



BUSINESS
HEALTHY



News and updates from Business Healthy

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This newsletter is designed to provide a roundup of news, updates and information that may be useful in helping you to keep your workforce healthy and well. It is written in a way to make it easy for you to cut and paste content to share across your internal communications channels. If there is a way we can make this easier, please let us know [here](#).

A copy of this newsletter is also available on the [Business Healthy website](#).

Business Healthy is funded and delivered by the City of London Corporation's Public Health team, supporting the City Corporation's statutory obligations to ensure the health and wellbeing of the more than half a million people who work in the Square Mile each day.

Follow Business Healthy on [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#) to stay up-to-date on news and developments in the world of employee health and wellbeing in the Square Mile.

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Sharing is caring

Share your thoughts or feedback on our newsletter, general musings, or ideas for upcoming events with us - businesshealthy@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Did you find this newsletter useful? If you know of someone who would like to receive it, too, they can subscribe [here](#).

We are not precious about our content, so please feel free to share it far and wide.

Previous editions of our newsletter can be found [here](#).

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Updates for businesses

There is lots of information and misinformation available regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, so please ensure that any advice or guidance you are sharing only comes from a reputable source, such as the GOV.UK website.

This information was accurate at the time of sending the newsletter, but the situation is changing and the most up to date information and guidance can be found on the [GOV.UK website](#).

COVID-19 cases are high: latest on Government COVID-19 guidance

There are few legal measures remaining in place to reduce the transmission of COVID-19, however caution is still urged as transmission of the disease is high at the moment, with [ONS estimating that 1 in 19 people in England had COVID-19](#). As of 15 July in England, COVID-19 infections continued to rise, as did hospital admissions, ICU/ HDU admissions, and deaths (in age groups 45 to 54 years, 65 to 74 years, and 85+ years).

According to [GLA data](#), roughly 281 people per 100,000 population in London had COVID-19 in the week 2 - 8 July.

Government and local guidance remains supporting the benefits of maintaining infection prevention control measures, particularly on a risk-assessment basis (for example depending on the nature of your work activities), and continuing to encourage vaccination. Specific actions may be required for [individuals who are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19](#).

COVID-19 health and safety guidance for City employers

Since the introduction of the “Living with COVID” plan, many public health measures to combat COVID are no longer legally enforced, however the Government continues to advise their use to keep people safe and healthy, particularly while COVID prevalence remains so high. These measures include:

- If you are unwell, displaying any main or wider symptoms of COVID and/ or have tested positive for COVID, stay at home. Advice is also for close contacts of those with confirmed or suspected COVID to isolate wherever possible, and take extra precautions for ten days from their contact with a case.
- Ventilate indoor spaces where people from different households are coming into contact with each other. This means bringing fresh air in (don't assume air conditioning units automatically do this – some recirculate air).
- Wear a face covering, especially in busy spaces.
- Get vaccinated against COVID – two doses and a booster gives you the best coverage possible (and additional dose for those at additional risk – if they are aged 75+ and/ or aged 12+ with underlying clinical conditions). See below for more details.
- Practise good hand and respiratory hygiene – regular handwashing and catching sneezes and coughs in a tissue and binning the tissue.

In addition, legal duties on businesses remain in place, in terms of the health and safety of their workforce and those affected by their business operations, as well as responsibilities regarding employment and equalities.

Local guidance for a range of businesses located in the City and Hackney, including offices, construction sites, retail and close-contact services, and gyms and fitness studios, has been refreshed, and is available on the [City Corporation website](#).

Monkeypox virus (MPV): Information and guidance

There has been an increase in MPV cases in the UK; as of 14 July there were 1,778 laboratory-confirmed cases in England, with a high proportion (75%) among London residents.

The virus is not currently defined as a sexually transmitted infection, but it can be passed on by close and intimate contact that occurs during sex. Anyone can contract MPV, particularly if they have had close contact with an individual with symptoms. Most cases are mild, but severe illness can occur in some people.

