

Press release: Local authorities should offer NHS Health Check to all eligible

Speaking at Public Health England 's Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Prevention Conference today (Thursday 8 February 2018), Chief Executive Duncan Selbie has called on local authorities to ensure that all local residents eligible for a free NHS Health Check get an invite – to help tackle the one in four premature deaths in the country caused by CVD.

The NHS Health Check is free for all adults in England aged 40 to 74, who have not yet developed CVD. It's one of the largest health prevention programmes in the world, helping to detect and prevent early signs of cardiovascular diseases such as high blood pressure, heart disease, kidney disease, type 2 diabetes and dementia.

CVD is a leading cause of disability and death in the UK, affecting around 7 million people and being responsible for 26% of all deaths in England – estimated to cost the NHS around £9 billion a year.

Duncan Selbie, chief executive of Public Health England, said:

Since 2013, over 6.1 million people have taken an NHS Health Check. The programme is a cornerstone in England for the prevention of conditions such as CVD, which causes one in four premature deaths and places a huge strain on individuals, families and our healthcare system. We also know that it is the same risk factors causing many cancers and other preventable illnesses, so this is a hugely important programme.

The NHS Health Check has had much success and has the potential to prevent many thousands of premature deaths and ill health in England, but there is still much to be done. Every local authority in the country is required by law to ensure that all eligible people in their area are offered a check every 5 years. We must work together to increase numbers taking up the offer, in particular targeting our efforts to those at greatest risk.

There is good evidence that the programme is successful in identifying those at high risk of cardiovascular disease, but we also need to follow up with effective care and support for them.

The Conference, with over 500 health professionals expected to attend, including GPs and NHS Health Check providers, will focus on a number of ways that CVD risk can be reduced, including:

- ensuring equity and reducing inequality through CVD prevention

programmes highlighting the importance of health care professionals in delivering behaviour change messaging for CVD risk reduction

- learning from a range of international CVD prevention projects

PHE has also recently published two documents focusing on CVD prevention:

- [Size of the Prize](#) provides region-specific statistics on the opportunity to prevent many thousands of heart attacks and strokes by improving the follow-up care given to those found to be at risk following an NHS Health Check
 - the [stocktake and action plan](#) sets out how to further improve the impact of the programme over the next 5 years
1. PHE's [CVD Prevention Conference 2018](#) is taking place on 8 February at the Kia Oval, Surrey Cricket Club in London
 2. View national [comparison data on NHS Health Check uptake](#)
 3. The [Heart Age Test](#) is an innovative online tool to check your risk of having a heart attack or stroke – it tells you your heart age compared to your real age, explains why it's important to know your blood pressure and cholesterol numbers and gives advice on how to reduce your heart age. The tool is a collaboration between PHE, NHS Choices, UCL and the British Heart Foundation.

About Public Health England

[Public Health England](#) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. We do this through world-leading science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and providing specialist public health services. We are an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care, and a distinct organisation with operational autonomy. We provide government, local government, the NHS, Parliament, industry and the public with evidence-based professional, scientific expertise and support. Follow us on Twitter: [@PHE_uk](#) and Facebook: www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland.

[Speech: British High Commissioner comments on media shutdown and opposition 'swearing in' in Kenya](#)

I have made clear, as have many international friends of Kenya for some time, that what we would like to see is a full, transparent, open dialogue between politicians and between others – business leaders, religious leaders, civil society – designed to heal some of the very deep divisions that were clearly exposed during the election campaign.

I do not believe that any parallel inauguration helps to create such a dialogue, I think that the UK has been very clear that our support is for the constitution and for the law, and that those acting outside those things should not be doing so, but should be acting in the spirit of promoting dialogue.

I will continue to call on both sides, and indeed on Kenyans of good will from all parts of the country, to find ways of talking to each other about how the institutions of the country can be strengthened and about how everybody can feel included in the future of the country. That is an exercise for Kenyans to lead, but I stand ready to support that as I know do my international friends.

On the question of the media, I would just say that one of the strongest things about this country, one of the reasons that so many investors are headquartered here, that so many people come here, that this country's capital is seen as the hub of the region and one of the hubs of the continent, is because of the open, democratic, free media; that sense that means people from country's like mine feel at home, that sense that people can have open debates in public.

I would urge the government, as I have done, to allow the media to operate freely, not simply because it's the right thing to do, but because it contributes very strongly to the positive image that Kenya has in the world.

[Watch the British High Commissioner speak to the Kenyan press](#)

Press release: Welsh Secretary calls on Welsh Government to take further steps to drive up animal welfare standards

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns is calling on Welsh Ministers in Cardiff Bay to follow Westminster's lead and explore the potential of implementing a ban on third party puppy sales in Wales.

It comes as the UK Government today (8 Feb) launches a call for evidence in England, seeking views on a possible ban on third party sales, which would mean anyone looking to buy or adopt a dog will either deal directly with the breeder or with one of the nation's many animal rehousing centres.

It forms part of a package of reforms implemented by the UK Government designed to drive up welfare standards.

Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns said:

Wales is a nation of animal lovers and it is vital that we maintain the highest standards of animal welfare. The UK Government is serious about improving welfare in breeding establishments and at the point of sale to ensure our much loved pets get the right start in life.

The call for evidence launched today marks a further step in the UK Government's aim to raise the bar standards in England. I would encourage the Welsh Government to carefully consider the evidence that is submitted and to explore the potential of implementing the same measures in Wales.

