

Public Health Key Documents: March 2026

NIHR

[Interventions to safely and effectively reduce \(taper\) use of opioids in chronic non-cancer pain: a systematic review](#)

Evidence to support any specific opioid tapered reduction intervention is mixed and uncertain. Findings confirm that service design and delivery require careful consideration of individual-level factors and highlight the potential to widen inequalities. Stakeholders consulted on the evidence suggest that valuing relationships, addressing fear and stigma and upskilling in behaviour change techniques are key.

Systematic search: Yes

March 2026

[Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of targeted and population screening for osteoporosis in women: scoping review](#)

Evidence on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of osteoporosis screening is limited, with reviews mainly drawing conclusions from the same few primary studies currently available. The evidence base lacks consideration of equity-related characteristics. High-quality trial evidence is required, particularly for targeted screening.

Systematic search: Limited

March 2026

[BEhavioural Weight Management: COMponents of Effectiveness \(BE:COME\) Synopsis](#)

This research sought to determine which individual components of behavioural weight management programmes are associated with greater attendance, intervention completion and weight loss. Behavioural weight management interventions are effective in weight loss during initial phase, though there is a big variation in weight loss achieved at 12 weeks. Intervention components, including tailoring, flexibility to attend over weekends and weekdays, and multimodal referral pathways along with in-person delivery and personalised dietary advice are associated with weight loss.

Systematic search: No

March 2026

The King's Fund

[Public satisfaction with the NHS and social care in 2025](#)

In 2025, 26% of British adults were satisfied with how the NHS runs – a 6% increase from 2024, and the first increase since 2019. However while overall satisfaction has improved, it remains low. (Results from the British Social Attitudes survey.)

Systematic search: No

March 2026

SIGN

Nil

Public Health Scotland

[Effective road safety interventions for public health: an umbrella review](#)

This umbrella review presents “a conceptual framework of the application of a public health prevention approach to road safety”. It provides an overview of research on the effects of road safety interventions on collisions, injuries, deaths, and wider public health outcomes.

Systematic search: Yes
March 2026

[Impact of the smoke-free public spaces legislation 20 years on: Evidence briefing](#)

This briefing provides an overview of the cumulative impacts of Scotland's smoke-free spaces policy over the past 20 years. It synthesises evidence on harm reduction, the short and long-term effects on health, changes in attitudes, behaviours and norms, and the economic impacts of the policy.

Systematic search: No
March 2026

[Vaccinations in prisons: Findings from a prison healthcare staff questionnaire](#)

Winter vaccine (COVID-19 and influenza) uptake was low in adults under prison care in 2024/25 and 2023/24. This report summarises the findings from a questionnaire of prison healthcare staff covering topics including vaccines offered, eligibility, administration, raising awareness, informed consent and education and training needs. It includes recommendations to improve vaccine uptake..

Systematic search: No
March 2026

[Physical activity in healthcare: A report on knowledge, training and attitudes of Scottish healthcare professionals](#)

This report summarises findings from a national survey of healthcare professionals, exploring knowledge of the UK Chief Medical Officers' physical activity guidelines, attitudes towards physical activity in clinical care, confidence in delivering advice, and perceptions of training. It highlights gaps in awareness and education, alongside strong recognition of the importance of physical activity in prevention and treatment. It includes recommendations to better embed physical activity within healthcare education and practice across Scotland.

Systematic search: No
March 2026

[Early childhood social and emotional development: the potential role of features of the indoor physical home and neighbourhood environments: a scoping review](#)

The review found limited and inconsistent evidence about the role played by specific elements of the home and neighbourhood environment in modifying the relationship between young children's social circumstances and their social, emotional and behavioural development. Poor indoor home conditions, such as overcrowding, damp and exposure to second-hand smoke, may increase the risk of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties during early childhood. Neighbourhood disadvantage experienced in early childhood is associated with an increased risk of emotional and behavioural difficulties. However, the strength of this relationship varies depending on how disadvantage is measured. Availability of or access to green space may support children's wellbeing, especially among younger children and those from disadvantaged or minority backgrounds. However, evidence from the UK does not consistently show a direct link between green space quantity and children's development.

