General – In the News

Andy Burnham is the new Secretary of State for Health
A number of organisations have welcomed the appointment of Andy Burnham as the new Secretary of State for Health, following the new changes that led to Alan Johnson’s move to Home Secretary.

£10m to encourage new health innovation and education clusters (HIECS)
The Department of Health is inviting applications for partnerships between health, social care, education and business sectors to become Health Innovation and Education Clusters (HIECs), which will deliver high quality care to patients, it announced today. Breakthrough to real change in local healthcare: a guide for applications to create Health Innovation and Education Clusters (HIECs)

More universities to benefit as HEFCE funds £60m of new projects
A further £60 million of capital funding has been approved by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) with some projects able to start as soon as this month

Skills for Health Support initiative for World Class Commissioning (WCC)
Skills for Health has launched a new support initiative that provides access to practical and effective workforce development for both commissioning bodies and service providers. The support is intended to assist with; implementing the new approach, identifying opportunities and overcoming initial challenges – whether they be establishing new management systems or driving the improvements necessary within their organisations.

Skills for Health will be consulting with employers from commissioning bodies and service providers about this initiative. It will be asking what action employers are taking, the types of short and long term challenges they face and what support is needed. If you would like to contribute to this process please contact Marc Lyall.

Tackling major health challenges in England – The King’s Fund reveals new approach to supporting the NHS
The independent Health Charity was recently granted by the Queen of a new Royal Charter. It is now implementing a new approach to supporting the NHS in line with the current climate of changes. The Chief
Executive Niall Dickson said: ‘Over the next few years the NHS is facing the prospect of much tighter budgets while attempting to deliver much better services. This will require strong leadership, creativity and greater use of evidence to drive change. is creating a health care improvement arm to put its expertise in research, policy analysis and supporting leaders into practice in key areas. These include:

- Improving the safety of maternity services
- Ensuring quality while reducing spend –
- End-of-life care
- The patient experience

The King’s Fund is also revamping its role in supporting those who work in health and social care and strengthened its activities in policy analysis, research and leadership development and will take forward a number of major projects, including:

- Inquiry into the quality of general practice in England
- An analysis of variations in health care
- Improving care for older people and those with long-term conditions
- Developing leaders

Putting the Patient in Control
Following a call for expressions of interest for sites across England to take part in the first trials of personal health budgets, 68 projects, involving a total of 75 PCTs, have been awarded provisional pilot status. Lord Darzi first announced personal health budgets in his report High Quality Care for All last year. Under the proposals, patients will have greater involvement in how money is spent on their healthcare needs, giving them more control over what services they use and who provides them so they will be delivered in a way that best suits them.

CQC seeks feedback on guidance for registration of all health and adult social care services
The Care Quality Commission (CQC) launched a consultation on guidance outlining what health and adult social care services will need to do to meet new legally enforceable registration standards.

The NHS Constitution: all you need to know about how the NHS Constitution affects you as a provider or commissioner of NHS care
Produced for NHS staff this leaflet provides the background information about the NHS constitution. The aim of the constitution is to reflect what matters to staff, patients and the public.

New indicators will help drive quality improvement in the NHS
A list of more than 200 indicators of high quality care in the NHS is being published for the first time to help clinicians drive up the quality of care they deliver to patients, the Department of Health and The NHS Information Centre announced today.

Step change in NHS commercial expertise
Commercial and procurement skills across the NHS will receive a major boost to help deliver high quality, personalised care for patients, following the publication of a new Commercial Operating Model by the Department of Health today.

Work begins to eliminate mixed sex accommodation in NHS
Building work to continue the progress made and finally eliminate mixed-sex accommodation in hospitals across England has started with over 700 projects planned across 200 organisations, Health Secretary Alan Johnson announced today.

