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To: Emily Evans
Subject: Your Friday three - 2 August 2024

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International Longevity Centre UK

Latest news

ILC Friday three

- **Reasons for optimism** - immunisation at work
- **Olympic legacies** - what can London 2012 teach us about healthy ageing?
- **Mental health matters** - events in Tokyo and New York

Reasons for optimism - RSV and shingles vaccines



It will come as no surprise, especially to those familiar with ILC's body of work on adult immunisation, that we are keen to highlight the role that immunisation plays in preventing disease and keeping us healthy across our longer lives.

Two recent developments have caught our eye: firstly, the announcement from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) that RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) vaccines will be added to the vaccine schedule for infants and older adults. This virus is responsible for 30,000 hospitalisations of under-5s every year, and over 175,000 GP appointments for older adults annually; many of which could now be prevented through uptake of the vaccine. Given there are no specific treatments for RSV currently (clinicians can only provide supportive interventions to manage symptoms) it could not be clearer that prevention is better than cure. Hopefully this decision by DHSC will show leadership and more countries will follow suit, offering similar protection to infants and older people.

Secondly, a new study has found that a new shingles vaccine is more protective against dementia than previou shingles vaccines. A previous ILC project on shingles uptake has emphasised the socioeconomic costs of the varicella-zoster virus. Treating each older person with shingles in England is known to cost around £450 per patient. A recent ILC project on shingles found that this virus also costs the EU around $660 million a year, with two-thirds of this loss occurring in workplace absences and lost productivity. And the benefits extend far beyond that, including reducing the risk and delaying the onset of dementia. But communicating the value of something that *didn't* happen or happened later is always hard.

We are seeing some concerning shifts in attitudes and behaviours around immunisation in the UK: a decrease in reported satisfaction from parents about vaccine safety for babies and small children, and decreased uptake of prenatal whooping cough vaccines are just two examples.

To read more about our work on placing life course immunisation on the global policy agenda, follow the link below.

LIFE COURSE IMMUNISATION

Lessons for Paris 2024: what did London 2012 teach us about a legacy of healthy ageing?



Although Paris 2024 is the third subsequent Olympic Games since London 2012, many of us in the UK still hold fond memories from that year. For many, it was a summer of sport and community cohesion that brought the nation together. Twelve

years on, what advice would we give to the Parisian organisers about securing an impactful legacy, in supporting French and global fans of the Games to age well across our longer lives?

In 2012 the Department for Culture, Media and Sport committed to use the games as a "catalyst to increase participation in wider physical activity alongside sport across all communities". Survey evidence about physical activity in the UK in the years that followed, and the views of leaders in the sport sector collated by the think tank Sports, indicate that this objective was not met. Watching and being inspired by elite athletes is undeniably exciting (and can be borderline addictive during these Olympic weeks), but the evidence indicates that these rarely translate to sustained behaviour change. Local resources, infrastructure, and access are more likely to make the difference than watching inspirational athletes on our TV screens.

If increasing participation in sport isn't a realistic legacy of the Games, then what is? Our view is that we should continue to leverage the legions of volunteers that make the Olympics possible, to broaden opportunities in sport. A quarter of a million people signed up to volunteer in London 2012, with 70,000 selected. Paris, by contrast, is calling upon 45,000 of the 300,000 applicants in 2024.

More time spent volunteering can be an outcome and a protective factor for healthy ageing. The social benefits and satisfaction gained from voluntary activity are well-established; previous ILC research has highlighted the economic contribution of volunteers. We know that when countries up their spending on preventative health by just 0.1%, they unloack an additional 10 years of volunteering for the average person aged 60 and over annually. Voluntary activity and participation in sport go hand in hand - Sport England found that 6.2 million adults volunteer every year to make grassroots sport possible and help it thrive. Voluntary activity and community engagement at the local level looks like a realistic and impactful legacy of an Olympic Games.

Our very own Healthy Ageing Olympics created medal tables for countries on several healthy ageing indicators - take a look at our Going for Gold programme page here to see how your country performed.

What are your solutions to the challenges of demographic change? Let us know via the button below.

GET IN TOUCH

Mental health matters: what policies will support us with serious mental health conditions across longer lives?

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Events update

One in eight of us around the world live with a mental health disorder, and efforts to shed light on and destigmatise mental ill health are much-needed around the world. Around 12 billion working days are lost every year to anxiety and depression, which belies the true impact of these two conditions on individuals and families.

What about the 1-2% of the population who live with serious diagnoses, such as schizophrenia and PTSD, especially as more of us are living longer? What is it like to need support and treatment across a 100-year life for a mental health condition? How does this differ across countries?

In September, ILC will be in Japan and the US to host two events as part of our Mental health matters project, supported by Boehringer Ingelheim.

Event 1 - Research symposium: Mental Health Matters – what are the policy priorities for Japan?
🗓️ Thursday 5 September
🕗 12:00pm – 4:00pm JST
📍 National Institute of Mental Health, Tokyo, Japan
Registration: https://ilcuk.org.uk/mental-health-matters-what-are-the-policy-priorities-for-japan/

Event 2 - Mental Health Matters: How can the 2025 UN High-Level Meeting prioritise serious mental health conditions in an ageing world?
🗓️ Tuesday 24 September
🕗 8:30am – 10:30am EDT
📍 The Yale Club of New York City, US
Registration: https://ilcuk.org.uk/mental-health-matters-what-are-the-policy-priorities-for-the-us/

Find out more about the Mental health matters project and what we've found so far: https://ilcuk.org.uk/mental-health-matters/

REGISTER HERE

During July and August we will be sending this newsletter out every fortnight rather than weekly. Your next Friday three will arrive on 16 August 2024.

To keep up-to-date with ILC events throughout the year, please continue to check our website on a regular basis.

If you are interested in learning more about our Partners Programme, please click here.

Please follow us on social media via the links below for our latest news and event updates.



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