

## Wirral Intelligence Service

### July to December 2024: Bulletin Supplementary Content

#### Contents

Adults, Children and Older People .....	1
Climate Crisis and Sustainability .....	5
Communities .....	6
Environment and Place .....	6
Health.....	7
Health Behaviours .....	10
Inequalities .....	12
Mental Health .....	13
Pharmacy .....	14
Poverty.....	16
Social Care.....	16
Wider Determinants.....	16

#### Adults, Children and Older People

##### **Preterm birth: reducing risks and improving lives**

After taking evidence from parents, charities, academics, health care professionals, NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care, [the House of Lords Preterm Birth Committee concludes](#) that the national target to reduce the preterm birth rate in England to 6% by 2025 will not be met. The Committee calls on the government and NHS England to take further action to reduce the number of preterm births. It also recommends a greater focus on improving outcomes for preterm babies and their families, in cases when preterm birth cannot be avoided.

##### **The healthiest generation of children ever: a roadmap for the health system**

[This roadmap, from Children and Young People’s Health Policy Influencing Group \(a coalition of more than 50 children’s charities and Royal Colleges\)](#), calls for children to be a central pillar of forthcoming health plans such as the NHS 10-year plan, with children advising directly on health policy that affects them. It calls for equitable funding for children, which was lacking in the recent Budget, in particular for children with palliative care, long-term conditions, and special educational needs and disabilities. It also calls for integrated care systems (ICSs) to be made accountable for improving set child health outcomes.

### **Women's health economics: investing in the 51%**

According to this report by the NHS Confederation, Create Health Foundation and London Economics, an additional £1 invested in obstetrics and gynaecology services per woman in England could generate an estimated £319 million return to the economy. This equates to a return on investment of £11 per woman in England for every additional £1 invested in obstetrics and gynaecology services. The [NHS Confederation report](#) reveals the high costs to the economy of women being unable to work due to a range of conditions (including heavy and painful periods, endometriosis, fibroids and ovarian cysts) not being treated effectively.

### **The state of health and care of older people in England 2024**

This [Age UK analysis](#) finds that 2 million older people in England are now living with some unmet need for social care. Drawing on the latest available data, the report concludes that England's health and care services continue to be under enormous pressure so that, despite the best efforts of many dedicated staff, they are currently unable to meet the needs of all the older people presenting who require treatment, care and support.

### **Prostate cancer is killing more Black men**

This [report from Prostate Cancer Research](#) unveils disparities in health care experiences among Black individuals in the UK, particularly concerning prostate cancer. According to the poll of 2,000 Black adults, nearly 25% believe discrimination has prevented them from being tested for prostate cancer, while 1 in 3 believe discrimination has stopped them being tested or treated for any medical problem. Less than half (47%) think they would receive the same level of care from the NHS as their white counterparts.

### **Woman of the north: inequality, health and work**

This [Health Equity North report](#) finds that women in the north of England live shorter lives, work more hours for less pay, are more likely to be an unpaid carer, and are more likely to live in poverty than women in other regions of England. They also have lower healthy life expectancy, fewer qualifications, worse mental health, and are more likely to suffer domestic violence or to end up in the criminal justice system than their counterparts in the rest of England. In addition, infant mortality is higher, and abortions are more common. The report recommends a wide range of evidence-informed policy solutions for central government, regional government and the health service which, if implemented, could improve the current situation for women's health.

### **Poverty and financial hardship of unpaid carers in the UK**

[Carers UK and WPI Economics have published a new report](#) which reveals the scale of poverty amongst unpaid carers in the UK as well as presenting the most effective solutions to lift carers out of poverty.

### **Men's health: the lives of men in our communities**

[This report from Local Government Association \(LGA\)](#) finds that men in England are facing 'a silent health crisis', dying nearly four years earlier than women, while suffering disproportionately higher rates of cancers, heart disease and type 2 diabetes. The report highlights severe inequalities, with men in deprived areas living up to 10 years less than their affluent counterparts and facing a 20-year gap in healthy life expectancy. It found socio-economic and behavioural factors, including higher levels of smoking and excessive drinking, as contributory factors. In addition, the report says four out of every five suicides are by men. The LGA is urging the government to implement a men's health strategy similar to the women's health strategy of 2022.

### **Taking the next step for working carers: introducing a new right to paid carer's leave**

[This Carers UK report](#) argues that introducing paid carer's leave could boost productivity, while improving millions of workers' lives. It estimates that it would cost the government between £5.5 million to £32 million annually, if the statutory right to five days of unpaid carer's leave for all employees with unpaid caring responsibilities was turned into paid carer's leave. In contrast, the cost of people having to leave work because of their caring responsibilities – based on Carer's Allowance payment figures and lost tax revenues – is an estimated £1.3 billion a year.

