A Collection of Recent NGO, Think Tank, and International Government Reports

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Welcome to Grey Matter, the Ministry of Health Library's Grey Literature Bulletin. In each issue, we provide access to a selection of the most recent NGO, Think Tank, and International Government reports that are relevant to the health context. The goal of this newsletter is to facilitate access to material that may be more difficult to locate (in contrast to journal articles and the news media). Information is arranged by topic, allowing readers to quickly identify their key areas of interest. Email library@health.govt.nz to subscribe.

Click on any of the bulleted points below to go to a section of interest.

Health Data, Research, & Technology   Mental Health & Wellbeing

Public Health   COVID-19

Health Systems, Costs, & Reforms   Health of Older People

Nutrition   Substance Abuse

Health Equity   Workforce

Health Data, Research, & Technology

Sharing and reuse of health-related data for research purposes: WHO policy and implementation guidance
"The purpose of this document is to clarify the policy and practice on the reuse and onward sharing for research purposes of health data collected under the auspices of WHO technical programmes. This covers use in both emergency and non-emergency situations and complements the following: the Policy on use and sharing of data collected in Member States by the World Health Organization (WHO) outside the context of public health

emergencies; the Policy statement on data sharing by the World Health Organization in the context of public health emergencies; and the Joint statement on public disclosure of results from clinical trials. This policy covers the reuse of health data for research purposes. Its scope includes research data generated by research undertaken directly by WHO, or funded by WHO, as well as the use of other health data for research purposes." *Source: World Health Organization*

[Improving data on pharmaceutical expenditure in hospitals and other health care settings](#)
"As a key component of health care, a full understanding of how much is spent on prescription medicines is increasingly important. Only a partial understanding of total expenditures across health systems is currently possible, as reporting is often limited to medicines dispensed in community pharmacies. However, spending on pharmaceuticals used elsewhere in the health sector, particularly in hospitals, constitutes a significant and growing proportion of the overall resources allocated to medicines. This report aims to improve the coverage and quality of data on total pharmaceutical spending across the whole health sector, by reviewing current practices, and recommending a set of definitions, concepts and guidance under the framework of A System of Health Accounts 2011. Countries are encouraged to apply these guidelines in their future reporting of pharmaceutical expenditures, as part of their annual health accounts data production." *Source: OECD*

[Health data and governance developments in relation to COVID-19](#)
"At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic many countries found that they lacked basic, timely data for decision making—such as information on health workforce, resources, hospitalisations, and mortality. Many policy makers have since leveraged COVID-19 related information system reforms in a way that may also address long-standing barriers in the structures, policies and institutions that have kept countries from fully utilising health related data. Health data governance reforms, in particular, have been an important aspect of countries responses. Improvements in the quality, coverage, completeness, and capacity for data sharing in regard to existing national personal health datasets were widely reported. Countries have also made significant investments in digital tools, systems for public health monitoring, assessments of resource use and availability, and data to monitor the status of non-COVID related health needs." *Source: OECD*

[Better, broader, safer: using health data for research and analysis](#)
"The (UK) government commissioned Ben Goldacre to deliver this report into the use of health data for research and analysis… This report shows that we need to be as thoughtful as we are innovative, guided by safe ethical frameworks for providing access to data, as well as systems that ensure under-represented groups are well represented. It also makes clear that we have all the building blocks we need for success, including an unrivalled wealth of experience in using health data. However, it also shows areas where we must boost our capability and capacity if we are to reach our full potential. " *Source: Department of Health & Social Care (UK)*

[Measuring Sex, Gender Identity, and Sexual Orientation](#)
"Recognition of the diversity within the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and other sexual and gender minorities - the LGBTQI+ population - has also led to a

reexamination of how the concepts of sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation are measured. Better measurement will improve the ability to identify sexual and gender minority populations and understand the challenges they face. LGBTQI+ people continue to experience disparate and inequitable treatment, including harassment, discrimination, and violence, which in turn affects outcomes in many areas of everyday life, including health and access to health care services, economic and educational attainment, and family and social support. Though knowledge of these disparities has increased significantly over the past decade, glaring gaps remain, often driven by a lack of reliable data." *Source: National Academies Press*

Access to and delivery of general practice services: a study of patients at practices using digital and online tools
"The evidence shows that online consultation systems can facilitate choice and flexibility in how primary care is accessed and delivered. With patient demand at an all-time high due to the care backlog that has built up during the pandemic, digital tools can help practices manage this pressure, enabling them to triage patients to the right person or service and prioritise face to face consultations for those that need them most." *Source: Health Foundation (UK)*

