

Public Health England

Friday message



Duncan Selbie
Chief Executive Designate

16 November 2012

Dear everyone

I was delighted to join 150 senior public health professionals from across the country – consultants and specialists, trainees, directors of public health, commissioning managers, intelligence specialists – at the first PHE healthcare public health conference on Friday. As everyone knows, the NHS has not really focused on population health nor perhaps fully appreciated just how much public health professionals can contribute to improving the overall health of the population and addressing specific inequalities through their influence on the NHS. Healthcare public health is firmly on our agenda and the QIPP Right Care programme is handing over to us a considerable range of their responsibilities, the atlases and the development of population based systems of care. The conference was an invaluable opportunity to share learning and to begin our work in building capability in this most important domain.

We have assets of international standing in our microbiology and epidemiology centres at Colindale and Porton and for some time now there has been a proposition to bring these, together with our colleagues at the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control, onto a single campus at Harlow in Essex. I recently asked Professor George Griffin, Chair of Infectious Diseases at St George's Hospital, to carry out a due diligence review of the process and scientific arguments for this. Professor Griffin has completed his [review](#) and I am satisfied that the scientific premise for the proposed move to Harlow is sound. This is, though, not the last milestone and there is more work to be done in making the business case which will take a further year to complete, after which the Government will carry out a full value for money assessment of the case, and crucially to agree how we can best handle this for the staff most directly affected. In my visits to Colindale and Porton I hope everyone has heard the importance I place on their work and contribution to science and service and that our ambition is to see this fully embedded and extended in PHE.

Across the country, all 152 local authorities taking on the statutory duty to improve health have completed a Local Government Association-led (LGA) self assessment of their readiness. The main message is that implementation is well under way with Councils seizing the opportunity to embed health across everything they do and to become public health organisations. There are a small number of areas where locality specific difficulties remain and, again, this is being led by the LGA with our support. We have in return received a clear message of the urgency local government place on knowing their budget allocations and this is being addressed.

And finally, I am very glad to say that we have appointed [Dr Kevin Fenton](#) as our Director of Health Improvement and Population Healthcare. Dr Fenton will be joining us from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta in early January.

With best wishes

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