Alcohol and Drugs

‘Record numbers’ hospitalised for chronic liver disease in Scotland

Hospital stay rates have increased from 47 per 100,000 people to 190 last year, the highest rate since records began in 1982-83, according to new statistics published by the Scottish Public Health Observatory (SPHO). Statistics show that people living in the most deprived areas are also six times more likely to develop chronic liver disease caused by alcohol abuse, compared with the rest of Scotland. The SPHO say 80% of chronic liver disease cases are a result of alcohol abuse and twice as many men have it as women.

‘Dry January’ campaign launched by Alcohol Concern

A campaign which encourages people to give up alcohol for the 31 days of January has been launched by Alcohol Concern. A free guide to this year’s campaign along with fundraising ideas and posters are available on Alcohol Concern’s website.
Alzheimer’s/Dementia

Alzheimer Scotland launches technology charter for people living with dementia

Alzheimer Scotland has launched a technology charter for people living with dementia in Scotland in an effort to raise awareness about the positive role technology can play in enabling people with dementia to live healthier, safer and more active lives. The work was funded by the Technology Enabled Care fund, and was written in collaboration with Alzheimer Scotland, NHS Scotland, Scottish Government, Scottish Fire and Rescue, Tunstall and Tynetec. The Technology Charter has six key values, which include; to ensure practice and service provision is rights based, personalised and free from discrimination, unpaid carers and families are recognised and valued as equal partners in care, and technology augments - but does not replace - human intervention.

People who ‘think negatively’ about old age more likely to experience brain changes linked to Alzheimer’s, study finds

People who think negatively about growing old are more likely to experience brain changes that lead to Alzheimer’s disease, according to researchers at Yale University, Carehome.co.uk reports. Researchers at Yale School of Public Health found individuals who internalize society’s negative views about ageing can have brain changes associated with Alzheimer’s. The study found those with more negative beliefs about ageing had a greater decline over the 10 year period in the volume of their brain’s hippocampus (critical to memory), which is also an indicator of Alzheimer’s disease. Brain autopsies on people who had died were also undertaken to look at two other indicators of Alzheimer’s Disease- amyloid plaques (toxic protein clusters that build up in brain cells) and neurofibrillary tangles (which build up between brain cells). Those with negative thoughts about ageing had a ‘far higher’ amount of plaques and tangles.

Playing 3D games could protect against memory loss, study finds

Playing three dimensional video games may protect against memory loss usually associated with age, according to a new study, Care Appointments reports. Researchers at the University of California believe 3D gaming could provide a novel treatment for people affected by age-related memory loss or dementia. Student volunteers playing the game Super Mario 3D World boosted their performance in memory tests by around 12% - roughly the amount it normally decreases by between the ages of 45 and 70. When compared to a 2D game such as Angry Birds, the game did not have the same beneficial effect. The new study, reported in The Journal of Neuroscience, involved playing either the 3D or 2D game for 30 minutes every day for two weeks.

Care Homes/Care at Home

Free training courses to help improve the care of people in residential care

Free training courses to help improve the care of people in residential care are being offered by the North East Sensory Services (NESS), using funding from the Scottish
Government’s See Hear strategy. The courses are specifically aimed at care home, sheltered housing and residential care home staff, who encounter a high proportion of people living with visual and/or hearing impairment. The NESS Sensory Awareness Training programme allows delegates to have a greater understanding of what it is like to live without sight and/or hearing, as well as improving knowledge on the different levels of sensory loss. The interactive sessions, using blindfolds and headphones to simulate visual and hearing impairment, also offer practical advice on how to help a blind or deaf person to get about and be understood.

**Care providers told to begin preparation for introduction of Living Wage in April 2016**

Care providers and other businesses are being urged by the UK Government to begin preparations for the introduction of the National Living Wage which comes into force in April 2016. The new wage will become law on 1 April next year and businesses are being advised to know the correct rate of pay, find out which staff are eligible for the new rate and communicate the changes to staff as soon as possible. A dedicated Living Wage website which also provides information for employers has also been set up.

**Disability**

**Consultation on the draft Rights for Life Declaration and Agenda for Change**

An online survey for people to have their say on the draft Rights for Life Declaration and Agenda for Change has been launched by the organisation Rights for Life. The Agenda for Change sets out some of the ways in which these rights can be put into practice. The document also reflects the principles, rights and standards set out in international human rights treaties to which the UK and Scotland are bound, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The online survey is intended for people aged over 16 and living in Scotland, and is open until 24 December 2015.

**End of Life/Palliative Care**

**NHS Scotland palliative care guidelines now available as apps**

Sixteen of the NHS Scotland palliative care guidelines are now available in app format providing offline access anywhere, anytime. The app is the product of a collaborative partnership between the Scottish Centre for Enabling Technologies at the University of West of Scotland, SHOW NHS National Services Scotland, the Chairs of the guideline steering group, Consultant in Palliative Medicine Dr David Gray & Forth Valley Palliative and Cancer Lead GP Dr Paul Baughan. The app will be of benefit to healthcare professionals from any care setting who are involved in supporting people with a palliative condition.

**End of life care event to be hosted by Holyrood Magazine on 19 January 2016**

An event to discuss end of life care (EoL) in Scotland will be hosted by Holyrood Magazine on 19 January 2016. The interactive session will allow delegates to identify the biggest obstacles to good EoL care in Scotland, and discuss solutions for
healthcare experts, professional, policymakers, and families. Professor Craig White, Divisional Clinical Lead, Scottish Government will discuss the Scottish Government’s Strategic Framework for Action which is due to be published shortly.

