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| **February 2024 – General Articles** |
| Age UK - Wikipedia | **Health and care of people over 50**A new report from Age UK ‘We Have to Take it One Day at a Time’ contains the results of polling and survey work on a range of topics relating to the health and care of people over 50, including:* caring for others
* access to health and social care
* social contact
* cost of living
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| Read the report here: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/health--wellbeing/we-have-to-take-it-one-day-at-a-time/age-uk_we-have-to-take-it-one-day-at-a-time.pdf>  |
| PSC logo | **PSC launches redress options report**The Patient Safety Commissioner has published the Hughes Report on options for redress for those harmed by pelvic mesh and valproate. The report finds that thousands of women, children, and families have been harmed by these two medical interventions and that there is a compelling case for the government to award them redress. The report recommends the government creates a two-stage financial redress scheme – an interim scheme to enable the identification of all those harmed ensuring patients receive financial redress quickly – and a main scheme. |
| The Commissioner highlights an amount of £25,000 to be paid via the interim scheme, reflecting the median amount patients told the Commissioner would be appropriate. The PSC recommends that that the interim scheme makes its awards in 2025. The interim scheme would be followed by a main scheme award tailored to the individual harm and needs of each patient.In addition, the report sets out the importance of providing those harmed with non-financial redress. This includes creating dedicated link works to support patients navigate complex public services; launching a housing support grant to support home adaptations; and improving the Department for Work and Pensions’ processes in terms of access to social security benefits. The report outlines the need for a new redress agency, independent of government that patients can trust to implement the proposed redress scheme.The report is based on in-depth interviews with harmed patients, as well as a survey of over 500 people who had either experienced negative side effects from pelvic mesh or were now raising valproate harmed children requiring additional support. The report recommendations have been sent to the government and the PSC awaits a response.<https://www.patientsafetycommissioner.org.uk/our-reports/the-hughes-report/>  |
|  | **Local NHS plans show more focus needed to put children at the heart of new health system**Inconsistency in how the needs of babies, children and young people are addressed in local health plans highlights the need for better national guidance and support. |
| * Less than half of local strategies mention integration with other key services such as education and social care.
* 61% of strategies do not consider the capacity of the children’s workforce. Almost a third (27%) of Joint Forward Plans do not set specific targets for addressing inequalities to improve health outcomes

Read more here: - <https://www.ncb.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/news-opinion/local-nhs-plans-show-more-focus-needed-put-children-heart-new>  |
| Member survey to inform our new strategy | NHS ConfederationKey points | **Inclusive digital healthcare: what you need to know**Summary and analysis of recent policy on inclusive digital healthcare. |
| * NHS England’s recent framework outlines the importance of digital inclusion throughout the NHS and provides guidance on effective and inclusive health and social care services to help address disparities and discrimination faced by digitally excluded groups.
* It emphasises the need for strong leadership commitment, geared towards addressing digital inequalities and creating parallel accessible services online and in-person.
* Collaboration with cross-sector partners within health and social care is also highlighted as important, especially with local and national initiatives that have unmatched access to excluded groups.
* The framework suggests there will be long-term financial savings from its implementation.
* While the framework provides clear, actionable starting points for staff across the NHS and beyond, there are implementation challenges around workforce, resources and funding that the framework does not address.

