work alongside enhanced contract tracing services and will provide alerts based on postcode, QR check-in at venues, symptom checker and test booking.

New UK-wide methodology agreed to record COVID-19 deaths
The UK government and the devolved administrations have agreed to publish the number of deaths that occurred within 28 days of a positive lab-confirmed COVID test result on a daily basis, thus providing accurate data on the immediate impact of recent epidemic activity.

Meeting people from outside your household (updated guidance)
This guidance has been updated to note that shielding for the clinically extremely vulnerable is currently paused, and to include new information on fines being introduced by the government for those who facilitate or organise illegal gatherings of over 30 people.

NHS England
Implementing phase 3 of the NHS response to the COVID-19 pandemic
Further to the letter of 31 July 2020 about the third phase of the NHS response to Covid-19, this document provides a range of supplementary materials to support implementation. The document includes: urgent actions to address inequalities in NHS provision and outcomes; mental health planning; restoration of adult and older people’s community health services; using patient-initiated follow-ups as part of the NHS Covid-19 recovery; finance – 2020/21 phase 3 planning submission guidance; and Covid-19 data collections – changes to weekend collections.

Department for Transport
Government plan for cycling and walking
The plan published by the Department of Transport on 28 July 2020 has been widely covered in the media, including a reference to ‘bikes on prescription’ from GP practices. This will not be widely rolled out immediately. The next stage is expected to be a series of pilot programmes in areas with poor health and low physical activity rates. The government is now working with stakeholders in healthcare, local authorities and communities to develop the pilots. The funding is coming from money previously announced for Active Travel in May, and is part of the government’s broader approach to preventing poor mental and physical health as outlined in the 2019 Prevention Green Paper.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)
NICE Shared Learning: How can referrals of obese patients to the local exercise referral scheme be increased? A UK based primary care quality improvement study
This organisation designed and implemented an alert on the electronic health records of patients who were obese, and sent them an electronic text message, inviting them to use the local exercise referral scheme.

Caveat: Content of these briefings has not been critically appraised! Apply your appraisal skills to articles referenced! Health Evidence Matters provides clinical and public health evidence reviews and training in evidence-based practice skills.

www.healthevidencematters.co.uk enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk @HealthEvMatters
**Caveat:** Content of these briefings has not been critically appraised! Apply your appraisal skills to articles referenced!

**Health Evidence Matters** provides clinical and public health evidence reviews and training in evidence-based practice skills.

www.healthevidencematters.co.uk
enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk
@HealthEvMatters

---

**Research and analysis from academic journals and preprints – non-coronavirus-related**

**JAMA: Precision Nutrition—the Answer to “What to Eat to Stay Healthy”**
Viewpoint outlines emerging field of precision nutrition which investigates various roles of whole foods, individual nutrients, sociocultural influences on eating and lifestyle, societal infrastructure on health of individuals and populations, and genome/microbiome variation.

[Full text](#)

**Bone Mass and Density in Youth With Type 2 Diabetes, Obesity, and Healthy Weight**
Study (n=180) found bone mineral density was significantly lower for a given lean BMI in those with type 2 diabetes vs those without. Authors advocate for studies investigating influence of diabetes on the growing skeleton.

[Abstract](#)

**BMJ Open: The association between cigarette smoking, cancer screening, and cancer stage: a prospective study of the women’s health initiative observational cohort**
This analysis (n=89,058 post-menopausal women) found current smokers were less likely to obtain breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening. Failure to adhere to screening guidelines was associated with more advanced breast and colorectal cancer stage at time of diagnosis.

[Full text](#)

---

**Research and analysis from academic journals and preprints – coronavirus-related**

**Diabetes Care: Preadmission Diabetes-Specific Risk Factors for Mortality in Hospitalized Patients With Diabetes and Coronavirus Disease 2019**
US cohort study of 1,126 hospitalised patients with diabetes and COVID-19 found that HbA1c levels were not associated with mortality in unadjusted or adjusted analyses, but an outpatient regimen with any insulin treatment was strongly predictive of mortality.

[Full text](#)

**Annals of Internal Medicine: Obesity and Mortality Among Patients Diagnosed With COVID-19: Results From an Integrated Health Care Organization**
Study of 6916 patients with COVID-19 found a J-shaped link between BMI and risk for death. Compared with patients with BMI of 18.5-24kg/m2, those with BMIs 40-44kg/m2 and >45kg/m2 had relative risks of 2.68 (95% CI, 1.43-5.04) and 4.18 (2.12-8.26), respectively.

It was noted that the risk was most striking among those aged ≤60 years and men. Increased risk for death associated with Black or Latino race/ethnicity or other sociodemographic characteristics was not detected.

According to an editorial, the consistency of this new study and prior research should put to rest the contention that obesity is common in severe COVID-19 because it is common in the population. It stresses that obesity is an important independent risk factor for serious COVID-19 disease and the finding that the risks are higher in younger patients is probably not because obesity is particularly damaging in this age group, but because other serious comorbidities that evolve later in life take over as dominant risk factors.