### **Talking about adversity, trauma and resilience: recommendations from FrameWorks UK**

Earlier this year, ADPH invited FrameWorks UK to present a set of evidence-based recommendations to Directors of Public Health and other public health professionals. The aim was to explain the causes and impact of adversity, trauma and resilience in infants, children and young people to policy makers and the wider public. [The recommendations in this report](#), which have been endorsed by ADPH, The Health Foundation, School and Public Health Nurses Association, Institute of Health Visiting, and NHS Scotland, provide practical guidance, as well as resources and literature, for improving understanding about adversity, trauma and resilience.

### **A third of all NHS staff are carers**

Being a carer can have a significant impact on someone's ability to work, so what did the most recent NHS Staff Survey reveal about how many staff in the health service are also carers? [In this 'Chart of the week' Rachel Hutchings, of The Nuffield Trust, explores the findings](#), which show that a third (32%) of all NHS staff are carers. She describes how the survey responses vary by age, sex and NHS trust, and how the findings compare against the general population.

### **Life after service in the UK armed forces, Veterans' Survey 2022, UK**

[UK Government has published analysis](#) about life after service in the UK armed forces from the Veterans' Survey 2022.

### **A dual crisis: the hidden link between poverty and children's mental health**

This [report from the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition](#) explores the impact of poverty and benefit conditionality on families' mental health. Based on research with parents and children, and a review of the evidence, it finds that money and mental health are inextricably linked; not having enough money leads to parental stress and guilt, which has a knock-on impact on children over the course of their lives. And with rates of poverty twice as high among Asian and Black families than white families, some children are 'overexposed' to the dual risks of poverty and poor mental health.

### **The real face of men's health**

This [Movember report](#) outlines the state of men's health across the UK and makes clear the benefits that could ripple through families, communities and societies if men's health was improved. It features examples, from the UK and abroad, on what is effective across four elements of health systems to successfully engage with men: health promotion programmes; a responsive health system that includes health services, screenings, checks and facilities; a health workforce with the competencies to respond to men; and research that works to build, evaluate and translate its findings into practice to reach and benefit all men. [The report](#) is published alongside an interactive map containing data on premature mortality.

### **Forgotten generation: shaping better services for children and young people**

[This NHS Providers report](#), based on NHS Providers' survey of trust leaders during April and May 2024, explores the issues in providing children and young people's services, and how trusts are working to address those issues.

### **The impact of hardship on primary schools and primary and community health care**

[This report FROM Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#) asks what impact hardship is having on the delivery of services in primary schools and primary and community health care setting such as GP surgeries. It finds that services are spending resources, time, funding, emotional energy, and in some cases, whole job roles, trying to deal with the consequences of hardship. It concludes that this diverts resources and adds to demand and workloads, which has knock-on impacts on pupils, families and patients who are not directly experiencing hardship.

## Climate Crisis and Sustainability

### The climate crisis: a critical threat to mental health

In this [Kings Fund blog \(Emma Wills\)](#) considers the impact of the climate crisis on mental health, and calls for a holistic response that brings together mental health, environmental sustainability, economic security and societal resilience.

### Public health 2040: health protection in a warming world

Climate change is set to pose significant changes to our planet and health. The wider public health workforce, who are key to ensuring a healthy population, are uniquely placed to help manage these changes to the public's health. This [Royal Society for Public Health briefing](#) looks at the future needs of the public health workforce to ensure that they have the capacity, skills, resources and support needed to protect the public from the impact of new threats to their health.

### Climate change and heat-related mortality: will 'summer crises' become part of the NHS's future?

Luca Tiratelli, [in this Kings Fund blog](#), considers the potential impact of climate change on our health and what it might mean for the NHS.

### A just energy transition for the good of health: a policy report from the UK Health Alliance on Climate Change

The UK is currently poised on a transformational opportunity to develop our energy system and the way in which we use energy, which has the potential to deliver a better, fairer and healthier society. Governments, industries, public institutions and people must take this opportunity to clean the air, protect against the threats of climate change, and create the jobs and infrastructure that will stimulate a positive cultural and societal shift that is good for health and the environment. [This UK Health Alliance on Climate Change policy report](#) highlights six recommendations to establish the UK as a global leader in the green energy revolution that will define this generation and provide UK citizens with healthier environments in which to live and work.