<https://www.nhsconfed.org/publications/inclusive-digital-healthcare-what-you-need-know?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=14333813_NEWSL_DHD%202024-02-14&utm_content=Reports2&dm_i=21A8,8J81H,2NYYES,ZB6XL,1>  |
|  | **The Centre for Social Justice: Creating a Britain that works and cares**In 2021–22 alone, nearly 400,000 carers had to leave their jobs to care for older or disabled family members. Despite this, there is a strong desire among carers to engage in paid employment, with a majority indicating that they would work if adequate support were provided. Supporting family carers in their employment could potentially save the UK economy £6 billion annually.  |
| This report proposes several key policies to facilitate carers’ participation in the labour market, including: delivering 10 hours of free home care to those they are looking after; providing £2,000 for home adaptations; raising the Carer’s Allowance earnings threshold; and mandating five days of paid leave for carers in the workplace. Read the report: <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/CSJ-Creating_a_Britain_that_Works_and_Cares.pdf?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=14358403_NEWSL_HMP_Library%202024-02-27&dm_i=21A8,8JR0J,2NYYES,ZE855,1>  |
|  | **Counting the cost of NHS strikes**NHS strikes have become such a familiar feature of our lives over the past two years that there is a risk we can become inured to their impact. Siva Anandaciva, Chief Analyst at The King's Fund, delves into the breadth and depth of the impact NHS strikes can have – on patients, staff, public perceptions, and NHS finances. Read the blog |
| <https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/blogs/counting-cost-nhs-strikes?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=14358403_NEWSL_HMP_Library%202024-02-27&dm_i=21A8,8JR0J,2NYYES,ZDR6W,1>  |

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| **Infection Prevention guidance and updates**  |
| 1 February | Official Statistics new publication**Winter Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Study, England and Scotland: 1 February 2024**Percentage of people testing positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) in private residential households in England and Scotland, including regional, age and sex breakdowns and corresponding confidence intervals. In addition, symptoms and health outcomes associated with COVID-19 and other respiratory infections. Based on responses from the Winter Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Study to deliver real-time information to help assess the effects of COVID-19 on the lives of individuals and the community, and help understand the potential winter pressures on our health services. The study has been launched jointly by the ONS and the UK Health Security Agency, with data collected via online questionnaire completion and self-reported Lateral Flow Device (LFD) results from previous participants of the COVID-19 Infection Survey. The data tables are intended to be published fortnightly, but will become weekly if necessary, based on the scale and pattern of infections. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/winter-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-study-england-and-scotland-1-february-2024?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=2bec9447-740f-42c7-b5b7-4e4184060867&utm_content=daily>  |

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| **Infection Prevention guidance and updates**  |
| 1 February | Official Statistics new publication**Adult social care in England, monthly statistics: February 2024**Official statistics on a range of topics including infection control measures and COVID-19 vaccinations in adult social care settings. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/adult-social-care-in-england-monthly-statistics-february-2024?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=203a0b7b-ad1d-481e-a5aa-a9918f0190b6&utm_content=daily>  |
| 1 February | Department of Health and Social Care Guidance **PPE guide for non-aerosol generating procedures** Guidance on the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) for non-aerosol generating procedures (APGs) in adult social care settings. Updated guidance so it follows to acute respiratory infections guidance: reduced the distance from 2m to 1m when removing PPE after caring for a client and to risk assess the use of gloves. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ppe-guide-for-non-aerosol-generating-procedures?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=72155601-02d2-4efd-b6f6-0dc238cece16&utm_content=daily#full-publication-update-history>  |
| 7 February | Department of Health & Social Care Independent new report **JCVI statement on COVID-19 vaccination in spring 2024 and considerations on future COVID-19 vaccination, 4 December 2023** Statement setting out advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) on the COVID-19 vaccination programme for spring 2024 and beyond. | [JCVI statement on COVID-19 vaccination in spring 2024 and considerations on future COVID-19 vaccination, 4 December 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-spring-2024-and-future-vaccination-programmes-jcvi-advice-4-december-2023/jcvi-statement-on-covid-19-vaccination-in-spring-2024-and-considerations-on-future-covid-19-vaccination-4-december-2023) |
| 8 February | UK Health Security Agency News story**Latest measles statistics published**Regular measles statistics updates issued by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA).The latest number of laboratory confirmed measles cases in England have been published in an updated [epidemiological overview](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-epidemiology-2023) published by UKHSA.Since the last update a week ago, a further 118 laboratory confirmed measles cases have been confirmed in England, bringing the total number of cases confirmed since 1 October 2023 to 465. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/latest-measles-statistics-published?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=f6751f5a-cca0-4e57-b448-fdac46fdaf85&utm_content=daily>  |