If infected, it usually takes between five and 21 days for the first symptoms of MPV to appear. Initial symptoms include:

- high temperature
- headache
- muscle aches
- backache
- swollen glands
- shivering/ chills
- exhaustion

These initial symptoms are usually then followed by the development of a rash (between one and five days after the first symptoms), which starts as raised spots, which turn into small blisters filled with fluid. The blisters eventually form scabs that later fall off.

Anyone with symptoms of MPV is advised to [contact a sexual health clinic](#) or NHS 111, especially if:

- They have been in close contact (including sexual contact) with someone who has or might have MPV (even if they haven't yet been tested) in the past three weeks
- They have travelled to West or Central Africa in the past three weeks
- Had new or multiple sexual partners recently

People with symptoms are also advised to stay at home and avoid close contact with others until they have been seen by a clinician. They must call the sexual health clinic ahead of attending.

Data is showing that this MPV outbreak in the UK is disproportionately affecting gay and bisexual men, but not exclusively.

The NHS will be offering vaccination to people most likely to be exposed to MPV, including some healthcare workers, people who have been in close contact with someone who has MPV, and some men who are gay, bisexual, or who have sex with men. Further information will be shared shortly, and people are advised not to come forward for the vaccine until contacted. Vaccines can be provided either as a prophylactic or post-exposure.

Everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation - is encouraged to be vigilant about new spots, ulcers, and blisters.

Precautionary measures for workplaces:

- Inform people you are in regular contact with: Make sure you, your colleagues and any visitors are aware of the symptoms of MPV, how it spreads, and where to go to access support, if needed.
- Promote public health messages: Sharing key messages with staff and members of the public can help to raise awareness of infection risks and how to stay safe. Information is available via the links below, as well as [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#).
- Review current procedures: if your workplace includes direct person-to-person contact activities, you may want to revisit existing cleaning procedures, and consider reviewing the protocol and increasing the frequency. The risk of spread by transient contact with surfaces

such as handrails is very low, especially if these are regularly cleaned. Cleaning advice for MPV can be found [here](#).

- Maintaining good cleaning procedures: MPV can spread from touching bedding, towels, or linens that have been previously used by someone who is infectious. Ensuring good cleaning procedures, particularly with shared or re-used bedding or towels, can help to reduce the spread of infection.

What to do if there is a case of suspected MPV in your workplace:

- Any suspected case of MPV should avoid close contact with others and contact NHS 111 or contact a sexual health clinic immediately.
- If you are concerned that you or others have been exposed to MPV in the workplace, contact UKHSA's London Coordination and Response Cell (LCRC) for advice at LCRC@phe.gov.uk. *(Include details regarding the nature of the workplace, level of contact with a case, and if you are aware of other cases in the workplace).*
- Suspected close contacts of MPV cases will be informed by UKHSA Health Protection Teams and hospital infection prevention and control teams. If you are identified as a close contact, you will be provided with advice based on the level of contact you had. You may be asked to self-isolate to reduce the spread of infection.

Sources:

- [Press release from UK Health Security Agency](#) (21 June)
- UK Health Security Agency "[Monkeypox outbreaks: Epidemiological overview](#)" (15 July)
- [Monkeypox](#) (NHS website)
- UK Health Security Agency "[Monkeypox cases confirmed in England - latest updates](#)" (15 July)

Thought of the Month: Taking care during hot weather

"High temperatures are predicted for a prolonged period, so make sure to follow...simple health advice to beat the heat." - Dr Agostinho Sousa, Head of Extreme Events and Health Protection at UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA).

The Government has issued a level 4 heat-health alert for the coming week as a result of high temperatures forecasted. This means:

- Population-wide adverse health effects, not limited to those most vulnerable to extreme heat, leading to serious illness or danger to life.
- Substantial changes in working practices and daily routines will be needed.
- Delays on roads and road closures, along with delays and cancellations to rail and air travel.
- A high-risk of failure of heat-sensitive equipment, potentially leading to localised loss of power and other essential services.

