

**Rhwydwaith Iechyd
Cyhoeddus Cymru**
**Public Health
Network Cymru**



The Impact of Climate, Nature and Health in Wales

April 2022

Welcome

Welcome to the April edition of the e-bulletin.

Our most recent webinar focused on climate and health in Wales and was a great success. As a result this ebulletin focuses on climate and health in Wales and the impact this is having on population health and wellbeing.

We would love to hear about any additional information, case studies or tips to share with the wider public health community in Wales in future e-bulletins and our website so please get in touch with us at Publichealth.network@wales.nhs.uk or find us on twitter [@PHNetworkCymru](https://twitter.com/PHNetworkCymru)

Contact us

You can contact Public Health Network Cymru in a variety of ways

Email us
publichealth.network@wales.nhs.uk

Write to us
Public Health Network Cymru,
Public Health Wales, Floor 5,
Number 2 Capital Quarter,
Tyndall Street, Cardiff, CF10 4BZ

Social media
Twitter: [@PHNetworkCymru](https://twitter.com/PHNetworkCymru)
Facebook: [Publichealthnetworkcymru](https://www.facebook.com/Publichealthnetworkcymru)



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Headlines

World Health Day 2022



On the 7th April World Health Organization (WHO) celebrated **World Health Day**. On this occasion, WHO focused global attention on urgent actions needed to keep humans and the planet healthy and foster a movement to create societies focused on well-being. We should not forget that **the climate crisis is a health crisis**.

WHO has developed a [dedicated website](#) that provides information on the climate and health crisis: “over 90% of people breathe unhealthy air resulting from burning of fossil fuels. A heating world is seeing mosquitos spread diseases farther and faster than ever before. Extreme weather events, land degradation and water scarcity are displacing people and affecting their health. Pollution and plastics are found at the bottom of our deepest oceans, the highest mountains, and have made their way into our food chain.

Systems that produce highly processed, unhealthy foods and beverages are driving a wave of obesity, increasing cancer and heart disease while generating a third of global greenhouse gas emissions.”.