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| **Infection Prevention guidance and updates**  |
| 15 February | Office for National Statistics Official Statistics new publication**Winter Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Study, England and Scotland: 15 February 2024**Page summary:Percentage of people testing positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) in private residential households in England and Scotland, including regional, age and sex breakdowns and corresponding confidence intervals. In addition, symptoms and health outcomes associated with COVID-19 and other respiratory infections. Based on responses from the Winter Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Study to deliver real-time information to help assess the effects of COVID-19 on the lives of individuals and the community, and help understand the potential winter pressures on our health services. The study has been launched jointly by the ONS and the UK Health Security Agency, with data collected via online questionnaire completion and self-reported Lateral Flow Device (LFD) results from previous participants of the COVID-19 Infection Survey. The data tables are intended to be published fortnightly, but will become weekly if necessary, based on the scale and pattern of infections. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/winter-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-study-england-and-scotland-15-february-2024?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=ec3894b1-4a46-493b-9f5c-a89ae98e66e3&utm_content=daily>  |
| 15 February | UK Health Security Agency Press release**TB cases rise in England**TB cases are now above the pre-COVID-19-pandemic numbers | <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tb-cases-rise-in-england?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=59834f25-8b7b-40c7-9d90-5c02405e7755&utm_content=daily>  |
| 22 February | UK Health Security Agency News story**Latest measles statistics published**Regular measles statistics updates issued by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). | <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/latest-measles-statistics-published?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=7d5b28a2-0d2b-41eb-a1f9-fd2d8b6792f6&utm_content=daily>  |
| 29 February | Office for National Statistics Official Statistics new publications**Winter Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Study, England and Scotland: 29 February 2024** | <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/winter-coronavirus-covid-19-infection-study-england-and-scotland-29-february-2024?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=cb15032c-e240-4e34-be0c-618b47fd9f2c&utm_content=daily>  |
| 29 February | UK Health Security Agency Press release**Marketing campaign launches to drive up childhood vaccinations**UKHSA Chief Executive Professor Dame Jenny Harries visits Manchester and Liverpool to launch campaign as measles cases continue to rise. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/marketing-campaign-launches-to-drive-up-childhood-vaccinations?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=d2f96bfb-34e2-4efa-8501-88c734829a44&utm_content=daily>  |
| **Infection Prevention guidance and updates**  |
| 29 February | UK Health Security Agency Official Statistics**National flu and COVID-19 surveillance reports: 2023 to 2024 season**National influenza and COVID-19 report, monitoring COVID-19 activity, seasonal flu and other seasonal respiratory illnesses. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-flu-and-covid-19-surveillance-reports-2023-to-2024-season?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=d40f10ca-8b26-4657-a81a-2a2586c4a4ea&utm_content=daily>  |

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| **Other Topics - updates** |

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| 5 February | Disability Unit Press Release **New Disability Action Plan to make UK most accessible place in the world**The Government has launched its new Disability Action Plan – 32 steps it is taking to make the UK the most accessible place in the world for disabled people to live, work and thrive. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-disability-action-plan-to-make-uk-most-accessible-place-in-the-world>  |
| 7 February | Department for Work & Pensions Government Guidance**Personal Independence Payment (PIP) handbook**Detailed guidance about PIP – the benefit for people with a health condition or disability. Information has been added about light touch award reviews. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-independence-payment-fact-sheets?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=d2224ffc-e6bb-494a-a419-bb60771e375b&utm_content=daily> |
| 7 February | Department of Health and Social Care Policy new paper**Our plan to recover and reform NHS dentistry**A national plan for NHS dentistry services in England. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-recover-and-reform-nhs-dentistry?utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=14333618_NEWSL_HMP_Library%202024-02-09&dm_i=21A8,8J7W2,2NYYES,ZBHJK,1>  |
| 9 February | Department of Health & Social Care new Guidance**Social care charging for local authorities: 2024 to 2025**Information for local authorities on charging for care and support. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-care-charging-for-local-authorities-2024-to-2025?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=a1ebec58-d20b-4256-bc41-7b42dc221a58&utm_content=daily>  |

