

Your summary of today's top healthcare news

Wednesday, 27th March 2019

EMPLOYMENT

Overworked nurses quitting at record rate

The rate at which NHS staff are resigning because of long hours has trebled in six years according to official figures. More than 200,000 nurses have left the service since 2010 and poor work-life balance was cited as the most common reason for leaving, with 18,013 such cases in 2017/18, compared with 6,699 in 2011/12. The data revealed that in 2017/18 more than 10% of nurses, health visitors and midwives left the NHS. Dame Donna Kinnair, acting CEO of the RCN, said: "Health and care services are losing thousands of experienced, dedicated nursing staff who feel as if no one is sufficiently listening to their concerns and patient care is routinely compromised by chronic staff shortages." Almost 95% of nurses say they are too busy to provide proper care to patients because of the lack of staff.

The Daily Telegraph, Page: 12 The Independent, Page: 14 The Guardian, Page: 45 i, Page: 4 Daily Mail, Page: 21 The Sun, Page: 14 Yorkshire Post, Page: 4

POLICY AND REGULATION

Davies: Investment in AMR fight needed

England's chief medical officer Dame Sally Davies has urged investors at a conference on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) to fund companies that are working to combat the rise of antibiotic-resistant superbugs by developing new drugs and vaccines. She said: "Investors should not be investing in companies in the food chain that misuse antibiotics. They should be investing for corporate social responsibility in antibiotic-making companies and vaccine-making companies." A study last year showed that an estimated 33,000 people died of AMR infections in 2015. She did also highlight the progress being made in the UK in terms of reducing antibiotic prescriptions. Between 2014 and 2017 the figure fell by 7.3%, but the Department of Health wants this brought down by a further 15% by 2024.

[The Daily Telegraph](#)

Whitty: more evidence needed on cannabis

Chief scientific adviser at the Department of Health and Social Care, Chris Whitty, has advised MPs that medicinal cannabis needs to be as thoroughly investigated as other drugs approved for use on the NHS, warning that rushing it through regulatory steps risked another disaster on the scale of the thalidomide scandal. He called for a responsible, evidence-based approach to medicinal cannabis. However, campaigners have complained that patients are being denied NHS prescriptions because guidance on when it should be used is too restrictive.

The Times, Page: 16 Daily Mail, Page: 35 The Scotsman, Page: 2

Plans to close London A&Es scrapped

Health Secretary Matt Hancock has scrapped plans to close two accident and emergency departments in west London. Mr Hancock said the Department of Health had withdrawn its support for the scheme after seven years. **Ealing Hospital's** and **Charing Cross Hospital's** A&E units had been expected to close as part of a programme to overhaul health services. Campaigners welcomed the move to cancel the closures, but said it should have come sooner. The local NHS group said it had already spent £43m on consultants alone for the £500m project, Shaping a Healthier Future (SaHF). Speaking in the House of Commons, Mr

Hancock said: "Shaping a Healthier Future is no longer supported by the Department of Health and Social Care, by NHS Improvement, or NHS England."

[BBC News](#) [The Guardian](#), Page: 29

Social media firms warned over 'anti-vaxxer' content

Health Secretary Matt Hancock has warned that social media firms could be hit with new laws to stop them allowing the spread of "anti-vaxxer" rhetoric online. He cautioned that uptake of the MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine is now at 87.5%, against the 95% target set by the World Health Organisation, despite "unimpeachable" evidence that it saves lives.

[The Daily Telegraph](#), Page: 12 [BBC News](#) [The Times](#), Page: 2 [Daily Mail](#), Page: 29 [The Scotsman](#), Page: 9 [The Herald](#), Page: 7

MEDICINE AND TREATMENT

Young boys twice as prone to mental problems as girls

According to a new report from NHS Digital, 12.2% of primary school age boys suffer from a mental disorder, and boys were found to be twice as likely to develop such problems as girls of the same age, of which 6.6% have a mental disorder. Experts said "difficult" behaviour in young children could be a sign of emotional distress that they struggled to talk about. Emotional disorders were equally common in both genders, but behavioural problems such as autism and ADHD were twice as likely in boys. The analysis, based on more than 9,000 children, also found that children from middle-income families were twice as likely to suffer mental disorders as those from low-income backgrounds.