[Full text](#)
Caveat: Content of these briefings has not been critically appraised! Apply your appraisal skills to articles referenced!

Health Evidence Matters provides clinical and public health evidence reviews and training in evidence-based practice skills.

www.healthevidencematters.co.uk  enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk  @HealthEvMatters

The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology: Associations of type 1 and type 2 diabetes with COVID-19-related mortality in England: a whole-population study
This nationwide analysis found type 1 (OR 3.51; 95% CI 3.16-3.90) and type 2 (2.03; 1.97-2.09) diabetes were both associated with a significant increased odds of in-hospital death with COVID-19, after adjustment for age, sex, ethnicity, socioeconomic deprivation, and region.
Full text

NEJM: Successful Elimination of Covid-19 Transmission in New Zealand
As part of the Covid-19 Notes series, which communicates short reports of innovative responses to Covid-19 around the world, this article outlines New Zealand’s pandemic response.
Full text

The Lancet Infectious Diseases: Inclusion of pregnant women in COVID-19 vaccine development
Article calls for strategies to ensure pregnant and lactating women are included in vaccine research as many of the vaccine candidates being actively considered in trials have excluded pregnant women.
Immune responses in pregnant women cannot be assumed to be the same.
Full text

With linked opinions, this article explores the evidence and the response to long Covid as recognition grows that many patients have long lasting effects
Full text

BMJ editorial: Covid-19: breaking the chain of household transmission
Authors argue an urgent need new measures to protect household contacts
Full text

BMJ editorial: Long term respiratory complications of covid-19
Editorial argues that substantial population morbidity is likely
Full text

BMJ news: Covid-19: Impact of long-term symptoms will be profound, warns BMA
A survey conducted by the BMA has found a third of doctors have treated patients with long term covid-19 symptoms, including chronic fatique and anosmia.
Full text

The Lancet: Sex differential in COVID-19 mortality varies markedly by age
Authors argue disaggregated data allow public health authorities to tailor mortality prevention strategies to prioritise those most at risk and urge nations to supply age and sex specific data, not only for an accurate description of the pandemic, but also for the calculation of directly standardised rates internationally
Full text
NIHR Dissemination Centre
NIHR Alert: High rates of delirium, persistent fatigue and post-traumatic stress disorder were common after severe infection in previous coronavirus outbreaks
Expert commentary is provided on a review of 65 peer-reviewed studies, mostly on SARS and MERS, plus seven early reports on COVID-19, which suggests long-term mental health implications of COVID-19 could potentially last for several years after the infection.
Details

Reuters Health
What is known about possible COVID-19 transmission from freight and packages
Following reports of several cases of frozen food packaging & imported freight contaminated with coronavirus, and research suggesting virus can stay 4-5 days on plastic/paper, overview highlights there is currently no evidence people can catch COVID-19 from food/food packaging.
Details

Imperial College
Largest study on home coronavirus antibody testing publishes first findings
Led by Imperial College London, the REACT (REal Time Assessment of Community Transmission) study is using antibody finger-prick tests to track past infections and monitor the progress of the pandemic. It is the first nation-wide antibody surveillance study to be rolled out across England using self-testing at home.
The findings, available in a non-peer-reviewed report submitted to medRxiv, show that slightly under 6% of the population had antibodies to the virus and had likely previously had COVID-19 by the end of June, an estimated 3.4 million people. London had the highest numbers at over twice the national average (13%), while the South West had the lowest (3%)
Details

Office for National Statistics (ONS)
Deaths involving COVID-19 (published 11th August)
Up to 31 July 2020, there were 51,710 deaths registered in England and Wales involving the coronavirus (COVID-19) (28,455 men and 23,255 women). The majority of deaths involving COVID-19 have been among people aged 65 years and over (46,199 out of 51,710).
Details

Coronavirus and the latest indicators for the UK economy and society: (published 13 August)
The proportion of adults wearing a face covering at some point when leaving the home was at 96% for the second consecutive week, according to the latest Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).
Details

Does exposure to air pollution increase the risk of dying from the coronavirus (COVID-19)?
More than one-third of COVID-19 deaths in England up to the end of June had a respiratory or cardiovascular disease as the main pre-existing health condition, with long-term exposure to air pollution being a known cause of breathing difficulties and other lung and heart conditions. While we found some evidence of a correlation between pollution exposure and COVID-19 deaths, our analysis of air pollution as a cause of death was inconclusive.
Details

Caveat: Content of these briefings has not been critically appraised! Apply your appraisal skills to articles referenced!
Health Evidence Matters provides clinical and public health evidence reviews and training in evidence-based practice skills.
www.healthevidencematters.co.uk enquiries@healthevidencematters.co.uk @HealthEvMatters
**Coronavirus (COVID-19) roundup (published 14th August)**

- There is some evidence of a small increase in the percentage of people in England testing positive for COVID-19 in July, following a low point in June, but this now appears to have levelled off.
- As of 9 August 2020, 6.2% of people aged 16 years and over tested positive for antibodies to COVID-19.
- A third of adults (33%) have said that their household would not be able to afford a week’s holiday this year.
- Adults said the requirement for self-isolation upon return from outside the UK had affected their travel plans; 1 in 5 (20%) reported that they had cancelled their plans, and 14% said they’d decided to holiday in the UK instead of travelling abroad this year.