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| **Other Topics – updates continued…..** |

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| 9 February | UK Visas & Immigration Guidance**Right to work checks: an employer's guide**How to carry out right to work checks, why you need to do them, and which documents you can use.**Summary of changes in this issue of the guidance**This guidance was last updated on 8 February 2024The most significant updates contained in this guidance relate to:* An increase to the maximum civil penalty for non-compliance with the Right to Work Scheme. The civil penalty for employers will be raised to £45,000 per illegal worker for a first breach and £60,000 per illegal worker for repeat breaches.
* Right to work checks involving EEA citizens and their non-EEA family members, including those who are identified without lawful immigration status.
* Annex B: Employment of specific categories of workers, to provide further information for employers offering supplementary employment to individuals who have immigration permission on a sponsored work route.
 | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checks-employers-guide/employers-guide-to-right-to-work-checks-8-february-2024-accessible>  |
| 12 February | Home Office Statutory guidance**Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims**Describes the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims, and the process for determining whether someone is a victim.Updated Annex E, 'reconsideration of a reasonable grounds or conclusive grounds decision | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-how-to-identify-and-support-victims?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=dd11d282-4caa-45e4-a2fc-5376f658a597&utm_content=daily#full-publication-update-history>  |
| 13 February | HM Revenue & Customs Guidance**View your Annual Tax Summary**View your Annual Tax Summary and find out how the government calculates and spends your Income Tax and National Insurance contributions.Guidance has been updated to show that the Annual Tax Summary is not evidence of income you have received. | <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/annual-tax-summary>  |
| 15 February | Department of Health and Social Care Guidance**NHS Choice Framework - what choices are available to you in your NHS care**Sets out patients’ rights to choice in healthcare, where to find information to help choose, and how to complain if choice is not offered. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-choice-framework?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=9debefd5-6ab0-4061-9f2d-36d30426201f&utm_content=daily>  |

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| **Other Topics – updates continued…** |

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| 20 February | Independent Reconfiguration Panel Guidance**Learning from reviews of NHS service change**Six lessons learned identified by the Independent Reconfiguration Panel to improve proposals for changes to NHS services. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/learning-from-reviews-of-nhs-service-change?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=8e321afe-0036-48b9-8366-1d7e26043355&utm_content=daily>  |
| 22 February | Statutory guidance**Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims**Describes the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims, and the process for determining whether someone is a victim. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/modern-slavery-how-to-identify-and-support-victims?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=6c4f2150-10eb-4f8e-b2d6-989ddc41db67&utm_content=daily>  |
| 23 February  | Department for Work and Pensions Guidance**Cost of Living Payments 2023 to 2024**Guidance on getting extra payments to help with the cost of living if you’re entitled to certain benefits or tax credits. | <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/cost-of-living-payment?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=b143c6ce-615f-4926-b20c-c1e840e55653&utm_content=daily>  |
| 23 February | Department for Education Statutory guidance**Working together to safeguard children**Statutory guidance on multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children.Update: 23 February 2024Pg 26, paragraph 48: amended the wording used to describe lead safeguarding partners. Pg 42: corrected the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel email address. Pg 161: updated the glossary definition of 'safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children' to match that on pg 7 to 8. Pg 167: linked to the latest version of 'Good practice guidance on working with parents with a learning disability'. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=b288ebd7-11d1-49e7-85e4-e6ed794cf312&utm_content=daily#full-publication-update-history>  |
| 29 February | HM Revenue & Customs Guidance**Rates and allowances: tax credits, Child Benefit and Guardian's Allowance****Find out the rates, thresholds and allowances for tax credits, Child Benefit and Guardian's Allowance.**2024 to 2025 rates have been confirmed. | <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rates-and-allowances-tax-credits-child-benefit-and-guardians-allowance?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications-topic&utm_source=0434a6b1-6663-4fdd-bdea-7441a9f30751&utm_content=daily#full-publication-update-history>  |