### Green physician toolkit

With the NHS responsible for around 40% of the UK's public sector emissions and 4% of total emissions, the health service in England has committed to reach net zero on all direct emissions by 2040. [This Royal College of Physicians toolkit](#) suggests a range of actions that physicians can take in their day-to-day practice to help mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Recommendations include reducing unnecessary prescribing, generating less waste, and limiting diagnostic activities where clinically appropriate.

### Quantifying the impact of climate change on human health

This [World Economic Forum report](#) provides an in-depth economic analysis of how climate change will reshape health landscapes over the next two decades. It highlights increased risks from new pathogens, pollution and extreme weather events, and shows how these will exacerbate current health inequities, disproportionately impacting the most vulnerable populations.

## Communities

### **The case for neighbourhood health and care**

[This report](#) from NHS Confederation, identifies the defining factors necessary to achieve effective, community-led health and wellbeing at the neighbourhood level. The report, from the NHS Confederation, Local Trust and PPL, reflects the most recent research and evidence, and confirms that any transformation of public services will not be successful unless it is accompanied by a more fundamental transformation of relationships between statutory services and communities, building on the best of what is happening in neighbourhoods today.

### **Working better together in neighbourhoods**

This [NHS Confederation report](#) sets out the evidence for neighbourhood and community-based efforts to improve health and wellbeing. It finds a spectrum of different types of interventions, from those developed within and by statutory bodies, to those that have arisen entirely within communities themselves, often in a conscious response to gaps within, or perceived failings of, the local services upon which all communities rely. This report shows what can be learnt from these experiences to build a better set of co-ordinated, neighbourhood-based responses to improving health and care, working together.

## Environment and Place

### **Plant-powered planet: building a healthy and sustainable food system**

Food systems account for about a third of greenhouse gas emissions and much of the loss of nature, yet globally, a billion people go to bed hungry, and billions are obese. Transforming food systems to be healthier, sustainable and efficient is critical. [This policy report from UK Health Alliance on Climate Change](#) highlights six recommendations for the UK government and devolved nations to drive a just transition to sustainable and healthy food systems, and five recommendations for the health sector to enable, promote and support good health.

### **Recipe for health: a plan to fix our broken food system**

This [report produced by House of Lords Food, Diet and Obesity Committee](#) finds that obesity and diet-related disease are a public health emergency that costs society billions each year in health care costs and lost productivity. It calls for the government to develop a comprehensive, integrated long-term new strategy to fix the food system, underpinned by a new legislative framework.

### **Planning for healthy places: a practical guide for local authorities on embedding health in local plans and planning policies in England**

Local plans are key documents through which local authorities can plan, design and influence environments to create and maintain health, and yet they are often weak and inconsistent on how exactly this can be achieved. This [Town and Country Planning Association guide](#), developed in collaboration with the TRUUD research programme and local authorities, provides practical evidence, guidance and inspiration to help local authorities create healthier places for everyone.

### **Behind the masks: corruption red flags in Covid-19 public procurement**

This [report from Transparency International UK](#) provides an analysis of UK public procurement and contracts issued during the Covid-19 pandemic. By analysing publicly available data on more than 5,000 UK contracts, alongside official reports, litigation in the courts, and public interest journalism, it identifies 135 high-risk contracts worth £15.3 billion. These contracts, which represent nearly £1 in every £3 spent, raise serious concerns and warrant further investigation by relevant authorities.

## **Health**

### **Tuberculosis in England, 2024 report**

This [report from the UK Health Security Agency \(UKHSA\)](#) presents people with TB disease notified to the National Tuberculosis Surveillance System (NTBS). It aims to describe the epidemiology of TB in England up to the end of 2023.

### **Veterans: access to health services**

This [House of Commons Library briefing](#) paper details the health care support available to armed forces veterans in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

### **Options for a future public health system in England**

This [Health Foundation long read](#) summarises where the current national and regional public health system is working well and explores existing structural challenges, including system fragmentation, a perceived absence of system leadership, and a lack of political independence and cross-government co-ordination. It concludes by presenting potential solutions for how these challenges could be overcome.

### **Health-related benefit claims post-pandemic: UK trends and global context**

People in the UK with health conditions may be entitled to two types of benefits: incapacity benefits (for those whose condition prevents them from working) and disability benefits (to help with extra living costs arising from the disability). Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a substantial increase in the number of individuals claiming these 'health-related' benefits, and official projections suggest that claimant numbers will rise further still. This [Institute for Fiscal Studies report](#) explores how the new claimants compare with those who began claims before the pandemic, the geography of new claims, and how the UK's experience compares with that of other developed countries.