Systematic search: Limited
March 2026

Scottish Government

[Covid-19 Post-Shielding Research: October 2023](#)

This report explores how people formerly on Scotland's Highest Risk List experienced shielding, how they have adapted since its end, and their views on guidance given. It highlights ongoing behaviours,

areas of concern, and what kind of support or information may help this group in the future. (This research was conducted between July and October 2023.)

Systematic search: No
March 2026

[Inclusion Health Action in General Practice \(IHAGP\): evaluation](#)

The Inclusion Health Action in General Practice (IHAGP) programme was introduced in 2023 to provide GP practices in areas of high deprivation with additional investment to carry out practical action to address healthcare inequalities. Among benefits discussed are improved patient experience, enhanced workforce capability, and cultural shifts toward more inclusive care.

Systematic search: No
March 2026

NICE – Guidelines

[NG257 Fertility problems: assessment and treatment](#)

This guideline covers diagnosing and treating health-related fertility problems. It aims to reduce variation in practice and improve the investigation and management of fertility problems.

Systematic search: Yes
March 2026

[NG256 Kidney cancer: diagnosis and management](#)

This guideline covers diagnosing and managing renal cell carcinoma in people aged 18 and over. It aims to improve care by helping healthcare professionals offer people the right treatments and support, taking into account the person's individual preferences.

Systematic search: Yes
March 2026

UKHSA

[Viral load variations in people living with HIV on ART: a rapid systematic review](#)

This review summarised evidence of variations in viral load in people living with HIV who were on stable ART, and factors that may be related to those variations.

Systematic search: Limited
March 2026

[Effectiveness of intervention strategies to increase vaccine uptake: a rapid systematic review](#)

The review identified 20 systematic reviews. Most interventions aiming to increase vaccine uptake or coverage tend to have a positive effect. Evidence suggests that when multicomponent interventions, digital interventions, reminders, financial incentives and interventions delivered by healthcare practitioners (including pharmacists, clinicians, nurses and health educators) are used there is a general increase in vaccine uptake after intervention compared to control (usual care, no intervention, wait list, attention placebo or an alternative format or delivery of intervention). In contrast, evidence on pregnant people or parent-targeted interventions, and educational or motivational approaches shows mixed results, while decision aids show no measurable impact.

Systematic search: Limited
March 2026

Health and Care Research Wales Evidence Centre

Nil

EPPI Centre

Nil

AHRQ (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality – USA)

Nil

Health Foundation

[Why are a growing number of young people who are NEET reporting work-limiting health conditions?](#)

Among young people who are NEET (not in employment, education or training) the share reporting a work-limiting health condition has increased steadily over the past decade, reaching 44% in 2025 (up from 26% in 2015). This reflects a wider trend among 16–24-year-olds. This briefing examines the reasons behind these figures and makes recommendations on possible government actions.

Systematic search: No

March 2026

[Socioeconomic disadvantage and self-reported health](#)

This analysis provides new insight into how working-age people transition out of good health over time. The findings show stark health inequalities between the least and most deprived areas that persist and widen across the life course. The analysis also compares how the role of different socioeconomic factors affect people's risk of no longer reporting good health (including employment status and housing tenure).

Systematic search: No

March 2026

[Attitudes to technology and AI in health care: findings from our 2025 survey](#)

The Foundation's latest survey indicates that sentiment towards technology in health care remains broadly positive, despite a small increase in negative views over the past year. Women, younger people and those most likely to be on low or no income (in socioeconomic groups D and E) tend to be less positive about the use of tech and AI in health care.