[The Daily Telegraph](#), Page: 1, 8

BAAPs: Snapchat filters should carry health warning

The British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (BAAPS) has called for health warnings to be attached to Snapchat filters, because increasing numbers of young people have sought "extreme" procedures to make them look like their filtered images. Ash Mosahebi, a leading NHS consultant and honorary secretary of BAAPs, said: "Almost all of them bring images they want to emulate - some are of celebrities, but also images they have managed to morph with these changing faces type of software."

[The Daily Telegraph](#), Page: 8

Teachers call for car-free zone outside schools

Nearly two-thirds of teachers would support banning cars outside schools during drop-off and pick-up times to improve air quality, a survey has found. One in three teachers are worried about air pollution, according to the survey for the walking and cycling charity, Sustrans, with 43% saying that idling car engines cause concern. The poll also revealed that 59% want the Government to take urgent action to improve air quality outside schools. "We need to radically change the way we travel. Idling car engines and snarled up roads poison the air and our children's bodies across the UK. For too long now, dangerous levels of air pollution near schools have been ignored," said Sustrans chief executive, Xavier Brice.

[The Guardian](#) [The Daily Telegraph](#) [The Press and Journal](#) [Daily Express](#) [Yorkshire Post](#) [Daily Mirror](#) [The Independent](#)

CRUK: Special offers drive obesity levels

Cancer Research UK has released a report indicating that shoppers who chase supermarket deals are more often overweight or obese, as they buy less fruit and vegetables and more unhealthy food. Malcolm Clark, a policy manager at Cancer Research UK, said: "These promotions look like they are pushing us in the wrong direction - certainly those people who are buying more promotions are ending up with baskets that are more skewed than general towards less healthy products." Studies showed a direct correlation between obesity and discount purchases, and experts want these special offers to be restricted.

The Times, Page: 23 The Guardian, Page: 15 Daily Mail, Page: 13 i, Page: 5 The Sun, Page: 18 The Scotsman, Page: 11 Yorkshire Post, Page: 2

Three Scottish health boards missing alcohol targets

Statistics released by the NHS Scotland Information Services Division show that **NHS Lothian, NHS Grampian** and **NHS Highland** are failing to meet drug and alcohol treatment targets to start treatment within three weeks of diagnosis. Tom Mason, Scottish Conservative MSP for the north-east region, said: "Once again, health boards in the Highlands and north-east of Scotland are lagging behind those elsewhere in the country." He added: "People struggling with dependency issues cannot afford to wait for weeks on end for help."

The Press and Journal, Page: 2

LEGAL

Man brain-damaged since childhood wins £6.2m

A man in his 20s, left disabled by a childhood brain infection, has won an NHS compensation package worth up to £6.2m. The man contracted encephalitis, a life-threatening inflammation of the brain, aged one, whilst being treated at **Watford General Hospital**. His family sued **West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust** to cover the lifetime cost of his care. A spokesperson for the trust said: "We hope that the financial compensation will ensure that the claimant has the best possible quality of life in the future".

[BBC News](#)

Oxycontin maker in \$270m settlement

Purdue Pharma has reached a \$270m settlement with the state of Oklahoma to end a landmark lawsuit concerning its part in the US opioid crisis. The company was accused of aggressively marketing the powerful painkiller OxyContin to doctors. The drug is alleged to have contributed to a crisis that led to 48,000 deaths in the US in 2017 alone. The company is facing more than 1,600 lawsuits in the US. Proceeds from the settlement will be used to establish the National Center for Addiction Studies and Treatment at Oklahoma State University.

[The Times, Page: 33](#) [The Daily Telegraph, Page: 15](#)