Personalised prescribing: using pharmacogenomics to improve patient outcomes
"A new report from the Royal College of Physicians and British Pharmacological Society joint working party considers the opportunities provided by increasing pharmacogenomic testing." *Source: Royal College of Physicians and British Pharmacological Society*

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Public Health

The climate crisis and its health impacts
"The report serves not just to highlight the extent and awareness of the link between climate change and health, but also to demonstrate the steps we can take and solutions in our grasp." *Source: Public Policy Projects*

Strategic framework for collaboration on antimicrobial resistance
"Building on the momentum of increased collaboration, the WHO, FAO, OIE and UNEP have developed a Strategic Framework for collaboration on antimicrobial resistance (AMR). This Framework reflects the joint work of the four organizations to advance a One Health response to AMR at the global, regional and country level. It broadly supports the implementation of the five pillars of the Global Action Plan on AMR, as well as strengthening global AMR governance." *Source: World Health Organization*

Electronic cigarettes and health outcomes: systematic review of global evidence
"This report aims to provide a systematic overview of the contemporary evidence on the health effects of nicotine and non-nicotine e-cigarette use excluding, where possible, use of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and other illicit substances." *Source: Australian National University*

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Health Systems, Costs, & Reforms

Health system performance assessment: a framework for policy analysis

"Health policy-making and reform require, first and foremost, a sound understanding of how a health system is performing. To assist countries in this process, the Health Systems Performance Assessment Framework for Universal Health Coverage offers a comprehensive attempt at guiding the collection and analysis of health system data in relation to policy goals and 21st century challenges. This book is grounded in the premise that any whole-of-sector assessment exercise should collect information on and examine the performance of both the functions of the health system as well as its performance goals. Thus, it follows through each of the health system functions (i.e., health system governance, financing, resource generation and service delivery), outlining their purpose, the sub-functions needed to fulfil that purpose, and assessment areas to evaluate how well a function performs." *Source: World Health Organization*

Health system recovery from Covid-19: International lessons for the NHS

"The challenges confronting the NHS in recovering from the pandemic are huge, with elective services that were scaled down during the worst of the crisis now with waiting lists of over 6 million patients. Yet worldwide, the pandemic has left even the most well-equipped health systems vulnerable. What approaches have other countries used to move towards recovery, and what might the NHS learn? This major new Nuffield Trust report looks across 16 different countries to gain an understanding of the recovery challenge worldwide." *Source: Nuffield Trust (UK)*

The diagonal approach: A theoretic framework for economic evaluation of vertical and horizontal interventions in healthcare

"The diagonal approach is a health system funding concept wherein vertical approaches targeting specific diseases are combined with horizontal approaches intended to strengthen health systems broadly. This paper aims to develop a theoretical framework for the diagonal approach. It allows concurrent evaluation of three different types of horizontal interventions, those: (i) improving health system efficiency, (ii) improving capacity, and (iii) investing in new platforms." *Source: Institute of Health Economics (Canada)*

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Nutrition

Health effects of the use of non-sugar sweeteners: a systematic review and meta-analysis

"While results of randomized controlled trials have generally suggested non-sugar sweeteners may have little impact on glucose metabolism and result in lower body weight when coupled with energy restriction in the short-term, there is no clear consensus on whether non-sugar sweeteners are effective for long-term weight loss or maintenance, or if they are linked to other long-term health effects at intakes within the ADI. This systematic review brings together the most current scientific evidence on health effects of non-sugar sweetener use." *Source: World Health Organization*

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Health Equity

[A Matter of Life and Death: Explaining the Wider Determinants of Health in the UK](#)
"The Health Foundation commissioned the FrameWorks Institute to examine how people think about their health, and the health of others, and based on this, recommend how we can frame health communications to tell a more powerful story. Drawing on findings from the second phase of our research, this report outlines an evidence-based framing strategy for shifting understanding and building greater support for action to address the wider determinants of health. It is for anyone working and communicating in the field of public health, whether they are speaking to a public, political, or expert audience." *Source: Health Foundation (UK)*

[Digital and remote primary care: the inverse care law with a 21st century twist?](#)
"The pandemic has brought significant changes to how people access primary care services, including the rise of online bookings and remote consultations. Are they changes in the right direction? In this long read, Charlotte Paddison discusses whether the shift towards digital primary care risks making access easier for people with less need and harder for those more likely to be in poorer health – and describes the actions that would help in getting access right." *Source: Nuffield Trust (UK)*

