



Public Health
England



Duncan Selbie
Chief Executive

Friday message

Friday 20 June 2014

Dear everyone

PHE leads for the UK Government on compliance with the International Health Regulations. These are overseen on behalf of all nations by the World Health Organisation and are concerned, foremost, with protecting people from communicable disease but also in building resilience, for example, through twinning laboratory facilities and sharing expertise. One of the international bodies with whom we work most closely is the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – the US equivalent of PHE. On Monday and Tuesday, David Heymann, our chairman, and myself, with some of our team, spent time in Atlanta, the CDC HQ, to review our current collaborations and where these might be further strengthened, in particular on Global Health Security and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in which the UK is playing a leading role internationally. PHE is responsible for four of the seven elements in the UK strategy on AMR, under the overall leadership of CMO, Dame Sally Davies. We also focused on non-communicable disease and where we share the same challenges, for example on obesity, but with some significant differences too. For example, more than half of all premature deaths in under 45s in the US are the result of accidents and violence while we are more challenged by tobacco and alcohol.

We hugely welcome yesterday's [announcement](#) that all four UK health ministers are backing the call for action on reducing the risk of developing dementia. They have each signed up to the Blackfriars Consensus Statement on dementia risk reduction which was published last month jointly by PHE and the UK Health Forum and supported by 60 leading figures and organisations from across the dementia and public health community. The UK is acknowledged, including by the US, to be at the forefront of the focus on dementia risk reduction and this endorsement is a further powerful indication of our commitment.

This week also saw the [launch](#) of our National Mental Health Dementia and Neurology Intelligence Network. The aim is to provide commissioners, local decision makers and health professionals with authoritative intelligence, research and evidenced best practice using the [PHE Fingertips platform](#). It brings together, for the first time, data from 13 separate sources into a single online resource. There is considerable support from clinicians and patient groups for this initiative.

Technology is having a massive impact on all of our lives, including the most disadvantaged, and it has great potential to influence health outcomes, much as we have seen in many other aspects of our lives. We are keen to harness that potential and this morning, as part of London Tech week, we launched our '[Health X](#)' innovation competition, in partnership with the Daily Telegraph and others, aimed at digital entrepreneurs to encourage them to design products that can help people to move more and eat well. This is expected to generate a lot of interest and creativity.

And finally, warm congratulations to one of our independent Board members, Derek Myers, who was knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for his services to local government in London. The first chief executive in London to have run two local councils simultaneously – Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith & Fulham – Sir Derek has played a leading role in the improvement and efficiency of public services at local, regional and national levels over the last 30 years.

With best wishes