- More people visiting coastal areas, lakes and rivers, leading to an increased risk of water safety incidents.

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has some top tips for staying cool during hot weather:

- Stay cool indoors by closing curtains on rooms that face the sun, and remember that it may be cooler outdoors than indoors. Heat rises, so rooms and accommodation on the top floors of buildings are likely to be hotter than those lower down.
- While everybody is at risk from the health consequences of heat, older people, those with underlying health conditions, and people who live alone - among others - can be particularly at risk, including people who work outdoors.
- Be aware of the [common signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion and heatstroke](#).
- Drink plenty of fluids, carry water with you, and avoid excess alcohol.
- Avoid physical exertion in the hottest parts of the day.
- Check that fridges, freezers, and fans are working properly.
- Check that windows or vents can be opened (where the air feels cooler outside than inside) and - if applicable - that mechanical ventilation systems are switched on and operating in summer mode.
- Try to keep out of the sun between 11am and 3pm, when UV rays are at their strongest.
- Check medicines can be stored according to the instructions on the packaging.

You may also like to consider encouraging staff to work from home where they can, and to avoid using public transport and helping to ensure it is less crowded for those who do need to travel.

For staff who cannot work remotely, consider supporting them to travel during off-peak times, and relaxing dress codes wherever possible and safe to do so, for example permitting them to wear lighter and looser clothing.

Information, resources, and risk assessment templates from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) on temperature can be found [here](#).

An HSE guide to heat stress in the workplace can be accessed [here](#).

More detailed guidance on keeping cool at home from UKHSA, NHS England, and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) can be accessed [here](#).

Please spread the word: research into the health and wellbeing needs of security guards, cleaners, and construction workers

The City Corporation's Public Health team and partners are asking for employers' assistance in recruiting people in frontline and essential roles - cleaning, security, and construction - to provide their views on their health and wellbeing needs in the workplace through interviews or focus groups. This includes individuals in these roles working across Central London - not just in the City.

This qualitative research is being undertaken by Tavistock Relationships and UCL's Institute for Health Equity, on behalf of the City Corporation, Legal & General, PwC, and other partners.

The aim is to understand more about what measures can be taken to reduce and raise awareness of the avoidable and unfair health inequalities faced by this group of the workforce, to support an ongoing programme of work (more information [here](#)).

Participation can be tailored to the convenience of individuals, and participants will be provided with £20 shopping vouchers to thank them for their time.

We are asking for support to share information about participation opportunities with your own workers in these roles, as well as those who are contracted in.

If you would like to find out more about this research project, and how to share information with your workforce to get involved, please contact Caroline Millar (Associate - Tavistock Relationships) at carolinemillarwork@gmail.com or 07967 961997. Interviews and focus groups will be taking place during July and August

Type 2 Diabetes: know your risk

Almost 2.5 million people across the UK have completed a short quiz - the [Diabetes UK risk tool](#) - to find out their risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes is largely preventable through lifestyle changes. At the moment in England there are around 2 million people at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is a leading cause of preventable sight loss in people of working age, and is a major contributor to kidney failure, heart attack, and stroke. For people living with type 2 diabetes, the risk of dying in hospital with COVID-19 is also twice that of people who don't have the condition. In addition, type 2 diabetes treatment accounts for around 10% of the annual NHS budget.

By completing the quiz, in England they may be eligible to access the free "Healthier You NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme". This is a free, nine-month evidence-based lifestyle change programme, delivered by NHS England and NHS Improvement, and Diabetes UK. It offers personalised support to eligible people to manage their weight, eat more healthily, and be more physically active, which together have been proven to reduce a person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Sessions are available face to face and remotely, in some cases.

Access more information [here](#). The tool can be found [here](#).