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Mental Health & Wellbeing

[Cyberbullying: an overview of research and policy in OECD countries](#)
"Cyberbullying is a high priority policy challenge in many OECD countries. In recent years, the literature base on cyberbullying has rapidly expanded, shedding insights into the prevalence of the issue, highlighting which characteristics make children more likely to be cyberbullied, those that make them more likely to cyberbully others, and how this affects or is affected by well-being. Education systems have responded to this challenge in different ways such as promoting awareness of the issue, providing support to children in schools, through Internet safety initiatives, and implementing policies and sometimes laws to combat cyberbullying. There are a number of empirically assessed interventions that aim to support victims and reduce perpetration, although more information is needed on how to develop and scale up effective interventions. Furthermore, the current literature base underscores the need to establish a common and agreed upon definition of cyberbullying, and a need for research to identify its causes and effects." *Source: OECD*

[COVID-19 and racialized communities: Impacts on mental health](#)
"The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in significant inequities in terms of health and social outcomes, and magnified stressors such as increased risk of exposure to and illness from COVID-19, job loss, and housing and food insecurity. These stressors have been particularly felt by already marginalized groups, including those from racialized communities, and there is evidence of accompanying negative mental health impacts. There is a need for increased understanding of how health systems and communities can prepare for the long-term mental health impacts of COVID-19." *Source: Wellesley Institute (Canada)*

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COVID-19

The future of COVID-19 vaccines
"New generation COVID-19 vaccines may be able to offer better protection (including against new variants, or for longer time periods), and be easier to administer, manufacture and distribute. It is uncertain when these vaccines will be available for use." *Source: UK Parliament*

Impact of COVID-19 August/September 2021 Topline results – Wave 3
"This report is the third in a series of reports about the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns on New Zealanders' habits and behaviours. Based on survey results, it examines changes in alcohol drinking, smoking, vaping and gambling behaviours during the August/September 2021 lockdown." *Source: Te Hiringa Hauora/Health Promotion Agency (New Zealand)*

Virtual wards and Covid-19: An explainer
"'Virtual wards' have existed for a number of years, but Covid-19 has led to further research and pilot schemes exploring their use. How have they been used during the pandemic and what does the future hold? This explainer by Holly Walton and Naomi Fulop provides some answers." *Source: Nuffield Trust (UK)*

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Health of Older People

Quality of life tools to support measurement of aged care quality
"Despite years of cyclical care reforms for service providers and shifting regulations, aged care services quality and accountability remains a significant concern to both the government and the Australian public. To break this cycle, it is essential that Australia establish a set of long-term and comprehensive indicators of quality in aged care. It has been recommended that the Department of Health mandate the collection and publication of quality of life outcomes in aged care to provide a minimum set of standards and provide transparency in aged care quality. However, substantial variabilities between available toolsets, a lack of best practice guidance, and a lack of publicly reported outcomes has meant that measuring the impact of aged care services on quality of life, consistently and systematically, is a challenge for most aged care providers." *Source: Deeble Institute (Australia)*

A window of opportunity: Delivering prevention in an ageing world
This "flagship report, brings together [a] 2-year global engagement programme on how to deliver prevention in an ageing world." *Source: International Longevity Centre*

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Substance Abuse

E-therapy for substance abuse issues literature review
"This rapid review provides current evidence on the effectiveness of e-therapy approaches on reducing problematic substance use and features of e-therapies that appear to be key in

supporting positive change. The key findings are outlined below." *Source: Te Pou (New Zealand)*

Workforce

Transforming the genomics workforce to sustain high value care
"Genomics is enormously valuable to society and will only grow in demand. Personal test results can provide both health and psychological benefits, reducing uncertainty and leading to more tailored care, reducing unnecessary screenings and invasive procedures, and leading to high-value care for the individual and their family. In order to truly realise the benefits, a national strategy is required to address the consequences of a fragmented workforce, the substantial burden of unpaid work, critical gaps in education and training, and lagging funding for research into evidence-based solutions and ongoing evaluations of interventions." *Source: Deeble Institute (Australia)*

The information available on or through this newsletter does not represent Ministry of Health policy. It is intended to provide general information to the health sector and the public, and is not intended to address specific circumstances of any particular individual or entity.