

# Public Health England

## Friday message



Duncan Selbie  
Chief Executive Designate

7 December 2012

### Dear everyone

I am very pleased to announce the [first tranche](#) of appointments to Public Health England's 15 Centres. So far the Centre Directors appointed are: Dr Qutub Syed, Cheshire and Merseyside; Dr Martyn Regan, Greater Manchester; Dr Roberta Marshall, North East; Dr Graham Bickler, Surrey, Sussex and Kent; Dr Sue Ibbotson, West Midlands; and Dr Stephen Morton, Yorkshire and the Humber. The remaining Centre Director posts will be going out to open advert at the end of next week and we expect to confirm Regional Director appointments next week too. These, taken together with our national appointments, mean that PHE is bringing together a formidably talented and experienced group of leaders to establish and deliver a world class public health service.

We wish to co-produce, with our partners and staff, how we want our Centres and Regions to work in practice and the style and behaviours that are most likely to succeed. Richard Gleave, Paul Johnstone and Yvonne Doyle will be leading this and we are calling the work "Going Live". Sue Ibbotson and Ann Hoskins are also helping and we expect to have an initial description to inform a wider set of internal and external discussions by the end of January.

The link between unemployment and ill health as well as the negative impact that long-term sickness often has on future health are well known. The evidence suggests that if you are off work for six months your chances of successfully returning are reduced by 50 per cent and at one year by a further 25 per cent. Early intervention when an employee becomes ill is proving very successful in preventing further health problems developing and getting people back to work quickly and this is being clearly demonstrated by a pilot programme operating across the three boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham and the City of Westminster. Their "[Fit for Work](#)" programme, one of seven in the country, takes referrals at no cost from GPs, employers and self referrals, for patients who have been signed off work for more than four weeks. The service works in partnership with the patient, their employer and GP and looks at the barriers to their returning to work, which include common health conditions such as muscular and joint pain, and moderate mental health problems, as well as non-health barriers such as worries about family, money or work itself. The results are remarkable with three quarters of those referred returning to work, on average within six weeks. This pilot is being evaluated nationally by the Department of Work and Pensions and should inform decisions about rolling out this intuitively sensible investment by employers and commissioners.

And finally, as we look forward to the coming seasonal festivities, the voluntary sector is preparing ahead to help us help ourselves be fit and well come the New Year. For example, Alcohol Concern has launched a campaign inviting people to give up alcohol for the month of January. Have a look at their website at [www.dryjanuary.org.uk](http://www.dryjanuary.org.uk).

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Duncan Selbie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.