Coming up

Cycle to Work Day, 4th August

Cycle to Work Day is celebrating its 10th anniversary this summer. It's a great way of encouraging the workforce to cycle all, or at least part, of the way to work. Cycling has lots of benefits, including increasing fitness, saving money on the commute, and being greener for the planet.

There are lots of ways to cycle to work, with ideas on the [Cycle Scheme website](#), such as Cycle to Work Schemes, monthly bike rental, and more.

The City Corporation's [Active City Network](#) also provides advice, information, and resources to City employers on how they can support their staff to travel through more active modes, including cycling.

Know Your Numbers Week, 5th - 11th September

Know Your Numbers Week is the UK's biggest blood pressure testing and awareness event.

The aim of this year's event is to encourage people to monitor their blood pressure at home to identify undiagnosed and uncontrolled high blood pressure. It's an inexpensive and effective way to keep blood pressure under control, as well as enable people to take control of their health, feel confident, and take the pressure off the NHS.

High blood pressure can lead to heart attacks, strokes, and other illnesses. By knowing your numbers you can take action to bring your blood pressure under control.

Employers can become "Pressure Partners"; this includes:

- Promoting home blood pressure monitoring, by encouraging purchase or sharing of blood pressure monitors among staff
- Directing staff to the Blood Pressure UK website and helpline, so they can find information about choosing a home monitor, how to use it, and how to look after their blood pressure
- Sharing information about the risks of high blood pressure, such as heart diseases, stroke, and dementia, and promoting the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating and physical activity.

Register your organisation's interest to become a Pressure Partner for Know Your Numbers Week 2022 [here](#).

World Suicide Prevention Day, 10th September

In the UK, while there has been a reduction in the number of people completing suicide over the last ten years, the numbers are still considerably high, and men are three times as likely to die by suicide than women.

[World Suicide Prevention Day](#) is an important opportunity to raise awareness on suicide and suicide prevention in a non-stigmatising way. The theme for 2022's WSPD is "creating hope through action".

People working in the City of London are invited to attend a free and interactive Suicide Prevention Awareness session, which will be taking place online on 16th September, 9-11am. The session is led by Samaritans volunteers and is open to anyone working in the City, whether they have little or no previous training in mental health awareness, or a lot. Places are extremely limited. For more information, visit the [Eventbrite page](#).

There are lots of free resources for employers and their staff relating to suicide prevention and post-vention available on the [Business Healthy website](#).

Sexual Health Awareness Week, 12th - 18th September

Around 1 in 12 people test positive for a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI), yet most have no symptoms, so don't know if they're infected. STIs can seriously impact on the health and wellbeing of affected individuals, as well as being costly to healthcare services. If left undiagnosed and untreated, common STIs - such as chlamydia, gonorrhoea, genital warts, and genital herpes - can cause a range of complications and long-term health problems.

Free, at-home STI testing can be accessed in different ways, including through an online service, such as Sexual Health London (www.shl.uk). SHL is available only to residents of London boroughs, some

of whom can also access free emergency and routine contraception through the platform, too. For people living outside of London, [this postcode tool](#) can be used to find local remote testing services.

You can also access a wide range of free sexual health services, such as long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) and other forms of contraception, through sexual health clinics, GP practices, and pharmacies. For example, Homerton Sexual Health Services run the following sexual health clinics in the City of London and Hackney:

- 80 Leadenhall Street (City of London)
- Ivy Centre (Hoxton, Hackney)
- Clifden Centre (Homerton, Hackney)

More information on local sexual health services can be found [here](#).

A short explainer animation - "AIDS is over, if you want it" - to help update people's knowledge on HIV can be accessed through the [Martin Fisher Foundation](#).

