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Children/Young People/Families

Supporting children and young people after abuse and neglect (24/10/18)

In a [feature article](#) for the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) Corinne May-Chahal, Professor of Applied Social Science at Lancaster University and Hannah Roscoe, Senior Research Analyst at SCIE, discuss the subject and recommend two quick guides published jointly by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and SCIE.

[Therapeutic interventions after abuse and neglect](#)
[Getting help to overcome abuse](#)

Major new scheme launched to support young people leaving care (26/10/18)

More than 50 businesses, charities and every government department in England have signed up to the Care Leaver Covenant, which commits to provide work-based opportunities to young people leaving the care system.

Children's and Families Minister Nadhim Zahawi has set out an [ambition](#) for the scheme to create 10,000 work opportunities over the next ten years helping these young people gain vital skills and experiences as they enter the jobs market.

Too many care leavers do not achieve the same outcomes as their peers, with 40 per cent of care leavers aged 19 to 21 not in education, employment or training (NEET), compared to 13 per cent for this age group overall.

[Children and Young People Now](#)

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Commissioning and Economics

Preventing cardiovascular disease: new ROI tool (25/10/18)

Public Health England (PHE) has launched a new [return on investment \(ROI\) tool](#) to help local commissioners decide the best approach to preventing cardiovascular disease (CVD) within their populations.

The majority of CVD is preventable through identifying and managing risk earlier. The ROI tool shows the health and cost impacts of using different interventions to treat people at high risk of CVD, helping commissioners decide how their budget is best spent to improve local health outcomes. It also shows the effectiveness of different approaches to detecting and managing people with high risk conditions.

[CVD ROI Tool](#)
[Report, user guide, database of interventions](#)

Child development outcomes at 2 to 2 and a half years (24/10/18)

Local authority commissioners and health professionals can use these quarterly and annual statistics to track to what extent children aged 2 to 2 and a half years in their local area are achieving the expected levels of development.

The data is collected from the health visitor reviews completed at 2 to 2 and a half years using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3 (ASQ-3). Public Health England (PHE) collects the data, which is submitted by local authorities on a voluntary basis.

These data and commentaries also show variation at a local, regional and national level. This can help with planning, commissioning and improving local services.

[Quarter 1, 2018 to 2019](#)
[Annual 2017 to 2018](#)

See also Communities and Local Government

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Communities and Local Government

Taking our health for granted: Plugging the public health grant funding gap (25/10/18)

The public health grant allows local authorities to provide services that are vital to maintaining and improving people's health, such as obesity programmes, drug and alcohol services and sexual health services. It also supports public health teams to steer the development of wider local policies and services, such as housing, planning and children's services, to support improvements in health.

This [briefing paper](#) from the Health Foundation assesses the extent of cuts to the public health grant since 2014/15 and projects the amount required per year to plug the funding gap that now exists.

[News release](#)
[Children and Young People Now](#)

Adult Social Care Activity and Finance Report, England - 2017-18 (23/10/18)

This [publication](#), from NHS Digital, contains data taken from the Adult Social Care Finance Return (ASC-FR) and Short and Long Term (SALT) collection to provide information regarding adult social care activity and finance on local authorities in England for 2017-18.

Gross current expenditure on adult social care by local authorities was £17.9 billion. This represents an increase of £402 million from the previous year, a 2.3% increase in cash terms and a 0.4% increase in real terms. The area of care which saw the largest increase in expenditure was long term support, which increased by £369 million to £14.0 billion in 2017-18, an increase in cash terms of 2.7%.

Measures from the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework, England - 2017-18 (23/10/18)

The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) measures how well care and support services achieve the outcomes that matter most to people. The ASCOF is used both locally and nationally to set priorities for care and support, measure progress and strengthen transparency and accountability.

This [report](#), from NHS Digital, focuses on the main findings for each measure in the ASCOF in 2017-18. Data are provided at council, regional and national level for each outcome.

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Education

Children with problems or problem children? (19/10/18)

Is it possible to tell if the child is just "being naughty" or whether mental ill health is the root cause?

There is nothing pleasant about being on the end of a child's angry or aggressive outburst for either a teacher or a parent. If that outburst happens in a classroom rather than the sitting room, the consequences for the child can be much more serious.

Hannah Richardson, [BBC News education](#) and social affairs reporter, explores the subject.

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End of Life/Palliative Care

Talking about dying (19/10/18)

This [report](#) from the Royal College of Physicians seeks to offer advice and support for any doctor on holding conversations with patients after they have received a diagnosis of a progressive or terminal condition.