Systematic search: No

March 2026

Canadian Agency for drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH)

[Teleoptometry for eye exams](#)

It is unclear whether teleoptometry would be a suitable replacement for a comprehensive eye exam.

Systematic search: Limited

March 2026

[Cryoneurolysis for patients undergoing surgical stabilization of rib fractures](#)

The rapid review found limited evidence that cryoneurolysis may improve clinical outcomes in people undergoing SSRF by reducing postsurgery opioid consumption and resource use without increasing hospital complications and adverse events.

Systematic search: Limited

March 2026

[Cryoneurolysis for patients undergoing total knee arthroplasty](#)

Limited evidence suggests cryoneurolysis may be associated with modest benefits in early postoperative pain, opioid use, and hospital stay without clear increases in serious adverse events.

Systematic search: Limited
March 2026

McGill University Health Centre (Canada)
Nil

Health Information & Quality Authority (Ireland) – Health Technology Assessments
Nil

Campbell Collaboration
Nil

Glasgow Centre for Population Health

[Navigating an addictive and toxic landscape: a rapid review of evidence concerning contemporary influences on problem gambling among young men](#)

Published as part of GCPH's ongoing project [Problem gambling and gambling harms: a public health priority](#), this review found evidence linking gambling harms with trauma, adverse mental health outcomes, substance use, suicidality and intimate partner violence, indicating clustering of harms and the need for holistic, trauma informed responses. The most robust evidence reviewed concerned gambling-like features in video games, particularly "loot boxes" and "skin gambling". Early exposure to these mechanisms primes and normalises gambling behaviours among children and adolescents. The review also highlights extensive exposure of young men, and children, to gambling marketing through social media and online platforms, contributing to early normalisation. Evidence directly linking masculinity influencers, flexing culture and cryptocurrency gambling platforms to problem gambling is extremely limited. Significant evidence gaps remain in estimating prevalence, characterising young men at greatest risk, and understanding the interaction between poverty, disadvantage and contemporary digital gambling ecosystems.

Systematic search: Limited
March 2026

Selected other recent reports

Early Years Screen Time Advisory Group (EYSTAG) [Screen use by children aged under 5](#)

EYSTAG was established by the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). The report examines quantitative and qualitative evidence on the effects of all types of screen use, including computers tablets, mobile phones, and television. It sets out the panel's findings and recommendations to parents and the government.

Endometriosis UK (2026) [The State of Endometriosis Care Report](#)

A survey by Endometriosis UK indicates that diagnosis times for endometriosis in the UK are not improving despite increased awareness of the condition.

Northern Health Science Alliance (2026) [Hard to swallow: the truth about head and neck cancer inequalities](#)

The report "highlights the stark socioeconomic inequalities in head and neck cancer across the UK, with those from the poorest areas disproportionately affected. These inequalities are apparent across the entire head and neck cancer pathway – from disease risk to stage of diagnosis, to access and adherence to treatment, and to quality of life and survival outcomes". Scotland has among the very highest rates of head and neck cancers and deaths therefrom.

Patients Association (2026) [Understanding patient experiences of buying medicines online](#)

The report's findings indicate that the rise in unregulated online medicine purchasing is driven by a combination of issues of access and online influence. While many patients recognise the risks, they often feel left with no alternative. The report recommends improving patient awareness of the risks of unregulated online sources of medicines, providing clear information on how to identify legitimate, safe online pharmacies and addressing issues of access to healthcare.

Royal College of Psychiatrists (2026) [Menopause and mental health](#)

This position statement examines how menopause affects mental health and wellbeing and its implications for clinical practice, services, and policy across the UK. It also highlights inequalities in care - people with severe mental illness, neurodivergence, minority ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQ+ identities, disabilities, or trauma histories often face greater barriers to care and poorer outcomes.

NICE FORWARD PLANNING – Publications due April 2026

Suspected Cancer: recognition and referral (update)

Clinical Guideline

Suspected cancer update

Quality Standard - update (underpinning guideline updated)