National Fitness Day, 21st September

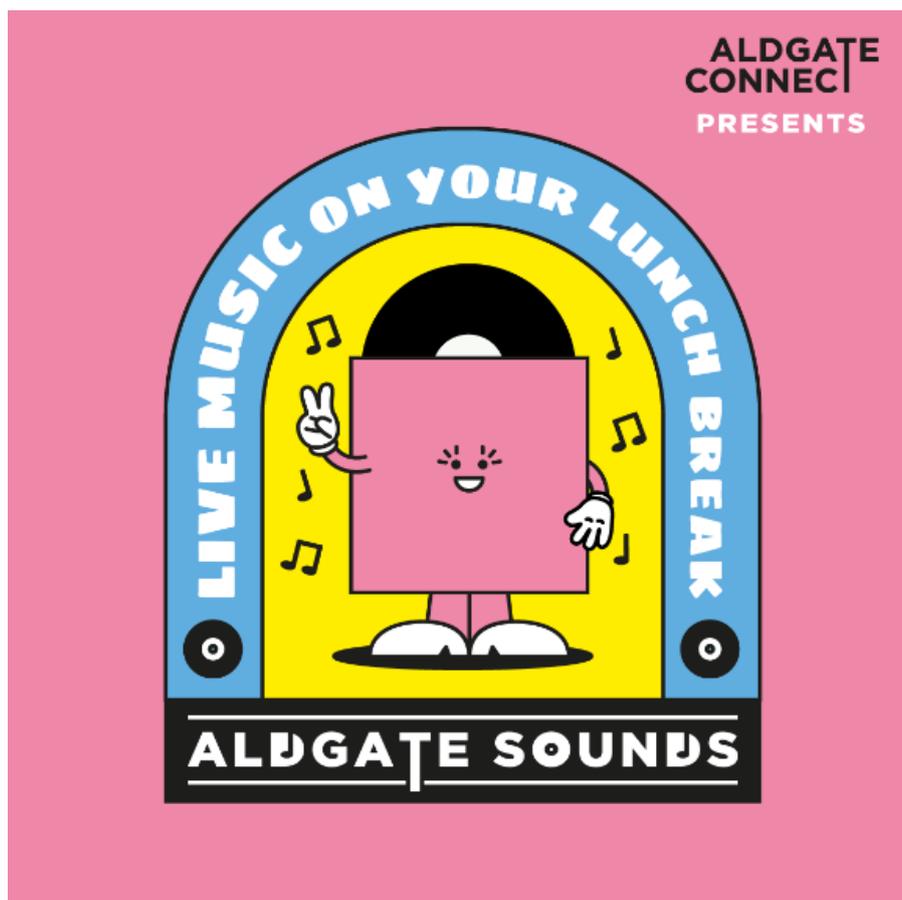
Fitness has the power to bring people together, and to positively impact on the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of us all. National Fitness Day is a chance to highlight the role physical activity plays across the UK. It's not just about one day in the year, it's about committing to change routines - even in a small way - for a lifetime of benefits.

People's stories about getting into and maintaining their fitness, and feeling the benefits, can help to inspire others.

Employers can take part in National Fitness Day by sharing information with staff and encouraging them to take part themselves. You can also subscribe to find out about free events taking part near your organisation, and/or host your own internal events.

More information can be found [here](#).

Lunchtime walks



Aldgate Sounds, Tuesday lunchtimes - July and August

Aldgate Sounds offers an opportunity to enjoy a musical lunchbreak during the summer months, through free classical, jazz, and acoustic guitar sessions.

Taking place in Aldgate Square (EC3N 1AF), between 12 and 2pm, Aldgate Sounds will be taking place on 19th and 26th July, and 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd August.

More information is available [here](#).

Workouts at One New Change

City workers are invited to free workout classes hosted by Pure Sports Medicine and Sweaty Betty at the rooftop of One New Change (EC4M 9AF), taking place in July.

These are hybrid and fusion classes, combining strength work, high-intensity interval training (HIIT), and Pilates.

Visit the [One New Change website](#) for more information.