The research found that the timely, honest conversations that patients want are not happening. Yet such discussion is fundamental to effective clinical management plans. The report highlights and challenges professional reluctance to engage in conversations with patients about uncertainty, treatment ceilings, resuscitation status and death. Getting care right at the end of life is a fundamental and important part of our work as physicians. Getting care right at the end of life is a fundamental and important part of the work of physicians.

See also [End of life care: How to talk about dying to someone who is dying](#), BBC News Health

[Dying Matters](#)
[Good Grief Trust](#)

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Environment/Transport/Housing

Air pollution and cardiovascular disease (22/10/18)

A new report by the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP), describes how [long-term exposure to ambient air pollution](#) can lead to cardiovascular disease.

A [collection](#) of other reports and statements by COMEAP are available.

Homelessness: duty to refer (20/10/18)

The Local Government Association has published a [report and training materials](#) to assist councils and their partners to best meet the duty to refer responsibilities, together with examples on the opportunity to cooperate to prevent and relieve homelessness.

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Health Care

Quality and Outcomes Framework, Achievement, prevalence and exceptions data - 2017-18 (26/10/18)

The Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) was introduced as part of the General Medical Services (GMS) contract on 1 April 2004. The objective of the QOF is to improve the quality of care patients are given by rewarding practices for the quality of care they provide to their patients.

This [publication](#), from NHS Digital, provides data for the reporting year 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 and covers all General Practices in England that participated in the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) in 2017-18. Participation in QOF is voluntary, though participation rates are very high at 94.8 per cent.

The highest QOF prevalence rates are for hypertension (13.9 per cent), depression (9.9 percent) and obesity (9.8 per cent).

See also Screening

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Health Protection/Emergencies

Fortifying flour with folic acid: government to consult (23/10/18)

Public Health Minister Steve Brine has [announced](#) that the government will consult on the mandatory fortification of flour with folic acid to prevent foetal abnormalities.

The consultation will launch in early 2019 to consider the evidence around folic acid fortification as well as the practicality and safety.

Evidence from the Scientific Advisory Committee of Nutrition (SACN) suggests that expectant mothers can take folic acid during pregnancy to significantly reduce the risk of foetal abnormalities including spina bifida and anencephaly.

Approximately 700 to 900 pregnancies are affected by neural tube defects each year in the UK.

Meningococcal disease: laboratory confirmed cases in England (26/10/18)

Public Health England has published annual laboratory [confirmed reports](#) for the epidemiological year 2017 to 2018 on invasive meningococcal disease (IMD) in England.

The Meningococcal Reference Unit (MRU) confirmed 755 cases of IMD during 2017/2018 – similar to the 748 cases reported in 2016/2017.

Overall IMD incidence in 2017/2018 has remained stable at one per 100,000. Incidence in infants increased from 11 per 100,000 population in 2016/2017 to 16/100,000 in 2017/2018 (102/755 cases) and decreased from 5/100,000 in children aged 1-4 years to 4/100,000 (106/755 cases). Young adults aged between 15 and 24 years accounted for 16% (n=123; 2/100,000) of all laboratory confirmed IMD in 2017/18 and those aged 25 years or older comprised 46% of cases (n=346; 1/100,000).

Meningococcal B (MenB) vaccination programme (19/10/18)

Meningococcal disease is caused by invasive infection with the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis*, also known as the meningococcus. There are 12 identified capsular groups of which groups B, C, W and Y were historically the most common in the UK.

The new MenB vaccine (Bexsero®) will protect against meningococcal disease capsular group B. The vaccine will be [added](#) to the childhood immunisation programme as part of the routine schedule in England.

Enterovirus D-68: risk assessment (25/10/18)

National reference laboratories in England and Wales have observed an expected biannual increase in detections of enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) during summer and autumn 2018.

EV-D68 infection causes a spectrum of illness, but infection can be associated with severe acute respiratory infections and acute neurological illness, including acute flaccid paralysis/myelitis and meningoencephalitis.

Public Health England (PHE) has published a [risk assessment](#) of the increase in reported cases.

Rise in cases of Salmonella Typhimurium (19/10/18)

Food Standards Agency, Food Standards Scotland, Public Health England and Health Protection Scotland are reminding people to take care when handling raw meat and to cook it properly.

There has been a rise in cases of a particular strain of Salmonella Typhimurium linked to lamb and mutton. Between in July 2017 and May 2018 a total of 118 cases were reported. Numbers of cases were at low levels from December 2017 to June 2018 (23 cases during this period). Since June 2018, a further 165 cases have been reported (up to 19 October).