### **Testing the nation's Eye Q: how smart are we when it comes to looking after our vision and eye health?**

One in three people will experience sight loss in their lifetime and half of this could be avoided, but this report has found that just one in four people consider routine eye tests as important for maintaining good eye health. The report also uncovered a shocking lack of awareness of 'red flag' symptoms linked to sight-threatening eye conditions. [The research was conducted as part of National Eye Health Week \(19–25 September 2024\) on behalf of Eye Health UK and Thomas Pocklington Trust](#), and involved interviews with a representative sample of 2,077 UK adults aged 18+, taking place between 24 and 25 August 2022.

### **Cervical screening, my way: women's attitudes and solutions to improve uptake of cervical screening**

In 2023, NHS England set a target to eliminate cervical cancer by 2040. This goal is set against declining levels of uptake of cervical screening over the past 20 years. [This Healthwatch England report](#) investigates why some women are hesitant to go for screening and makes recommendations to policymakers on how to improve uptake and help meet the elimination goal.

### **Independent investigation of the National Health Service in England**

In July 2024, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care commissioned Lord Darzi to conduct an immediate and independent investigation of the NHS. [Lord Darzi's report provides an understanding of the current performance of the NHS across England and the challenges facing the health care system](#). Lord Darzi has considered the available data and intelligence to assess patient access to health care; the quality of health care being provided; and the overall performance of the health system.

### **Time to care: findings from a nationally representative survey of experiences at the end of life in England and Wales**

This [Marie Curie report](#) sets out the findings from a national post-bereavement survey, the QUALYCARE survey, conducted in 2023 across England and Wales. The aim was to describe the outcomes, experiences, and use of care services by people affected by dying, death and bereavement in England and Wales. The report reveals that 1 in 3 people were severely or overwhelmingly affected by pain in the last week of life, with bereaved people reporting how difficult it was to get joined-up support from health and care professionals at home.

### **Navigating the long haul: understanding Long Covid in Northern England**

[This report, a collaboration between Health Equity North, Newcastle University, University of Manchester, Insights North East, Public Health South Tees and Healthworks, explores the impact of Long Covid](#) on the health, wellbeing and employment prospects of adults living in northern England. The findings have prompted calls for more research into Long Covid and for the government to undertake a consultation with Long Covid patients to better understand the condition and to implement care plans to facilitate rehabilitation and management of the condition



## **What builds good health? An introduction to the building blocks of health**

This [Health Foundation guide](#) is a brief introduction to the building blocks of health. It explains how a person's opportunity for health is influenced by much more than the NHS, and why people in the UK do not all have the same chance to be healthy. It also sets out how action to strengthen the building blocks of health can lead to improvements in the health of the whole population, for the benefit of individuals, society and the economy. This guide is for anyone with an interest in people's health and wellbeing. It will be especially useful to those new to the wider determinants of health.

## **Module 1: the resilience and preparedness of the United Kingdom**

The [UK Covid-19 Inquiry has published](#) its first in a series of reports and recommendations following the conclusion of its first investigation. The Inquiry's investigations are organised into modules, and module 1 examines the state of the UK's central structures and procedures for pandemic emergency preparedness, resilience and response.

## **Building new health system action to reduce obesity: audit findings of integrated care board forward plans**

This [Future Health report, sponsored by Johnson and Johnson](#), reveals that obesity is not a priority for 37 of the 42 NHS integrated care boards across England. Only five included obesity or the importance of the population maintaining a healthy weight as part of their top priorities. This is despite obesity rates tripling since 1975, and with two-thirds of the population now overweight or obese.

## **10 facts about the NHS workforce**

The NHS is the single largest employer in the UK. Although the size of its workforce is rising, the level of growth is not sufficient to meet the increasing demand for health care and complexity or level of patient need. Increases in staff numbers are not consistent across roles, and the service faces high numbers of vacancies overall. [This NHS Providers briefing](#) presents 10 facts outlining the current state of the NHS workforce.

## **Priorities for an AI in health care strategy**

This [Health Foundation long read](#) argues that a dedicated strategy for artificial intelligence (AI) in health care is needed to co-ordinate current fragmented efforts in the NHS in England. It sets out six priorities this strategy should address and some of the steps to do so.

## **Health Survey for England, 2022-part 1**

The Health Survey for England (HSE) is used to estimate the proportion of people in England who have health conditions, and the prevalence of risk factors and behaviours associated with certain health conditions. The [NHS England surveys](#) provide regular information that cannot be obtained from other sources.