Infection Prevention and Control

Association of Continence Advice hosting conference in May 2016

The Association of Continence Advice has announced that it will host its Annual Conference and Exhibition on the 23 and 24 May 2016 at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre. The theme of programme will be Transitions in Continence Care with discussion on bowel management and care. There will also be an extensive exhibition which will feature over 50 companies offering new products and practical solutions.

Justice

Fatal Accidents and Sudden Deaths etc. (Scotland) Bill passed

A Bill which introduces changes to the existing legislation on Fatal Accident Inquiries has been passed by MSPs in the Scottish Parliament. Changes introduced by the Fatal Accidents and Sudden Deaths etc. (Scotland) Bill include:

- mandatory FAIs for new categories of deaths, including the deaths of children in secure accommodation;
- the power to reopen an FAI if new evidence arises, and to hold a fresh FAI if the new evidence is substantial enough; and
- a requirement on individuals or organisations to explain how they have implemented recommendations placed on them by a sheriff after an FAI, or why none have been implemented

During Stage 3 debate on the Bill, a previous amendment to introduce a mandatory FAI for deaths of people detained under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act was reversed. Scottish Government Minister Paul Wheelhouse highlighted a range of evidence to suggest that such a measure would be disproportionate and outlined provisions already in place to ensure adequate review of deaths that occur while a person is subject to compulsory treatment under mental health legislation.

Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill passed by MSPs

The Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill has been passed by MSPs in the Scottish Parliament. The Bill takes forward a range of proposals to modernise and improve efficiency within the criminal justice system. The new legislation includes a number of reforms and responds to the work of four independent reviews of criminal law and practice. During the Stage 3 proceedings in the Chamber, Cabinet Secretary for Justice, Michael Matheson, said “constructive meetings” had taken place around the key delivery and oversight functions for any new model of support service for
vulnerable adults in custody, adding that “further work and engagement is required to ensure that any model of the delivery, training, support and guidance, inspection and oversight of adult services is truly effective and sustainable.”

**Older People**

**Online services leave older people without support according to report**

Moving public services online without providing sufficient support for those who are 'offline' could leave some of the poorest older people without vital support, according to a new report published by Age UK. New figures published in the report, ‘Later life in a digital world’ show a clear link between internet use, socio-economic group and age, providing evidence that it is the poorest older people who are most likely to be offline and therefore lose out on essential services. Around four out of five people aged 75 and over in the lowest socio-economic groups do not currently use the internet. Age UK has called on organisations that provide online services to recognise that is it not always possible or appropriate to suggest people get help from others.

**Other Health and Social Care**

**New project launched by SSSC to help people understand the role of social workers**

A new project to help more people understand the role of social workers and the difference it makes to local communities has been launched by the Scottish Social Services Council. The SSSC is also looking for organisations and people – social workers, care practitioners, early years practitioners and those that they work with – to take part and get the project started. As part of the project, a national social media campaign running from December to February aimed at helping to raise awareness through conversations and storytelling of what social service workers will also be launched.

**Report on benefits of digital technology and citizen led participation published**

A new report on the ‘Benefits of Digital Technology - Citizen led Participation’ has been published by Scottish Enterprise and the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE). The report looks at the role of digital technologies in health and care innovation using examples of ‘Living it Up’ which provides access to ‘innovative’ health, care and wellbeing services, local information, volunteering opportunities and products. The also report shares examples of people-powered innovation and highlights the enablers and barriers which support and hinder Scottish businesses from tapping into the ideas and life experiences of citizens.

**CCPS publishes response to National Care Standards**

A brief response to the consultation on the principles that will underpin the new care standards has been published and submitted by the Coalition of Care Providers in Scotland in collaboration with the Housing Support Enabling Unit and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations. In a statement on their website, the CCPS states that while there is support for the draft principles there is ‘disagreement’ over
the principle of ‘compassion’ and some confusion over the principle of ‘personal wellbeing’.

**Health and Social Care Academy hosting event on prevention on 25 January**

As part of its Integration Series, the Health and Social Care Academy is hosting an event on ‘The Power of Prevention’ on the 25 January 2016. The aim of the event is to consider how best to meet the needs of communities across Scotland, and to embed the values of prevention and anticipation into the commissioning of support and services. The event also aims to provide insights into preventative and anticipatory approaches and their role in improving outcomes for people who use support and services, highlight third sector responses to prevention and showcase community led examples of prevention.

**Other**

**SSSC publishes annual report and account for 2014/15**

The Scottish Social Services Council has published its annual report and accounts. This report provides an overview of the SSSC’s work in 2014/15 and how it has managed its resources to achieve outcomes. In 2014 registration became compulsory for support workers in day care services for children including nurseries and out of school care as well as for managers of housing support and care at home services. Figures show that around 90,000 people are now registered to work in social services in Scotland – nearly half of the whole workforce.

**IRISS hosting ‘communicating with impact’ workshop on 20 January**

A workshop on communicating effectively when it comes to writing reports, project proposals, strategy documents or stories is being hosted by the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services. The ‘Hands On Workshops’ aims to provide tips on jargon free writing and refining and clarifying your message. The free workshop will be held on 20 January at the Edinburgh Training and Conference Venue.

**Disclaimer**

This weekly bulletin is produced as an update on the key issues concerning adults and health.

Each item in the bulletin has a hyperlinked headline that will take the reader to the original source.

We collate items from our parliamentary and Scottish Government monitoring covering health and social care news from throughout the UK, and current research and policy development. We use a variety of sources for the bulletin, including alerts from Newsdirect, Community Care, Children & Young People Now and ISD Scotland.
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