HEFCE Workforce Development Programme
HEFCE are developing a new relationship between higher education (HE) and employers through our workforce development programme. The programme turns on two related goals - the design and delivery of HE courses in partnership with employers, and to increase the number of learners in the workplace supported by their employers. The programme will run from 2008-2011. Completed planning templates should be e-mailed to HEFCE by Friday 3 July 2009.

Registered Professionals - Education and Training
**Review of the effect of European working time directive on junior doctor training**

Junior doctors trainers have raised concerns that the introduction of the 48 hour working week may have a detrimental effect on the training that they receive while at work. As a result of the work undertaken by Medical Education England (MEE), the independent advisory board on medical training, that commissioned the Post-graduate Medical Education and Training Board (PMETB), the independent regulator of standards of training, to work with stakeholders, the government has written to the European Commission for a limited derogation from the working time directive (EWTD) for an extra four hours to 52 hours that could be applied to doctors in training delivering 24 hours immediate care in hospital services. The letter sets out the detailed process to identify the specific services and rotas where a case for derogation can be made.

**Contract Awarded to Develop Patient Reported Outcome Measures**

A new contract that will help improve the use of Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs), which support the NHS to collect patient feedback on the success of their operations, was today awarded to the Royal College of Surgeons and London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

**RCN Council Elections: Call for Nominations**

This is for 15 members of council, including one from the South East region.

**GMC Affiliates pilots: mid-term report of the independent evaluation from KPMG**

This evaluation was aimed at closing the regulatory gap between local workplace management of doctors and national professional regulation. The purpose of this evaluation is to produce feedback and provide an assessment of the feasibility, potential benefits, costs and wider impacts of the introduction of GMC Affiliates at a national level. This report marks the mid term point in the evaluation of the pilots.

**POMETB’s merger with the GMC: DH Consultation Launched**

The Department of Health (England) have now opened a consultation on draft legislation under Section 60 of the Health Act 1999. **POMETB Partners: new website section launched**

**National Survey of Trainers: closing date extended to 15 June 2009 - click here to complete**

To ensure that every trainer has the chance to submit a survey return, PMETB has extended the closing date until the 15th June.

**Workplace Based Assessment - A Guide for Implementation**

This offers new guidance for doctors to enhance, support and improve their performance

**Review of Tomorrow's Doctors**

The GMC is consulting on a revised edition of Tomorrow's Doctors. **Find out more about the review.**

**Consultation on Student Fitness to Practise**

The GMC and the Medical Schools Council (MSC) consulted on options to promote consistency in student fitness to practise arrangements inside medical schools. As a result of the consultation, new guidance: *Medical students: professional behaviour and fitness to practise* was published in March 2009.

**The Gateways Disability Project**

The General Medical Council has joined with 11 medical schools to develop guidance on encouraging people with disabilities into medicine in a partnership called the **Gateways Disability Project.**

**Non Registered Professionals - Education and Training**

**Assistant Practitioner Survey – Skills for Health Consultation**

Since the role Assistant Practitioner was introduced there have been concerns raised about the ambiguity of the role in relation to their development and the responsibilities they have been given. As a result Skills for Health set
up a Task and Finish group of stakeholders to develop core standards for the role. Research confirmed there was a variation in the responsibilities, training and ongoing progression of Assistant Practitioners. Based on the report Skills for Health have created standards for the Assistant Practitioners that we would like you to comment on so we can determine a common consensus on the core standards which can then be integrated into local developments and the Assistant Practitioner can be identified as a National Transferable Role. So we can monitor your responses we have created an online consultation which has been designed to take no longer than 20 minutes to complete. The online consultation will remain open until the 31st July 2009, your feedback is invaluable. Core Standards for Assistant Practitioners in England Skills for Health supports the national ‘Now is the time to invest in skills’ campaign.

More opportunities as Government funds firms to expand Apprenticeships
Following the end of the consultation on the specifications of apprenticeship standards for England (SASE) by the DIUS, businesses across the country are to share £11 million to create nearly 3000 new places, with about 60% of funding aimed at young people alone. In April the National Apprenticeship Service was launched to deliver and fund apprenticeship places across England and its main aim will be to make it as easy as possible for employers to take on apprentices, and provide support and help to both the employer and learner.