[Advice on cooking raw meat, Food Standards Agency](#)
[News release, Public Health England](#)

Rabies: risks from bat bites (22/10/18)

Public Health England has updated [guidance](#) for individuals who have been bitten by a bat, in the UK or overseas.

This document contains information on: bat rabies; the risk of catching rabies after being bitten by a bat; how to treat a bat bite after exposure; specialist advice for health professionals.

See also Pharmacy/Prescribing

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Information/Evidence/Research/Ethics

Changes in health in the countries of the UK and 150 English Local Authority areas 1990–2016: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2016 (24/10/18)

Previous studies have reported national and regional Global Burden of Disease (GBD) estimates for the UK. Because of substantial variation in health within the UK, action to improve it requires comparable estimates of disease burden and risks at country and local levels. The slowdown in the rate of improvement in life expectancy requires further investigation.

The researchers in this [study](#) published in the Lancet (open access article) use GBD 2016 data on mortality, causes of death, and disability to analyse the burden of disease in the countries of the UK and within local authorities in England by deprivation quintile.

[Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive, Public Health England](#)

Small area population estimates in England and Wales: mid-2017 and revised mid-2012 to mid-2016 (25/10/18)

The Office for National Statistics has published national population estimates broken down into [small geographical areas](#) (Super Output Areas, health geographies, wards, Parliamentary constituencies and National Parks). Includes revised estimates of the usual resident population for small areas within England and Wales, for mid-2012 to mid-2016 (as at 30 June).

Deaths registered in England and Wales – 21st century mortality: 2017 (23/10/18)

The Office for National Statistics has published [annual data](#) on the number of deaths registered in England and Wales by age group, sex, year and underlying cause of death, as defined using the International Classification of Diseases, 10th ed.

Sex ratios at birth in Great Britain: 2012 to 2016 (23/10/18)

The Department of Health and Social Care has published [analysis](#) of male to female birth ratios in Great Britain for the period 2012 to 2016, alongside a breakdown by mother's country of birth and ethnicity of the child.

This analysis will show whether any group is found to have a birth sex ratio that is different from the naturally expected range, to indicate evidence or absence of evidence of sex selection occurring in Great Britain.

NCARDRS congenital anomaly statistics: annual data (19/10/18)

The National Congenital Anomaly and Rare Disease Registration Service (NCARDRS) reports present data collected from 2014 onwards.

Data is presented from 4 NCARDRS regions to provide an estimate of birth prevalence of congenital anomalies nationally.

The [reports](#) includes a focus on Down's syndrome, Edwards' syndrome and Patau's syndrome, presenting data on all cases in England up to 2016.

Radiotherapy: good practice (25/10/18)

Public Health England has published supplementary [guidance](#) to support those working in radiotherapy. The 5 documents are intended to assist in applying the '[Towards Safer Radiotherapy](#)' error report classification and coding system, which was published by the Royal College of Radiologists in April 2008.

The documents add to the [Medical radiation](#) collection.

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Integrated Health and Social Care

Amending the Health and Social Care Act 2012: can it be done? (25/10/18)

Nicholas Timmins [writing](#) for the King's Fund takes a long hard look at the operation of the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

What problems do people think need fixing?

Options for change

The legislative outlook

More flexible than it first appeared

The risk of judicial review.

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Legislation/Crime/Prisons

Policing for the future (25/10/18)

This [report](#) from the Home Affairs Committee of the House of Commons looks at the changing demands on policing. The Committee finds that forces are struggling to cope in the face of changing and rising crimes, as a result of falling staff numbers, outdated technology, capabilities, structures, fragmentation and a failure of Home Office leadership.

It recommends major changes to the police response to new and growing crimes and warns that the Home Office cannot continue to stand back while police forces are facing difficulties in provided services required.

Safety in Custody Statistics, England and Wales (25/10/18)

Safety in custody statistics cover deaths, self-harm and assaults in prison custody in England and Wales. This publication updates statistics on deaths to the end of September 2018 and assaults and self-harm up to June 2018.

The bulletin is released by the Ministry of Justice. Main points include:

- There were 325 deaths in prison custody in the 12 months to September 2018, up 8% from the previous year
- In the 12 months to June 2018, there were 49,565 incidents of self-harm, up 20% from the previous year
- There were 32,559 assault incidents in the 12 months to June 2018, up 20% from the previous year
- There were 23,448 prisoner-on-prisoner assaults in the 12 months to June 2018, up 19% from the previous year
- There were 9,485 assaults on staff in the 12 months to June 2018, up 27% from the previous year.