Launching the call for evidence on a ban in England, UK Government Environment Secretary Michael Gove invited all interested parties to share their views by 2 May 2018 on how this could best be introduced.

[News story: Enforcement Undertakings accepted from United Utilities](#)

United Utilities have paid £155,000 to environmental charities as part of two Enforcement Undertakings (EUs). The EUs were offered to the Environment Agency after the company admitted causing sewage to pollute two watercourses in the summer of 2016.

EUs are a new kind of restorative enforcement sanction. Polluters can make an offer to the Environment Agency to pay for or carry out environmental improvements as an alternative to any other enforcement action and the Environment Agency decides whether this is acceptable.

In July 2016, a blockage in a sewage detention tank in Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire, caused sewage to overflow to the River Goyt, resulting in discoloration to the river downstream to New Mills, and sewage fungus being deposited on the river bed for at least a kilometre. Although no fish were found to have been killed, there was a short-term but significant impact on invertebrate life and the river habitat, in which fish such as trout and bullhead normally thrive.

In August 2016, a blockage in a sewer in Millbrook, Tameside, caused an overflow through a dislodged hatch cover, resulting in a similar impact on a shorter stretch of Swineshaw Brook which runs to the River Tame.

The EU offers were accepted by the Environment Agency in October 2017 and

were completed in January 2018. United Utilities made a total of £155,000 in donations to the Wild Trout Trust, the Ramblers Association and the Healthy Rivers Trust. This money will be used to fund environmental improvements and research in the affected catchments and to restore endangered footpaths.

The company also spent a further £10,000 removing rubbish from Swineshaw Brook and also paid the Environment Agency's incident response and investigation costs in full. In response to both incidents United Utilities had acted quickly to stop the pollution and resolve the cause. As part of the EUs the company also committed to improving their infrastructure and asset maintenance schedules in order to reduce the likelihood of this happening again.

Mike Higgins, an Environment Officer with the Environment Agency, said:

Enforcement Undertakings allow polluters to positively address and restore the harm caused to the environment and prevent repeat incidents.

They offer quicker and more directly beneficial resolution than a court prosecution and help offenders who are prepared to take responsibility for their actions to voluntarily make things right. We will continue to seek prosecutions against those who cause severe pollution or who act deliberately or recklessly.

Please report any environmental issues to the Environment Agency's 24 hour Incident Hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

[News story: London school helps to shape Relationships and Sex education](#)

The City of London Academy in Southwark has been participating in the Department for Education's call for evidence, asking parents, teachers and young people to help shape the new Relationships and Sex education curriculum. Staff and pupils at the school have engaged with age-appropriate content such as mental wellbeing and staying safe online.

School Standards Minister Nick Gibb met with teachers and pupils to discuss why the lessons are important and to hear their views on these issues. These steps will help to set guidance for all schools on how to teach these subjects so that it helps young people face the challenges of the modern world.

Academic standards are rising in England, with around 390,000 more London

pupils in schools rated good or outstanding than in 2010 and 93 per cent of London schools given this rating at their last inspection.

Making sure young people have the knowledge they need to stay safe and develop healthy relationships is part of the government's drive to raise education standards even further.

Schools Standards Minister Nick Gibb said:

It has been a pleasure to meet the teachers at the City of London Academy and to talk to the pupils benefitting from an education that teaches them the importance of healthy and stable relationships.

There are 1.9 million more children in good or outstanding schools than in 2010 and across the country, schools like the City of London Academy, with 64 per cent of pupils being entered for the EBacc, are raising standards for pupils.

We want to continue to raise the bar and that's why we have committed to update relationships and sex education to meet the needs of young people today. Our call for evidence closes next week and we want as many people as possible to have their say on what the new curriculum should include.

The current statutory guidance for teaching Relationships and Sex education was introduced in 2000. It fails to address risks to children which have grown in prevalence in recent years, including online pornography, sexting and staying safe online. The guidance is being updated after legislation was passed by Parliament earlier this year to make relationships education compulsory in all primary schools and Relationships and Sex education compulsory in all secondary schools.

The eight-week 'call for evidence' has been gathering views from people across England from all backgrounds on the content of this subject. It will establish:

- how parents expect their children to be taught this topic in a safe and age-appropriate way; and
- what teachers think they should be teaching their pupils to help them navigate the modern world they are growing up in;
- what children themselves think they would benefit from understanding the most, and the online risks they are concerned with.

Head of the School Dr Jeffery Quaye said:

I welcome the Department of Education's decision to make Relationship and Sex Education as statutory requirement for schools from 2019/2020. Here at City of London Academy Southwark, we observed that by placing more emphasis on relationship instead of

the mechanics of reproduction, we have raised students' awareness of sexting and sexual harassment. Also, our students have developed better understanding of the benefits of healthy relationships, staying safe online and managing emotions. Through balanced curriculum changes and a new framework of teaching students, we have seen noticeable evidence of mutual respect, empathy, self-confidence and wellbeing enhanced amongst our students.

Year 11 pupil, Keana Nicholas Pipe said:

I think learning PSHE is important to help students know what to do if they find themselves in any difficult situations. I think it's important to learn about consent because and through the classes I now feel more confident. I know who to ask for advice and how to make an informed choice.

The move to make Relationships and Sex education compulsory was welcomed by the teaching profession and organisations such as Barnardo's, Stonewall, the Catholic Education Service, NSPCC, Terrence Higgins Trust and the End Violence Against Women coalition.

Teachers, parents and young people are invited to have their say on relationship education in schools [here](#)

The call for evidence closes on Monday 12 February.