Government invites bids for a share of £20 million to fund adult learning
Organisations can bid for a share of £20 million in Government cash from today to open up and promote informal learning for adults. The deadline for bids is July 12 this year but an “early bird” funding pot of £1 million is available for ideas submitted by June 12.

Sector Skills Councils relicensing - first decisions announced

Four Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) have been relicensed, Skills Secretary John Denham announced today, on behalf of the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations.

Aimhigher Associates scheme
Guidance and planning for the national phase, 2009-2011. This guidance provides information about the national phase of the Aimhigher Associates scheme, 2009-11, and invites Aimhigher partnerships to submit plans against which allocated funds may be drawn down. [MS Word 480K] [Adobe PDF 127K]

Aiming High for Young People

This document aims to give young people useful information around the commitments made within the Aiming High strategy, including progress made in investing in positive activities and how they can get involved.

Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill

This Bill from the DCFS aims to take forward significant reforms to post-16 education and training to improve the delivery to young people and adults.

RCN Urges a call for young people to go into Nursing as a career
This is to avoid a recruitment crises.
Primary Care

**New primary care approach boosts referrals to NHS stop smoking services by 49%** The Department of Health is rolling out a new systems-based approach to improve stop smoking interventions in primary care. This new approach has increased referrals to local NHS Stop Smoking services by up to 49% in pilot areas.

**New RCGP tool to aid GP research**

A unique assessment tool designed to make it easier, simpler and quicker for GP practices to carry out research is being launched by the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP). The RCGP has developed Research Ready to encourage more GPs and practices to carry out studies. The scheme is a web-based programme which helps GP practices assess their ability to carry out quality research including making sure the practice is aware of its responsibilities when conducting studies.

**NAPC introduces the eManager Complaints Handling System**

An expert system for GPs allowing effortless compliance with the new NHS Complaints Regulations 2009. NAPC is pleased to announce its partnership with X-Genics Limited, publishers of eManager, an expert system that promises to change the way medics comply with best practice and regulations. This exciting new tool provides an instant solution to the considerable confusion in the market about how best to meet legal requirements and standardise practice throughout the PCTs.

**Vital support for GPs to help patients to work** The RCGP has been awarded a £1million contract by the Department for Work and Pensions to provide vital support to doctors managing patients with work and health issues to help those patients remain in or return to work.

**GP training practices £100m capital programme**

The Department of Health has been allocated £100m for 2009/10 to advance the upgrading of up to 600 GP surgeries to training practices, creating opportunities for small firms and targeting funding on those areas that have historically had a lower provision of doctors. This was announced in the Chancellor’s Autumn statement (Page 113) and the Operating Framework (page 34, Para 10)

Public Health

**NHS staff receive £1.5 million to help innovation in community services**

NHS staff have received awards totalling £1.5m to pursue projects that will work toward developing services in the community such as bi-lingual stroke rehabilitation programmes and diet and nutrition training.

**Fair weather friends called for during heatwaves**

Practical action to prepare for a potential heatwave is the central theme of the 2009 Heatwave Plan published by the Department of Health. The plan urges everyone to be aware of the health risks faced by elderly friends and relatives during a heatwave.

**Tackling health inequalities: 10 years on**

Local health agencies and schools must improve the management of childhood asthma to help children lead full and healthy lives, Alan Johnson, Secretary of State for Health urged.

**New salt reduction targets by the Food Standards Agency**
The Food Standards Agency has published revised salt reduction targets for 2012. These voluntary targets are more challenging than previously, aiming to reduce people’s average salt intake to 6g a day. For further information on the new salt reduction targets, please go to the FSA website.