**Centre for Mental Health**

**Our place: local authorities and the public’s mental health**

This report, written with the Local Government Association, argues that people’s mental wellbeing will play a crucial role in every aspect of recovery planning, including schools reopening, workers returning from furlough, people who have been shielding, and in dealing with the economic and housing consequences of coronavirus (Covid-19), as well as planning for possible further spikes in infections. It concludes that a national focus is needed on helping everyone stay mentally well, backed up by funding for councils.

**NHS Confederation**

**NHS Reset: Mental health services and COVID-19 - preparing for the rising tide**

This report considers what mental health services need to prepare for, in anticipation of the expected surge in demand. It also highlights how the health and care system can 'reset' the way care and support are planned and delivered in aftermath of COVID-19.

**Royal Society for Public Health**

**Guest Blog: West Midlands seeks to mainstream public health**

David Kidney, Chief Executive of the UK Public Health Register and Executive Chair of the proposed West Midlands Health Technologies Cluster and Lisa McNally, Director of Public Health, Sandwell, outline the investment and opportunities for innovative public health services and practices across the West Midlands.

**Queen’s Nursing Institute**

**Homeless health projects achieve lasting benefits**

The Queen’s Nursing Institute has published an evaluation of the ten nurse-led homeless health projects that were funded in partnership with the charity Oak Foundation in 2018. The projects benefited people who were experiencing homelessness or who were living in vulnerable or temporary housing, including recent migrants, street homeless, people in custody, and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller populations. All of these groups experience a range of health inequalities that can be severe and life-threatening. The ten projects – which received up to £5000 per project - were all led by
community nurses working in different parts of England, with projects taking place in London and the southeast, the Midlands, the northwest and the southwest.

The King's Fund
How is the NHS performing?
Covid-19 has dramatically altered how NHS services and finances operate. The King's Fund 29th quarterly monitoring report looks at where the NHS expected to be at the end of 2019/20, where it actually finds itself in 2020/21, and what impact Covid-19 might have in the future.

Royal College of General Practitioners
Cases of common cold, flu, and other respiratory diseases in England are substantially lower than average for this time of year, GP surveillance data show. Lockdown and physical distancing measures to prevent the spread of covid-19 were the probable cause of the trend. But although there were fewer respiratory diseases and other viral infections for this time of year than in previous years, the college said that since lockdown measures have eased recorded rates of illnesses such as the common cold have begun to rise as more people start to return to their general practice seeking medical treatment.

Office of Health Economics
The broader value of vaccines: the return on investment from a governmental perspective
Most value assessments of vaccination programmes are carried out by taking the perspective of the health system. To stimulate the debate concerning the broader value of vaccination beyond this perspective, this report quantifies the related return on investment to the UK government.

Realising the broader value of vaccines in the UK
Many health technology assessment (HTA) agencies limit their assessment of vaccines to individual health benefits and the costs associated with vaccine administration and the disease avoided. However, compared with other health technologies, the standard evaluation approaches have often been criticised as inadequate to accurately estimate the value of vaccines. This study uses a newly designed framework to capture the broader value of 10 selected vaccines with a high likelihood of entering the UK within the next decade.

Social Care Institute For Excellence
Hospital discharge and preventing unnecessary hospital admissions (Covid-19)
This guide discusses the lessons learnt from hospital discharge and avoidance during the Covid-19 pandemic. It highlights challenges faced and good practice to prevent unnecessary admissions going forward.
Sisters Not Strangers
Hear us: the experiences of refugee and asylum-seeking women during the pandemic
Sisters Not Strangers, a coalition of eight organisations, surveyed more than 100 asylum-seeking women from England and Wales to hear how they are surviving during the Covid-19 pandemic. The survey was completed by women seeking and refused asylum, as well as those with leave to remain. These responses were supplemented by a survey of 24 staff and volunteers who have been supporting asylum-seeking women since the outbreak.

Details

The Salvation Army
Future-proof the roof: the case for sustainable investment to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping post-Covid-19
This report warns that the economic consequences of the pandemic will increase rough sleeping and force families into expensive and unsuitable temporary accommodation, such as bed and breakfast, as local authorities struggle to manage rising homelessness levels. The government needs to properly fund homelessness support services in this autumn’s Comprehensive Spending Review.

Details