### **Integrated care systems report 2024**

Integrated care systems (ICSs) were formalised across England as legal entities with statutory powers and responsibilities in July 2022. Directors of Public Health (DsPH) and their teams have adapted and sought to collaborate with ICSs effectively for the benefit of the health and wellbeing of local populations. [This report from Association of Directors of Public Health](#) summarises the results of a survey to investigate and understand the experiences of DsPH when engaging with ICSs.

### **Reverse the trend: reducing type 2 diabetes in young people**

This [Diabetes UK report](#) reveals a 40% rise in type 2 diabetes diagnoses in younger people between 2016–17 and 2022–23. There are now almost 168,000 people under 40 in the UK who live with type 2 diabetes, an increase of more than 47,000 since 2016–17. Diabetes UK is calling on all political parties to commit to tackling the alarming rise in cases of type 2 diabetes among this age group.

### **Corridor care: unsafe, undignified, unacceptable**

[This report from Royal College of Nursing](#) reveals that more than 1 in 3 (37%) nursing staff working in typical hospital settings delivered care in inappropriate settings, such as corridors, on their last shift. The report shares the results of a survey of almost 11,000 frontline nursing staff across the UK. The report calls for mandatory national reporting of patients being cared for in corridors, to reveal the extent of hospital overcrowding, as part of a plan to eradicate the practice.

## **Health Behaviours**

### **Less healthy food or drink: advertising and promotions restrictions**

The Advertising (Less Healthy Food Definitions and Exemptions) Regulations 2024 were laid before parliament on 3 December 2024 and will come into force UK-wide on 1 October 2025. The regulations include a 9pm watershed for less healthy food or drink advertising on TV, including all on-demand programme services (ODPS) and internet protocol television (IPTV) services under the jurisdiction of the UK, and therefore regulated by Ofcom, and a total restriction on paid-for advertising of less healthy food or drink online, including non-Ofcom regulated ODPS and IPTV. [This Department of Health and Social Care guidance](#) provides more information on the legislation.

### **The false economy of big food and the case for a new food economy**

This [Food, Farming and Countryside Commission report](#) provides an estimate of the food-related cost of chronic disease, caused by the current food system. It concludes that £268 billion is the food-related cost of chronic disease in the UK – calculated by combining health care (£67.5 billion), social care (£14.3 billion), welfare (£10.1 billion), productivity (£116.4 billion) and human costs (£60 billion) of chronic disease attributable to the current food ecosystem. The report argues for enshrining the right to healthy food into law, establishing leadership for food across government, regulating the food environment and rebalancing power, and redirecting money towards a healthier, greener, fairer and more resilient new food economy.

### **Investigating the impact of loneliness and social isolation on health**

This [report from Nesta](#) examines the links between loneliness and health to better understand whether loneliness and social isolation actually cause worse health. It argues that by better understanding the relationship between loneliness and health, we can better assess if interventions to tackle loneliness would lead to improved health outcomes.

### **Killer tactics: how tobacco, alcohol, and unhealthy food and drink industries hold back public health progress**

Businesses are vital to the economy and can make an important contribution to health improvement. However, unhealthy product industries cause ill health and impede economic growth. [This report, from the Alcohol Health Alliance, Action on Smoking and Health, and the Obesity Health Alliance](#), draws on evidence to highlight some of the common strategies and tactics used by the tobacco, alcohol, and unhealthy food and drink industries to delay and disrupt policies that improve health, and outlines what needs to change.

### **A blueprint for the future: sexual and reproductive health and HIV services in England**

Good sexual health enables healthy relationships, planned pregnancies and prevention of disease. This [Local Government Association report](#), produced together with the Association of Directors of Public Health and the English HIV Sexual Health Commissioners Group, calls on government to work with local government to commit and deliver a sustainable, national 10-year sexual and reproductive health (SRH) strategy.

### **Moving communities impact report**

This [Sport England report](#) finds that leisure facilities in England are playing an increasingly important role in their communities, with more people using them now than this time last year. In particular it notes a growth in leisure centre usage by economically disadvantaged groups, with visits from users in the most deprived 20% of areas increasing by 9% (100,000 people). [The report argues](#) that this demonstrates the crucial role leisure facilities play in supporting vulnerable communities to get active locally, providing inclusive and accessible opportunities for physical activity and social interaction.

### **Public Health Inequalities Responsive Studies Team (PHIRST) evaluation findings on inequality in physical activity**

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) through PHIRST has released its evaluation findings on the 'Bracknell Forest Health and Well-Being Physical Activity Service' which was commissioned to reduce physical activity inequalities. They have produced an [infographic](#) and [YouTube video](#).

### **Millions more moving**

The [Richmond Group of Charities has published Millions more moving](#), a report informed by lived experience insights on how national policymakers can tackle inactivity by supporting people with long-term conditions to move more. It sets out three 'shifts' in the policy landscape that will help maximise the role of movement in health.