**Long-term plans for growth in the South East unveiled**

The South East Plan sets out a framework for sustainable growth that will support long-term economic performance in the region by encouraging the provision of new job opportunities and meeting the region's housing needs. The Plan deals with the key issues of tackling climate change, including flood risks, and protecting the region’s natural and historic environment. It also sets out the region's transport strategy and an overall framework for implementation.

**Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of Looked After Children - revised statutory guidance**

This guidance is a revised version of the existing guidance, ‘Promoting the Health of Looked After Children’, which was published by the Department of Health in 2002. The revised guidance will be statutory on PCTs and on Strategic Health Authorities as well as local authorities.

**School Nurses feeling the strain of public health demands**

An RCN survey of over a thousand school nurses shows the average state school nurse has to look after more than 2,500 school children, leaving two thirds feeling overstretched and unsupported. The survey also indicates that school nurses are taking on an increasing number of responsibilities with nearly three quarters now spending a significant amount of their time dealing with child protection issues.

**Allied Health**

**Modernising Scientific Careers: A statement setting out the direction of travel following the closure of consultation on 6 March 2009.**

Following the consultation last autumn, the government agrees there was recognition of the need to modernise education and training for the scientific workforce. Work continues to develop the education and training curricula and to further refine the training programmes and other aspects related to implementation. Over the summer, further engagement events will be held to inform the model as it emerges. Invitations will be sent out to senior professionals and wider NHS stakeholders. There will be a separate consultation on proposals for a new regulatory framework.

**International Reports and News on Education and Training Policy for Health**

**A step ahead for research: Commission welcomes the Council’s agreement of a legal framework for European research infrastructures**

The European Commission has welcomed the agreement reached today, by the Council, on its proposal for a regulation for a community legal framework for European Research Infrastructures consortium (ERIC). The regulation will make it easier to set up European Research Infrastructures, such as cutting edge installations to test technologies for carbon dioxide capture and storage, data banks in genomics or state of the art large super computers.

**Research**

**NHS Healthcare Science Research projects Awarded over £1 million**

Ten healthcare scientists from across England have been awarded research fellowships worth a total of over £1 million for projects that will lead to improvements in patient care, announced Professor Sue Hill, Chief Scientific Officer (CSO).

**Ambulance services are rated highly in their response to non-urgent calls, survey shows** Ambulance services in England have been given a strong endorsement for the way they deal with people who have non-urgent medical problems.
NICE and MRC to collaborate on £2 million methodology research programme

The need for methodological research to underpin decision-making by NICE was highlighted in a House of Commons Health Select Committee Report in 2008. Since then NICE has been working with the Medical Research Council (MRC) to identify its methodological research priorities. On 28 May the MRC and NICE announced a £2million call for proposals in response to the needs identified.

Research Excellence Framework

HEFCE is working to develop new arrangements for the assessment and funding of research. The new arrangements - the Research Excellence Framework (REF) - will be introduced after the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). The REF will consist of a single unified framework for the funding and assessment of research across all subjects. It will make greater use of quantitative indicators in the assessment of research quality than the RAE, while taking account of key differences between the different disciplines. The economic and social impact of research, as well as impact upon public policy, will also contribute to the overall assessment of quality.