[Safety in custody quarterly: update to June 2018](#)
[Howard League for Prison Reform](#)

MoJ: Management of sex offenders (25/10/18)

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has published two research items on the management of sexual offenders.

The [first](#) examines the benefits and challenges associated with housing separately prisoners in England and Wales who have a conviction for a sexual offence.

The [second](#) explores the experiences of men who have committed sexual offences and subsequently reoffended after participating in Sex Offender Treatment Programme (SOTP).

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Maternity/Infants

NHS Maternity Statistics, England 2017-18 (25/10/18)

This is a publication on maternity activity in English NHS hospitals. This report examines data relating to delivery and birth episodes in 2017-18, and the booking appointments for these deliveries. Data is included from both the Hospital Episodes Statistics (HES) data warehouse and the Maternity Services Data Set (MSDS).

The [statistics](#), published by NHS Digital, show the number of HES delivery episodes during the period, with a number of breakdowns including by method of onset of labour, delivery method and place of delivery. It also shows the number of MSDS deliveries recorded during the period, with breakdowns including the baby's first feed type and the smoking status of women in early pregnancy.

Key facts include:

- There were 626,203 deliveries in NHS hospitals during 2017-18, a decrease of 1.6 per cent from 2016-17
- The proportion of deliveries where labour was induced has increased from 20.4 per cent in 2007-08 to 32.6 per cent in 2017-18
- Of the 389,250 babies submitted with a recorded feed type, 74 per cent received breast milk for their first feed.

Health visitor service delivery metrics (24/10/18)

Public Health England publishes quarterly and annual datasets and commentary for local authority health visits to pregnant women, children and their families during pregnancy and early childhood.

[Quarterly, first quarter 2018 to 2019](#)
[Annual 2017 to 2018](#)

Breastfeeding at 6 to 8 weeks after birth: annual data (24/10/18)

Public Health England (PHE) has published annual experimental statistics on breastfeeding prevalence at 6 to 8 weeks after birth. Information is presented at local authority of residence, PHE Centre and England level.

The latest [annual data](#) covers the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Breastfeeding at 6 to 8 weeks after birth: 2018 to 2019 quarterly data (24/10/18)

Public Health England has published a [statistical release and commentary](#) for the quarter April to June 2018 on the number and proportion of infants that have been fully, partially or not at all breastfed at 6 to 8 weeks after birth.

For previous data see the [Breastfeeding statistics collection](#).

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Mental Health and Wellbeing

See Workforce Development

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Nutrition/Physical Activity/Obesity

Promoting healthy weight in children, young people and families (25/10/18)

This [resource](#), from Public Health England, is made up of briefings and practice examples to promote healthy weight for children, young people and families as part of a whole systems approach.

It is intended to support local authorities, NHS commissioners and providers, voluntary and community sector organisations to take action to reduce obesity.

Local authorities supported to innovate against childhood obesity (25/10/18)

The government is asking local authorities to apply to its [Trailblazer programme](#), in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA). Up to 12 local authorities will be supported to develop practical plans, and in spring next year 5 authorities will be selected.

The 3-year programme forms part of the second chapter of the government's childhood obesity plan, launched in the summer, which included the aim to halve childhood obesity by 2030. One in 3 children leaves primary school overweight or obese.

[News release](#)

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Older People

Majority of people unprepared for adult social care costs (26/10/18)

Only 15 per cent of adults say they are making plans for how they will pay for care they might need in the future while half of English adults (50 per cent) say that they have never thought about how they will pay for care when they get older.

Unlike the NHS, which is free at the point of need, social care is means tested and what you contribute to the cost of your care depends on the care setting and your level of assets and savings. Across the UK, 44 per cent of people in care homes pay the full cost of their care themselves, and more than a quarter (26 per cent) pay the full cost of their homecare.

The [Local Government Association](#) is calling on the Government to lead a national campaign to heighten the profile and reputation of adult social care after the findings of the poll raised concerns about the public's understanding and preparedness for the costs associated with adult social care.

[Community Care](#)

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Pharmacy/Prescribing

English surveillance programme for antimicrobial utilisation and resistance (ESPAUR) report (23/10/18)

The [ESPAUR report 2018](#), from Public Health England, includes national data on antibiotic prescribing and resistance, antimicrobial stewardship implementation, education and engagement activities. The report highlights how more than 3 million common procedures such as caesarean sections and hip replacements could become life-threatening without effective antibiotics.