### **The power of prevention: boosting vaccine uptake for better outcomes**

This [Reform briefing paper](#) focuses on three broad factors involved in people's attitudes to vaccination – confidence, complacency and convenience – which influence uptake. Taking each in turn, the paper sets out practical steps for the new government that would help keep the UK protected against vaccine-preventable diseases, reducing unwarranted variation in health outcomes while freeing up valuable, limited resource in the rest of the health system.

### **Social prescribing around the world**

This [report from National Academy for Social Prescribing](#) provides a unique, global perspective of the development of social prescribing across different health systems, with a focus on health inequality, equity and justice. This global report was brought together by the International Social Prescribing Collaborative (ISPC), an international community of practice comprised of more than 32 countries, founded and supported by the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP).

## **Inequalities**

### **Thriving Places Index**

[The 2024 Thriving Places Index \(TPI\)](#) provides an up-to-date picture of how well different areas are doing in creating the conditions for everyone to thrive. It brings together the very best existing data and evidence to help you understand and map the pathways to developing a thriving place where you are.

### **Unleashing health and prosperity throughout Britain**

While a theoretical understanding of the links between health and wealth is increasingly recognised, the practical elements of what makes it work on the ground are less evidenced. [This NHS Confederation paper](#) shines a light on these elements, showcasing tangible principles that work.

### **Is the use of privately funded health care on the rise?**

This [Health Foundation analysis explores trends in attitudes, activity and spending on privately funded health care](#). Where possible, it draws on data covering the whole of the UK, but some data sources exclude Northern Ireland or only cover England. While there may be some distinctive regional trends at play, The Health Foundation believes the findings generally hold true for the UK overall.

### **Review of NHS trust strategies for addressing health inequalities**

NHS trusts play a crucial role in addressing health inequalities by focusing on providing equitable access to services and ensuring patients receive a consistent level of care. Taking a strategic approach is identified as key to making progress; it can provide a helpful roadmap to achieve long-term objectives that are aligned with the trust's overall strategy and identify the opportunities and risks to making progress. [This NHS Providers review](#) sets out the key components of a successful trust strategy for reducing health inequalities. It is based on desk-based research into a selection of published trust strategy documents and follow-up interviews to better understand the extent to which action on health inequalities has been prioritised.

## Public health funding

This [Association of Directors of Public Health \(ADPH\) briefing](#) presents an overview of the public health funding landscape across the UK, including recommendations for how public health funding can be reformed to ensure people can live healthier, happier and more productive lives.

## Unleashing health and prosperity throughout Britain

While a theoretical understanding of the links between health and wealth is increasingly recognised, the practical elements of what makes it work on the ground are less evidenced. Based on engagement with five local areas in England and Wales, [this paper, from NHS Confederation and IPPR](#), puts forward a set of principles that have been proved to aid successful social and economic development: making the integrated care partnership, health board or equivalent leadership body the vehicle to unlocking the anchor system; looking inward and recognising the assets systems already have at the ready; linking with local inclusive growth strategies; devolving accountability; sharing resources across partners; and leading the cultural shift necessary to generate more long-termist thinking.

## Bringing it all together: financial strategies that address health inequalities

This [Healthcare Financial Management Association \(HFMA\) explainer](#) sums up the HFMA's work on health inequalities and explores how organisations can use financial strategies to address health inequalities.

## Making sense of health inequalities

[This NHS Providers resource](#), produced as part of NHS Providers' Health Inequalities programme, looks at the current state of the nation in relation to health inequalities and the role that NHS trusts have to play in addressing them.

## How do the last five years measure up on levelling up?

Five years ago, then Prime Minister Boris Johnson made 'levelling up' a central plank of the Conservative Party's bid for re-election, with a manifesto pledge to 'level up every part of the UK'. In 2022, the government published a thorough and ambitious White Paper setting out 12 levelling up 'missions' to achieve by 2030, as well as specific metrics by which they would be measured. [This report from Institute for Fiscal Studies](#) examines early progress towards those 12 missions, where possible using the headline metrics identified in the White Paper.

## Mental Health

### The big mental health report 2024

This [Mind report](#) brings together the latest evidence on the current state of the nation's mental health and its mental health services, alongside insights from people with lived experience of mental health difficulties. It also takes a close look at how financial difficulties are impacting people's mental health, the impact of stigma and discrimination, and the experiences of people living with severe mental illness.