Other Reports

- Cancer waiting times statistics - 2008/09 Quarter 4
- NHS referral to treatment (RTT) times data - March 2009
- Statistical Press Notice: Access to Gum Services
- Abortion statistics, England & Wales; 2008
- Government responds to Archer Inquiry
- Heatwave plan updated with advice for those with respiratory problems
- NHS celebrates success and progress in A&E
- Agreements secured for pre-pandemic vaccine for the UK
- Statistical press notice: A&E statistics - Quarterly update
- Diagnostics waiting times & activity data: month ending March 2009
- Statistical press notice - Direct access audiology referral to treatment (RTT) times data February 2009
- Statistical Press notice: GP Extended Opening Hours - monthly update
- Statistical Press notice: Dental Commissioning - quarterly update
- New Chief Executives appointed at Strategic Health Authorities
- National Patient Choice Survey latest results
- UK adopts new growth charts based on breast-fed babies
- Government pledges £1.6m for Macmillan's National Cancer Survivorship Initiative
- National review of age discrimination in health and social care: call for evidence
- Understanding what matters: A guide to using patient feedback to transform care
- National review on age discrimination
- Common Assessment Framework for Adults Demonstrator Site Programme; overview of Phase 1 sites
- Pandemic flu: managing demand and capacity in health care organisations (surge) Consultation report on the regulations to implement the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008
- Care Quality Commission publishes report on the NHS care of Baby Peter
- NICE interventional procedures programme publishes landmark 300th guideline
- NICE short clinical guideline increases treatment options for patients with type 2 diabetes
- NICE guideline to improve the recognition and assessment of coeliac disease
- New NICE guidelines to help millions of people with low back pain
- Report shows improvement in uptake of NICE-approved cancer drugs
- NHS Evidence service will benefit health and social care professionals
- Sustainable food: a guide for hospitals

Live Consultations

Closing June

- Colorectal cancer (first line) - cetuximab: final appraisal determination, 1 June - 19 June 2009
- Resources and environmental changes to prevent skin cancer: draft scope consultation, 28 May - 25 June 2009
- Preventing children’s unintentional injuries outside the home: draft scope consultation, 28 May - 25 June 2009
- The Office of the Health Professions Adjudicator Regulations 2009: a paper for consultation, 19 June 2009
Closing July

- Consultation on ordinary residence guidance, Directions and cross-border arrangements, 17 July 2009
- Environmental design principles for adult medium secure units, 10 July 2009
- The regulation of private hearing aid dispensers by the Health Professions Council, 7 July 2009
- Impartial Careers Education - Statutory Guidance The Education and Skills Act 2008 Closing Date: Thursday 30 July 2009
- Proposed Harmonised Data Standards and Definitions for the Children's and Young People's and Local Government Workforce Closing Date: Monday 20 July 2009
- Assessments Relating to Learning Difficulties - Guidance to Local Authorities, Closing Date: Thursday 16 July 2009

Closing August

- A Department of Health consultation paper: draft guidance on provisions to deal with nuisance or disturbance behaviour on NHS premises in England Closing date: 4 August 2009
- Promoting the Health and Wellbeing of Looked After Children - revised statutory guidance Monday 3 August 2009

Closing September

- A better future: a consultation on a future strategy for adults with autistic spectrum conditions Closing date: 15 September 2009

Awards

- NHS Leadership Awards 2009
- Clinical Senior Lectureship Awards The awards for round three have been announced.
- Military and civilian health partnership awards 2009
- Enter the Nursing Times awards

Events, Conferences and Courses

June

- 5th Conference of the International Society for Equity in Health, 9th-11th June, Crete
- RCN Joint Educational Forums' Second International Conference, 11th – 13th June, Scotland
- RCN Career development workshops - new dates released
- NHS Confederation Conference and Exhibition 2009, 10 to 12 June 2009
- Consultation events on new registration standards 17 June 2009
- PCT Commissioners' Fertility Conference 18th June, London.
- GP Employment Law Courses 2009
- Get Ahead: The Essential GP Trainee Skills Day, 10 July 2009
- NHS Innovation Expo - 18-19 June Excel, London Health Minister invites delegates to visit tomorrow's world: NHS Staff and health innovators invited to see the future at health innovation expo
- 'Developing a Career in Academic Medicine' Workshop, 25 June 2009

July

- Innovation and Health Technology Assessment: Improving Health System Quality, 26th-31st July, Italy
- Sustaining innovations and new technologies for managing long-term conditions, 09 July 2009, Time: 9.30am-4.15pm, Venue: Microsoft London (Cardinal Place)
November

- **RCGP Annual National Primary Care Conference 2009** 5th - 7th November, Glasgow