Antibiotics are essential to treat serious bacterial infections, but they are frequently being used to treat illnesses such as coughs, earache and sore throats that can get better by themselves. Taking antibiotics encourages harmful bacteria that live inside you to become resistant. That means that antibiotics may not work when you really need them.

The ['Keep Antibiotics Working' campaign](#) educates the public about the risks of antibiotic resistance, urging people to always take healthcare professionals' advice as to when they need antibiotics. The campaign also provides effective self-care advice to help individuals and their families feel better if they are not prescribed antibiotics.

Medical devices and clinical consumables (23/10/18)

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has [written](#) to all suppliers to update them on the department's contingency measures. This includes increasing stock levels at a national level.

The letter advises that the NHS Supply Chain has begun contacting suppliers who import products from other EU countries to establish what they are doing to make sure they can continue providing products in a no-deal scenario.

See also National Audit Office report [The UK border: preparedness for EU exit](#).

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Public Health/Health Promotion

Public Health Outcomes Framework: indicator updates (24/10/18)

The Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) examines indicators that help us understand trends in public health.

PHOF data updates are published as part of a quarterly cycle in August, November, February and May. Public Health England provides a [table of the indicators](#) to be updated each quarter in advance of the data appearing.

[PHOF profile tool](#)

Behavioural insights: public health (25/10/18)

Public Health England (PHE) has published an [overview](#) of how behavioural insights are used to improve public health in England.

PHE Behavioural Insights (PHEBI) is a team of behavioural scientists, including experts in behavioural economics, health psychology and evaluation, who work across PHE with local authorities and other relevant stakeholders to advise on policy and practice and apply and evaluate the evidence of behavioural science in public health.

Sector-led improvement in public health: progress and potential (25/10/18)

This [report](#) from the [Local Government Association](#) show the innovations that can be achieved by local areas collaborating within regions on health issues that can best be tackled at scale.

The case study examples showing how public health is embracing sector-led improvement (SLI) across England since its transfer to local government.

Building on the experience and understanding gained through adopting SLI principles and approaches, it identifies ways in which public health can embed these more extensively. The publication was compiled following discussions with the case study areas and many other public health professionals involved in local and regional SLI.

**See also Communities and Local Government
Information /Evidence/Research/Ethics**

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Safeguarding

Serious incident notifications from local authority children's services 2017 to 2018 (25/10/18)

Ofsted has published statistics covering [notifications](#) from local authority children's services about incidents that affect children under 18, including incidents of serious harm and deaths, in the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Key figures:

- 384 serious incident notifications. This was an 11% decrease on the number of notifications in 2016-17 (433) but returning to the level of previous years.
- 209 cases of child deaths were notified compared with 211 in the previous year. There was an increase in the number of suicides reported to Ofsted from 35 in 2016-17 to 46 in 2017-18.
- 175 serious harm notifications. This was a 21% decrease on the number of serious harm notifications in 2016-17 (222).

[Children and Young People Now](#)

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Screening

NHS screening programmes: information for GPs and practice staff (23/10/18)

There are 11 population screening programmes in England. Public Health England has published information on how to [support patients](#) in accessing population screening programmes and obtaining screening results for GPs and practice staff.

Breast screening: professional guidance (22/10/18)

Public Health England published [standards and guidance](#) for health professionals, managers and commissioners working in the NHS breast screening programme.

The latest document to be added to the collection is [Breast screening: ergonomics in screening mammography](#)

This guide sets out some examples of good practice for ergonomics in breast screening mammography and includes recommendations for minimising the risk of injury.

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Sexual Health

'Protect Against STIs' campaign (25/10/18)

Latest statistics from Public Health England (PHE) show that a case of chlamydia or gonorrhoea is diagnosed in a young person every 4 minutes in England. There were over 144,000 diagnoses of these sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in people aged 15 to 24 in 2017.

PHE's ['Protect Against STIs' campaign](#) highlights the increased likelihood of contracting a life-changing STI if people have sex without a condom. STIs if left untreated can cause major health issues, including pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility, swollen or painful testicles, and reactive arthritis. In pregnant women, STIs can lead to higher risk of miscarriage or stillbirth.

In a bid to get the nation's young adults talking about and having safe sex, TV personality Sam Thompson (who appears in *Made in Chelsea* and *Celebs Go Dating*) appears in [two films](#) discussing the issue with doctors and quizzing young people on their attitudes to sexual health and condom use.

