

[News story: New return on investment tool on musculoskeletal conditions](#)

Public Health England (PHE) today (11 October 2017) launched its latest [return on investment \(RoI\) tool](#), this time helping local commissioners decide the best approach to preventing musculoskeletal conditions (MSK) within their populations.

RoI assessments can be made at local authority, clinical commissioning group, or sustainability and transformation partnerships level, helping commissioners make the economic case for prevention.

PHE commissioned the York Health Economics consortium to develop the tool. The different approaches to addressing MSK were chosen following a literature review and in consultation with an expert steering group.

Among the approaches are:

- ESCAPE-pain, an exercise-based rehabilitation program for knee pain, which would return £5.20 in healthcare savings for every £1 spent
- cognitive behavioural therapy including exercise for back pain, which would see £7.52 in both healthcare savings and quality of life year gains returned for every £1 spent
- vocational advice from physiotherapists in primary care for all MSK conditions, which would return £11.14 in healthcare savings, quality of life year and productivity gains for every £1 spent

Duncan Selbie, PHE's chief executive, said:

The main way in which the NHS operates – you get ill, it fixes you – is unsustainable. People will have to take more responsibility for their own health and the NHS should intervene much earlier to help people avoid the need for expensive care. Bad backs and joints cause the most sick leave at work and using this resource will both help to get people back into work, reduce pressure on the NHS and boost the local economy.

Low back and neck pain is the leading cause of morbidity, as laid out in our Health Profile for England. Its impact is 3 times bigger than the second place condition, skin diseases. In 2014 to 2015, 9.5 million sick days were claimed because of MSK conditions. This represents 40% of all days lost due to work-related ill health and 33% of long-term sickness absence in England is due to MSK conditions.

Reducing the burden of MSK on local populations is an important step to getting people back to work, boosting the local economy and also lowering the future demand on health and social care budgets.

It is the latest tool from PHE's health economists underlining why investment in prevention is important to long term health of the population and long term sustainability of the NHS. At the end of August, PHE published an ROI tool for mental health interventions, including a school anti-bullying programme and social and emotional learning for children.

A suite of tools have already been published, with ones on falls prevention and Best Start in Life in the pipeline.

[Press release: Nuclear Safeguards Bill introduced today](#)

- Equivalent high standards of Euratom to be maintained

The UK will establish a domestic nuclear safeguards regime under measures contained in the [Nuclear Safeguards Bill](#), introduced to Parliament today (Wednesday 11 October).

As set out by Business Secretary Greg Clark on [14 September 2017](#), the government is committed to a domestic nuclear safeguards regime which will deliver to existing European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) standards, exceeding those required by the wider international community.

The Bill, first announced in the [Queen's Speech](#), will bolster the roles and responsibilities of the UK's existing nuclear regulator, the [Office for Nuclear Regulation \(ONR\)](#), once the UK leaves Euratom.

The UK will continue to be a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and work is ongoing on new agreements with international parties to ensure it continues to meet relevant international standards.

Energy Minister Richard Harrington said:

The Nuclear Safeguards Bill will help secure the future of the UK's nuclear industry and high standards of nuclear safety and safeguards once we leave Euratom.

We are bringing forward the UK's first new nuclear power plants in a generation and it is in our mutual benefit to maintain the successful working relationship we have now with Europe, and the rest of the world, on nuclear matters. This is what we will be looking to secure in negotiations with our partners.

Nuclear safeguards are processes which allow countries to show to the international community that civil nuclear material is used for peaceful

purposes.

The UK will withdraw from [Euratom in 2019](#) as a result of the decision to leave the EU and the Nuclear Safeguards Bill will ensure that the UK has the right regime in place for the ONR to regulate nuclear safeguards.

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[News story: Home Office announces changes to Grenfell immigration policy](#)

Under the original policy, eligible foreign nationals directly affected by the fire with uncertain immigration status could be granted 12 months' limited leave to remain in the UK with full access to relevant support and assistance.

The changes announced today will enable those who qualify under this policy and who come forward before 30 November to have their limited leave extended and to qualify for permanent residence after a total period of 5 years' leave granted under the policy, subject to meeting security, criminality and fraud checks.

Immigration Minister Brandon Lewis said:

Our initial response to this terrible tragedy was rightly focused on survivors' immediate needs in the aftermath of the fire and ensuring they could access the services they need to start to rebuild their lives.

However, since the Grenfell Tower immigration policy was announced, we have been planning for the future of those residents affected by these unprecedented events and listening to their feedback, as well as the views of Sir Martin Moore-Bick.