### **Covid-19 and the nation's mental health: a review of the evidence published so far**

Covid-19 was an unprecedented global health emergency unlike anything else in living memory. While the pandemic's immediate impact was on physical health, it also had a profound impact on people's mental health. This [Centre for Mental Health report](#) explores what is known about those impacts, and how they have affected mental health services in the UK, four years on from the start of the pandemic.

### **Just living and coping: the cost-of-living crisis and the nation's mental health**

The cost-of-living crisis has had a profound impact on people with mental health problems, with many struggling to get by day-to-day at the expense of their health. This report draws together research commissioned by Mind to explore the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. [The Centre for Mental Health researchers heard from 500 people across England and Wales, many of whom already had mental health problems](#). The research found that 84% of people said the crisis had made their mental health worse, with the biggest impacts among those living in the deepest poverty. The report makes recommendations for the NHS and central government.

### **Listening to the stories of women who have experienced child removal due to drug and alcohol use**

This [Maternal Mental Health Alliance report](#), written in collaboration with REFORM, shares the stories of three women with experience of drug addiction during pregnancy and the early days of motherhood. It aims to shine a light on their experiences and centre their views on what is needed to improve the journey for others in a similar situation. The report explores three themes: the level of stigma that exists for women experiencing drug addiction, and/or are at risk of having their children removed; the need for improved support through training of health care professionals and investment in peer support and advocacy programmes; and the importance of hope.

### **A call for change: tackling inequalities in access to mental health support for children with social work involvement and those living in poverty**

This [National Children's Bureau report](#) finds that children with social work involvement for current concerns are more likely to be rejected by NHS mental health services compared to their peers. Research undertaken with Cambridge University found that, overall, children from the most deprived areas are twice as likely to be rejected than those from the least deprived areas.

## **Pharmacy**

### **Medicines shortages: solutions for empty shelves**

[This report from the Royal Pharmaceutical Society](#), and backed by charities and patient groups, calls on the government to create a national strategy to manage medicine shortages and to change legislation to allow community pharmacists to amend prescriptions when medicines are in short supply. The report explains how medicine supply chains are global and complex, with shortages caused by manufacturing problems and disrupted, less resilient supply chains.

### **Community Pharmacy England pharmacy advice audit 2024**

This [Community Pharmacy England report](#) sets out the findings of the audit of more than a third (3,916) of community pharmacies carried out earlier this year. During the audit, 61,837 patient consultations fell outside of an NHS-funded service, with the average pharmacy completing around 22 such consultations a day. This equates to 69 million unfunded consultations taking place in England's community pharmacies per year. This is nearly 50% more consultations than in 2020 and is despite the introduction of the Pharmacy First service.

### **Pharmacy closures in England**

Healthwatch England sent a Freedom of Information (Fol) request to all 42 integrated care boards (ICBs) in England to investigate the issue of pharmacy closures. [This briefing provides a geographical breakdown of pharmacy closures in England](#) and finds that the closures are hitting older people and rural communities the hardest. Healthwatch England makes recommendations to reduce the impact of pharmacy closures on pharmacy users.

### **Pharmacy pressures survey 2024: staffing and morale report**

This [Community Pharmacy England report](#) finds that staffing pressures are significantly impacting community pharmacies, adding workload pressures for all those who work in them and hampering their ability to help patients and the public. The main challenges include extreme stress and burnout, affecting both the personal and professional lives of pharmacy staff and ultimately impacting patient care.

### **Pharmacy Pressures Survey 2024: funding and profitability report**

This [Community Pharmacy England report](#) confirms the severe financial pressures putting community pharmacies at risk of closure, threatening patient care and access to services across England. Spiralling costs and workload, coupled with a 30% funding cut in real terms since 2015, mean that too many pharmacies are struggling to stay afloat.

### **Pharmacy**

This [Health and Social Care Select Committee report](#) finds the current Community Pharmacy Funding Framework not fit for purpose and urges an overhaul to reduce its complexity. It concludes that a new framework is necessary to deliver adequate funding and prevent damaging cross-subsidy between clinical services and prescription dispensing, as is currently the case. Reductions in core funding to community services of 30% since 2015 equates to an annual shortfall per pharmacy of between £67,000 and £100,000.

## Poverty

### **A penny for your thoughts on poverty and the NHS? Kings Fund Blog**

Too often, poverty is seen as the result of bad lifestyle choices – a belief that even permeates the NHS. But poverty needs to be seen as a structural rather than personal failing, says [Kings Fund writer - Julia Cream](#)

### **Committee on Fuel Poverty annual report: 2024**

[This annual report](#) offers advice towards meeting fuel poverty milestones and serves as a contribution to the current review of the Fuel Poverty Strategy.