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Smoking/Tobacco Control

Statistics on NHS Stop Smoking Services in England April 2018 to June 2018 (25/10/18)

This [quarterly report](#) presents results from the monitoring of the NHS Stop Smoking Services in England during the period April 2018 to June 2018. NHS Stop Smoking Services offer support to help people quit smoking. This can include intensive support through group therapy or one-to-one support. The support is designed to be widely accessible within the local community and is provided by trained personnel, such as specialist smoking cessation advisors and trained nurses and pharmacists.

The report, from NHS Digital, includes information on the number of people setting a quit date and the number who successfully quit at the 4-week follow-up. It also presents in depth analyses of the key measures of the service including pregnant women, breakdowns by ethnic group and type of pharmacotherapy received. The results are provided at national, regional and local authority levels.

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Social Care/Welfare

Care Act 2014: supporting implementation (26/10/18)

The Department of Health and Social Care has published [updated statutory guidance](#) to support local authorities to carry out the implementation for part 1 of the Care Act 2014.

UKHCA: The Homecare Deficit 2018 (25/10/18)

[United Kingdom Homecare Association \(UKHCA\)](#) has published a new report [The Homecare Deficit 2018](#).

This report contains data supplied under Freedom of Information legislation by local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland, and Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland.

Using data obtained under Freedom of Information legislation, UKHCA found that the average prices paid for homecare in the UK is just £16.12 per hour, almost £2 per hour less than UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.

UKHCA calculates that the UK's homecare sector needs at least £402 million per year to ensure that homecare workers receive the statutory National Living Wage, while also ensuring that homecare providers can meet their statutory obligations.

However, the size of the deficit this year would be £921 million if national governments and local councils were to commit to raising the status of the homecare workforce to at least the independently calculated Real Living Wage.

Characteristics of children in need: 2017 to 2018 (25/10/18)

The [Department for Education](#) has published information on: children in need of social services; children referred to social services, assessments undertaken and primary need at first assessment, section 47 enquiries (a local authority carries out one of these if they suspect a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) and initial child protection conferences; children who were the subject of a child protection plan.

Key figures:

- The number of children in need at 31st March has increased this year, from 389,040 in 2017 to 404,710 in 2018, an increase of 4.0%.
- The number of child protection plans at 31st March has increased this year, from 51,080 in 2017 to 53,790 in 2018, an increase of 5.3%.

[Local Government Association](#)

Universal Credit report (26/10/18)

The Department for Work & Pensions (the Department) is introducing Universal Credit to replace six means-tested benefits. The Department started work on Universal Credit in 2010 with an original completion date of October 2017.

However, the government 'reset' the programme in 2013, following a series of problems managing the programme and developing the necessary technology.

Since the Department began rolling out full service in May 2016 there have been several further delays to the programme, which is now unlikely to complete before 2023. By the end of March 2018 the Department had spent £1.3 billion of the £2 billion it expects to invest in the programme by 2024–25, and by June 2018, 980,000 people (around 12% of the expected caseload) were claiming Universal Credit. A further 7.5 million people are still to come onto the new benefit before the programme completes.

This [report](#) by the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons finds that the introduction of Universal Credit is causing unacceptable hardship and difficulties for many of the claimants it was designed to help.

[News release](#)

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Workforce Development

Kent and Medway: suicide prevention training (25/10/18)

Face-to-face suicide prevention training is now available for anyone within Kent and Medway who would like to access it.

This training is fully funded by the Kent and Medway STP, Medway Council and Kent County Council, and therefore it is available free of charge. The training is being delivered by Maidstone and [Mid-Kent Mind](#).

The 3-hour training programme will be useful to anyone who may come across someone (a friend, a family member, a colleague, a member of the public, a stranger) who appears to be struggling with life.

To book on to a course please visit <http://www.maidstonemind.org/suicide-prevention-awareness-training/>
If you have any questions, please contact mindhelp@mmkmind.org.uk

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Workplace

Ergonomic interventions for preventing work-related musculoskeletal disorders of the upper limb and neck among office workers (23/10/18)

Work-related upper limb and neck musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are one of the most common occupational disorders worldwide. Studies have shown that the percentage of office workers that suffer from MSDs ranges from 20 to 60 per cent. The direct and indirect costs of work-related upper limb MSDs have been reported to be high in Europe, Australia, and the United States. Although ergonomic interventions are likely to reduce the risk of office workers developing work-related upper limb and neck MSDs, the evidence is unclear.

This is an [update](#) of a Cochrane Review which was last published in 2012.

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