



The Association of Directors of Public Health

Statement on the CMO Report 2017 'Health Impacts of All Pollution'

ADPH welcomes the publication of the Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer 2017, which focuses on the health impacts of all pollution.

The Association of Directors of Public Health (ADPH) welcomes the publication of the report, which looks at the direct impact of pollution on human health. Air pollution is priority for Directors of Public Health (DsPH) and in November 2017 we published a [policy position statement](#) outlining our views on this topic. We also welcome the focus on other types of pollution such as light pollution and noise pollution, which can have an impact on sleep patterns and mental health.

ADPH particularly welcomes the recognition that pollution contributes to inequalities in health. Deprived groups are often disproportionately affected by air pollution and research has found higher concentrations of particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide in the most deprived 20% of neighborhoods in England.

ADPH welcomes the recommendation that local government should implement evidence based actions to address pollution. To help further this ADPH, LGA, PHE and Defra published a [toolkit on air pollution](#) for DsPH in 2017 which has been positively received. ADPH recommends that public health teams continue to work collaboratively with colleagues in planning departments and schools to help educate parents and children about and mitigate the impacts of health pollution.

ADPH agrees that more evidence is needed on the most effective interventions for mitigating the impact of pollutants on health. The generation of further evidence for effectiveness of interventions will better equip DsPH to act on pollution locally. More research is also needed on the extent and impact of other pollutants and the links between light pollution and noise pollution and poor health, with consideration of how exposure to these pollutants is affected by deprivation.

ADPH Chief Executive Nicola Close said:

“We are pleased that the CMO has chosen to focus on the topical and important issue of the impact of pollutants on health. Long-term exposure to particulate matter has an effect equivalent of 25,000 deaths a year in England.

We would like to highlight that there is an opportunity when tackling pollution to focus on those interventions that have co-benefits to health. For example, focusing on increasing active travel will both improve physical activity in the population, but also contribute to reducing the air pollution caused by vehicles.

The 2017 UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations put too large an onus on local authorities to tackle air pollution, and did not represent a whole system approach to the issue. We are hoping that this year's Clean Air Strategy will be more comprehensive, with clear actions for national as well as local government and a recognition of the role of the DPH in tackling pollution.”

ENDS



Further information

The [Association of Directors of Public Health](#) (ADPH) is the representative body for Directors of Public Health (DPH) in the UK. It seeks to improve and protect the health of the population through collating and presenting the views of DsPH; advising on public health policy and legislation at a local, regional, national and international level; facilitating a support network for DsPH; and providing opportunities for DsPH to develop professional practice.

The Association has a rich heritage, its origins dating back 160 years. It is a collaborative organisation working in partnership with others to maximize the voice for public health.

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