## Social Care

### **Earlier action and support: The case for prevention in adult social care and beyond**

[This joint publication \(from the LGA, ADASS, Social Care Institute for Excellence, Mencap, Skills for Care, Think Local Act Personal, The Care Provider Alliance and Social Care Future\)](#) makes the case for a shift towards taking action and offering support earlier, so that more people can live the lives they want.

### **The state of health care and adult social care in England 2023/24**

This [Care Quality Commission annual assessment of the state of health and social care in England](#) looks at the quality of care over the past year. It draws on inspection activity, findings from the CQC's national NHS patient survey programme and statutory reports, bespoke research into people's experiences, insights from key stakeholders, and evidence collected by the regulator throughout the year about the quality and safety of services in all areas of health and care.

## Wider Determinants

### **Our future homes: housing that promotes wellbeing and community for an ageing population**

This [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government report](#) seeks to understand the market in England for older people's housing today and into the future. It outlines the enablers for older people when seeking to move into appropriate or specialist housing. It also looks at the opportunities and benefits of broadening provision and choice for older people, including continuing to live in their own home if they wish to do so. It aims to develop a viable and implementable approach for enhancing choice for older people in the housing market.

### **Improving our nation's health: a whole-of-government approach to tackling the causes of long-term sickness and economic inactivity**

This [NHS Confederation report](#), produced together with the Boston Consulting Group, sets out actions needed to introduce a 'whole-of-government' approach to health, focusing to begin with on addressing the challenge of economic inactivity driven by long-term sickness.



### **Health, hope and prosperity: a vision for healthy new towns**

This [Town and Country Planning Association report](#) sets out the high-level preconditions necessary to create a healthy new town and reflects on some of the key lessons that need to inform future thinking. It then looks at some of the key lessons from the past New Towns programme and what to consider for future success. The project aims to learn from the Garden City and the post-war New Towns model to deliver a new vision for healthy new towns.

### **'Creative Health at a Glance' resource, review and toolkit**

The National Centre for Creative Health (NCCH) have produced some resources to explain how cultural and creative activity can support health priorities. The '[Creative Health at a Glance' resource](#) introduces health professionals to how creative and cultural activity can support health priorities. The health conditions in this booklet appear within the NHS's Core20PLUS5 strategy and are recognised as the 'Major Conditions' contributing to ill health in the UK. There are also 10 downloadable posters.

### **Pathways to work: commission report**

[This report by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council](#) explores how to reduce economic inactivity and help more people access work, with a focus on Barnsley and its local, regional and national challenges and opportunities.

### **The State of the Arts**

The Campaign for the Arts have launched [a new report into the UK's arts and culture bringing together vital information and official statistics on arts funding, provision, engagement, education and employment](#). This reinforces the LGA's findings on the challenging picture facing cultural organisations and emphasises the critical contribution that local government makes as a core investor in, and provider of, cultural services.

### **Creating health and wellbeing: a partnership approach to evidence-led planning and design in our cities, towns and villages**

Evidence-led planning and design can shape a better built environment that provides health-creating conditions. [This guide, from Quality-of-Life Foundation, created in partnership with Prior + Partners](#) summarises the different planning and design tools available to local authorities in England and how evidence can be used to link these to the local context and challenges. It also includes case studies, shining a light on ambitious local authorities that are leading health creation.

### **Healthy industry, prosperous economy**

This [Institute for Public Policy Research report](#) finds that rising workplace sickness is costing UK businesses billions every year. Arguing that it is necessary to harness the role of industry in supporting people's health, the report proposes a new 'Health in All Industries' approach that would bring together public health and industrial policy. It explores what products and practices organisations should move away from as part of a plan for health, growth and prosperity, both in the workplace and in the wider economy.

## Improving our nation's health: a whole-of-government approach to tackling the causes of long-term sickness and economic inactivity

The UK faces a series of complex health challenges, exemplified by the recent sharp rise in the number of people out of the workforce due to long-term sickness. This has significant impacts on individuals' wellbeing, as well as large fiscal and economic costs. Tackling complex challenges such as this requires a fresh approach. [This NHS Confederation interim report](#), developed by the NHS Confederation and Boston Consulting Group, sets out why a whole-of-government approach is key to addressing this issue and how it can be taken forward by a new government.

**Disclaimer:** The views and opinions expressed in these republished articles are those of the original authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Wirral Council and its staff

If you have any local information, research or reports you think useful to share then get in touch [phintelligence@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:phintelligence@wirral.gov.uk) or if the bulletin has been passed onto you and you would like to subscribe please [complete this form](#).

Thanks, John