The government believes it is right to provide this specific group of survivors greater certainty over their long-term future in the UK, subject to their continued eligibility and the necessary security and criminality checks being met.

Eligible survivors granted the initial 12 months' leave outside the Immigration Rules will be able to apply for further periods of limited leave with access to public funds and permission to work, and indefinite leave to remain after 5 years' lawful residence.

Meanwhile, relatives of survivors or victims of the tragedy will be able to stay in the UK for up to six months from their date of entry, it was confirmed today.

The new dedicated immigration policy allows relatives who have come to the UK to provide a short period of support to a survivor or to arrange the funeral

of a family member to have their stay extended.

Anyone who believes they are eligible for either scheme can speak face-to-face to a specialist Home Office team at:

The Community Assistance Centre
10 Bard Road
Nottingdale
West London
W10 6TP

Press release: Small firms benefitted from over £12 billion of government spending

Figures out today show that SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) benefitted from £12.2 billion worth of central government spending in 2015 to 16.

They also show that the amount government spends directly with SMEs has continued to climb. This now stands at £5.6 billion, representing a significant increase since 2011 to 12 when £4.4 billion was spent.

The proportion of total government spend going to SMEs currently stands at around one pound in every four.

But the government recognises that the latest figures show there is more to be done to reach its aspiration of spending one pound in every three with these businesses by 2022. While direct spend has increased, the overall target continues to be challenging, with issues of counting down supply chains causing difficulties for businesses themselves.

That is why it is proposing new measures to encourage more spend to flow to SMEs.

Caroline Nokes, Minister for government Resilience and Efficiency says:

SMEs are the backbone of the UK economy, fuelling economic growth and providing more than 15 million jobs. These businesses also play a vital role in helping government to deliver efficient, effective public services that meet the needs of our citizens and provide value for money for taxpayers.

We have set ourselves a challenging target, but we know this is the

right ambition. This Government is doing more than any previous Government to break down barriers for SMEs who want to supply to the public sector. We are confident these new measures will be welcomed by small businesses throughout the UK.

FSB National Chairman Mike Cherry said:

I welcome the commitment to make more use of the UK's ambitious and innovative small businesses when awarding public procurement contracts. Today's figures show there is still some way to go to reach the 33 per cent target, but I look forward to working with ministers to see it delivered and for this to be hardwired into the Government's upcoming Industrial Strategy.

It is also important for government departments and agencies not to hand public money to bigger companies which have a track record of treating smaller suppliers appallingly, with late payments and unfair contracts, and today's commitment on that is a positive step.

The proposed new measures include:

- using transparency to encourage large businesses to employ more SMEs in the supply chain
- improving visibility of opportunities available to SMEs in the supply chain
- making prompt payment part of the selection process for larger suppliers

The government will launch a consultation on these proposals in the coming weeks.

Earlier this year, it was announced that for the first time all of government's strategic suppliers have signed up to the fair payment terms in the Prompt Payment Code – helping to boost cash flow for small businesses and allowing them to invest in growth.

The Crown Commercial Service – the government's central procurement body – is leading the way in simplifying the application processes for small businesses who wish to become government suppliers.

All central government contracts above £10,000 are openly advertised on the government's procurement website, [Contracts Finder](#).

At the same time, government is also publishing a list of the 100 small and medium-sized enterprises who received the most spend from government

departments during 2015 to 16.

For more information about government spend with SMEs, go to www.gov.uk/CCS.

Further information

You can [view the statistics on government spending with SMEs on GOV.UK](#).

- government departments now spend around £5 billion more with SMEs than in 2011 to 12, when comparable figures were first collected. That year, around one pound in six was spent with SMEs.
- Network Rail are included as part of central government in the published figures for the first time, taking the total government procurement spend to £50.9 billion in 2015 to 16.
- with Network Rail spend excluded – to allow measuring on a like-for-like basis against 2014 to 15's figures – the government's overall percentage spend with SMEs is 25.5%. When Network Rail spend is included the overall percentage spend with SMEs is 24%.
- one of the biggest areas of spend is on defence. Ministry of Defence contracts are typically large and complex. Without MoD spend included, SME spend would be 27.7%.

Further details of the measures to boost spend include:

- using greater transparency to increase SMEs in the supply chain, by requiring them to publish annual data on their spend from government contracts flowing to smaller businesses in their supply chains
- improving visibility of opportunities available to SMEs by requiring suppliers to advertise their subcontracting opportunities on Contracts Finder so SMEs can bid
- making prompt payment part of the selection process for larger suppliers, and excluded them from the procurement process if a bidder fails to satisfy this selection condition