~ Poor health literacy 'increases early death risk for elderly'
One in three adults aged over 65 in England have difficulty understanding basic health-related information, suggests a study in the BMJ. They are more than twice as likely to die within five years as adults with no literacy problems, it was found. The University College London study tested nearly 8,000 adults on their understanding of aspirin instructions. The Patients Association said patients should help draft information leaflets so they are "relevant and clear". BMJ
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-17381926

~ Persistent challenges to providing quality care
The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has published 'Persistent challenges to providing quality care: An RCN report on the views and experiences of frontline nursing staff in care homes in England'. The report found that care homes are struggling to provide high quality care for residents with complex medical conditions, against a backdrop of a severe funding, equipment and staff shortages. The report identifies a lack of training for staff, inappropriate admissions and extreme pressure on the workforce leading to poor staff morale. The RCN says that getting health and social funding right is crucial for the sustainability of the social care system and the NHS.
http://www.rcn.org.uk/newsevents/news/article/uk/rcn_sets_out_care_homes_plan

~ Accurate diagnosis for suspected COPD
NHS Improvement have published 'Accurate diagnosis for suspected COPD'. This document covers diagnosis, tests and assessment of severity and impact. Through an early and quality assured diagnosis, a more comprehensive assessment of severity, effective proactive disease management and evidence based treatment interventions, lives will be saved and the burden on the resources of the NHS will be reduced.
The webpages include information about a good patient pathway, evidence, guidance, top tips, service models, case studies etc
http://www.improvement.nhs.uk/lung/NationalImprovementProjects/AccurateDiagnosis.aspx

~ The evolving threat of antimicrobial resistance - Options for action
A team of leading Health Protection Agency (HPA) experts have contributed to a World Health Organization (WHO) publication entitled ‘The evolving threat of Antimicrobial Resistance: Options for Action’

Antibiotic resistance is recognised as being a global problem and it requires a wide range of solutions to manage it. This WHO publication has been compiled with advice from organisations and leading experts from around the world to provide a comprehensive guide to what actions can be taken to reduce the spread of resistant bacteria.


~ Revised guidance on Clostridium difficile issued
The Department of Health has issued revised guidance on how to test, report and manage C diff infections. In particular, the new guidance will help healthcare providers by identifying which two types of tests, which when used in combination, will deliver the most accurate results for infection testing.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2012/03/clostridium-difficile-6-march-2012/

~ New health maps to drive children’s health improvements
For the first time, variations across the breadth of child health services provided by NHS England are presented together to allow clinicians, commissioners and service users to identify priority areas for improving outcome, quality and productivity. The NHS Atlas of Variation in Healthcare for Children and Young People maps out the variation in healthcare for 25 different child health issues across England. It includes breastfeeding, asthma, epilepsy, A & E and diabetes.


~ NICE recommends new treatment option for people with common heart condition
NICE has recommended dabigatran (Pradaxa, Boehringer Ingelheim), in accordance with its licensed indications, as an option for the prevention of stroke and systemic embolism in people with atrial fibrillation. The guidance also recommends that the decision about whether to start treatment with dabigatran should be made after an informed discussion about the risks and benefits of dabigatran compared with warfarin, and in light of a person's current level of international normalised ratio (INR) control if they are already taking warfarin.

http://www.nice.org.uk/newsroom/pressreleases/DabigatranForAtrialFibrillation.jsp

~ Nurses, midwives and allied health professionals are offered research training
More research training will be offered to nurses, midwives and allied health professionals according to a new strategy launched by Health Secretary Andrew Lansley. At the annual Florence Nightingale conference which focused on innovations in healthcare, he set out details of the scheme that will be managed through the National Institute of Health Research. Healthcare professionals will be funded to do further education in the research field, such as Masters degrees and PhDs or to spend time doing internships so they can gain experience in using research to improve care. The aim is to put research at the heart of frontline services and make NHS staff some of the best trained in the world.

http://mediacentre.dh.gov.uk/2012/03/08/nurses-midwives-and-allied-health-professionals-are-offered-research-training/

~ The best of clinical pathway redesign
NHS Improvement has published 'The best of clinical pathway redesign: practical examples delivering benefits to patients'. The case studies showcase innovations that have enabled patients to enjoy better health thanks to practical service improvements implemented on various clinical pathways. The best practice case studies cover cancer, diagnostics, audiology, heart lung and stroke.

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CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST


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