

POLICY BRIEF

Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny

28 July 2021



The information within this Brief is correct at the time of approval for publication and contains relevant recent announcements made by Government and its departments and regulators.

HEADLINES

- [Prime Minister confirms move to Step 4](#) - Step 4 of the Roadmap will proceed as planned on Monday 19 July, the Prime Minister has confirmed. [COVID-19 Response: Summer 2021](#)
- [More than 80 million vaccines administered across the UK](#) - this includes over half (54%) of young people aged 18 to 24 in England who have received a first dose - just three weeks after the programme was opened to this age group.

GOVERNMENT POLICY, LEGISLATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS

Department of Health and Social Care (06/07/2021) [Health and Care Bill introduced to Parliament](#). The Bill builds on the proposals for legislative change set out by NHS England in its Long Term Plan and follows on from the White Paper '[Working together to improve health and social care for all](#)' published in February 2021. A briefing summarising the main proposals was circulated in March 2021.

The Bill will ensure each part of England has an Integrated Care Board and an Integrated Care Partnership responsible for bringing together local NHS and local government, such as social care, mental health services and public health advice, to deliver joined up care for its local population.

Department of Health and Social Care (07/07/2021) [New pilot to help people exercise more and eat better](#). The pilot will explore the best ways to incentivise adults to make healthier choices as part of the healthy weight strategy. The successful supplier will partner with a range of organisations who can provide incentives which may include vouchers, merchandise, discounts, and gift cards to reward people for making healthy choices. The six-month pilot is expected to launch in January 2022, and the government has announced an open tender for the Health Incentives programme.

Department of Health and Social Care, Home Office, Public Health England (08/07/2021) [New cross-government unit to tackle drug misuse following major independent review](#). A new drugs unit will be set up to help end illegal drug-related illness and deaths. The Joint Combating Drugs Unit will bring together multiple government departments – including the Department of Health and Social Care, Home Office, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Education and Ministry of Justice – to help tackle drugs misuse across society. There are now an estimated 300,000 opiate or crack users in England, and around one million people using cocaine per year. Drug misuse poisoning deaths are at a record high, having increased by nearly 80% since 2012.

Department of Health and Social Care (07/07/2021) [Government pledges £2.45 million to improve childbirth care](#). Maternity safety minister Nadine Dorries has announced £2.45 million funding which will benefit NHS maternity staff and improve the safety of the women and babies they care for. This funding will be used to survey maternity staff and parents and test out best practices for monitoring and responding to a baby's wellbeing during labour. It will also focus on managing complications with a baby's positioning during caesarean section to reduce brain injuries.

Department of Health and Social Care (01/07/2021) [New services launched to help people achieve a healthier weight and improve wellbeing](#). Thousands of adults and children will benefit from new services launched across England to help them achieve a healthy weight and boost their wellbeing, as part of the government's continued drive to tackle obesity. Launching today, the NHS Digital Weight Management Programme – backed by £12 million of government funding – will offer free online support via GP and primary care teams referrals for adults living with obesity, who also have a diagnosis of either diabetes, high blood pressure or both, to help manage their weight and improve their health. Alongside this, the government is providing £30 million of new funding to councils across England to roll out expanded management services for adults living with obesity.

Department of Health and Social Care (26/06/2021) [The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP appointed Secretary of State for Health and Social Care](#). The Queen has been pleased to approve the appointment of the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP as Secretary of State for Health and Social Care following the resignation of the Rt Hon Matt Hancock MP.

Department of Health and Social Care (27/06/2021) [Adult social care given over £250 million extra to continue coronavirus \(COVID-19\) protections](#). People in care homes or those being cared for at home will benefit from an extra £250 million to continue to protect them from COVID-19 transmission. Made up of £142.5 million Infection Control Funding and £108.8 million for testing, the fund will help protect people in adult social care by continuing to meet the cost of rigorous infection prevention and control measures, as restrictions in wider society are eased, and supporting rapid, regular testing of staff to prevent COVID-19 transmission.

Department of Health and Social Care (24/06/2021) [New advertising rules to help tackle childhood obesity](#). The health of children across the UK will be improved as new restrictions will mean they are less exposed to advertising of unhealthy foods, the government has announced. Following a public consultation, regulations will come into force at the end of next year to introduce a 9pm watershed for advertisements of foods high in fat, salt and sugar (HFSS). The full government response to the consultation can be found [here](#).

Department of Health and Social Care (24/06/2021) [New research shows 2 million people may have had long COVID](#). Over 2 million people in England are thought to have had one or more COVID-19 symptoms lasting at least 12 weeks according to one of the largest studies of the virus funded by the government.

Department of Health and Social Care (20/06/2021) [New data strategy launched to improve patient care and save lives](#). A new [draft data strategy](#) sets out ambitious plans to harness the potential of data in health and care, while maintaining the highest standards of privacy and ethics. The proposed strategy will ensure people are able to view their medical records, and empower them to keep a track of their health information. Looking to the future, the draft data strategy seeks to learn the lessons of the pandemic so the health and social care sectors can use data to design and deliver better services for the public and improve care when we are not in a pandemic situation.

Department of Health and Social Care (16/06/2021) [Everyone working in care homes to be fully vaccinated under new law to protect residents](#). People working in CQC-registered care homes will need to be fully COVID-19 vaccinated with both doses. The new legislation means that from October (subject to Parliamentary approval and a subsequent 16-week grace period) anyone working in a CQC-registered care home in England for residents requiring nursing or personal care must have 2 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine unless they have a medical exemption. A further consultation will be launched on whether to extend to other health and social care settings.

RECENT CONSULTATIONS AND SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRIES

Date of publication	Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee	 GOV
01 July 2021	Department of Health and Social Care: Aligning the upper age for NHS prescription charge exemptions with the State Pension age - this consultation is seeking views on changing the upper age of age exemptions on prescription charges.	Closes 02 September 2021.