The website also includes additional resources such as videos and infographics

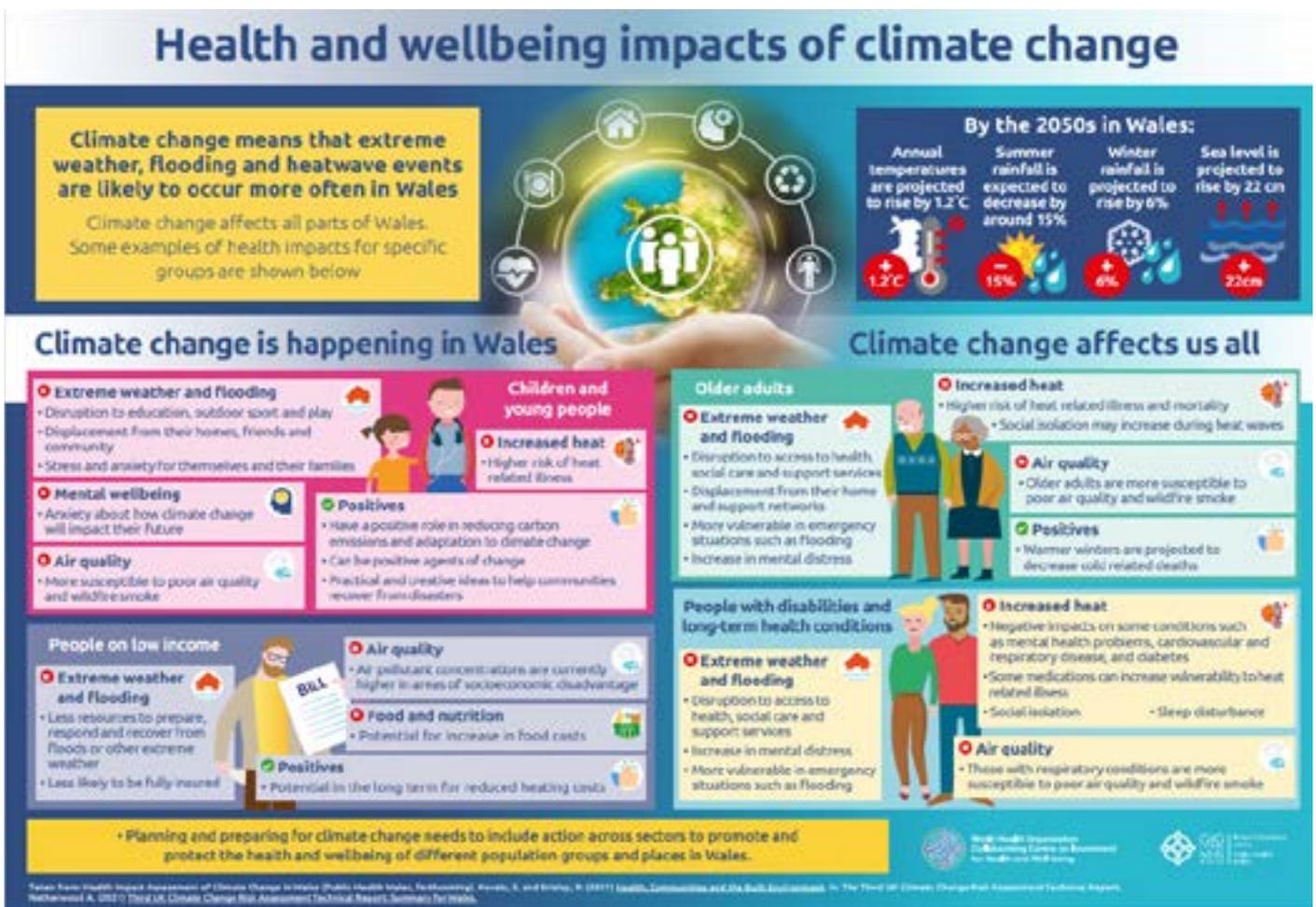
- [WHO recommendations](#) on what can governments/regions/mayors/individuals do to protect our planet and our health;
- [campaign toolkit](#), with social media messages and posters;
- Information on the [WHO Health for All Film Festival](#) which invites independent filmmakers, production companies, public institutions, NGOs, communities, students, and film schools from around the world to submit their original short films on health (submissions will be open from 30 October 2022 to 30 January 2023)

Healthy Environment Workshops

Public Health Wales has launched a new, free, [toolkit](#) to help partner organisations run Healthy Environment Workshops throughout Wales. The easy-to-use online resource will give teams the tools they need to run sessions which will help attendees to consider and reduce their negative impacts on the environment, and increase those activities that have a positive impact such as helping nature, reducing waste and carbon emissions. The toolkit and on-line workshop have been developed to contribute towards the aims of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, which all public bodies in Wales have a legal requirement to work towards.

Health and wellbeing impacts of climate change Infographic

Public Health Wales has published a series of [infographics](#) highlighting the importance of climate change impact on the health and wellbeing of the population of Wales, and to support public bodies and businesses to take action to address any impacts. The infographics focus on the relationships between the natural environment and health, the population groups affected and some of the key health and wellbeing impacts of climate change and those population groups who could be affected.



— What does climate change mean for the wildfire season in Wales?



Drone images were taken from Pant y Wal Windfarm, Northwest of Glynogwr when a fire broke out on the 25th March

The wildfire season in Wales is underway. These fires and the impact to communities are not new, there have been over 75,000 wildfires across South Wales since 2000. However, the recent surge in wildfires across Wales is an indicator of the risks and pressures we face in line with the current Climate Change predictions ([CCRA Evidence Report Wales](#)).

Internationally the World Health Organisation warns that wildfire or forest fires can have a significant impact on mortality and morbidity depending on the size, speed and proximity to the fire, and whether the population has advanced warning to evacuate ([WHO](#)).

In the UK fires tend to affect vegetated areas in close proximity to built-up areas, which is an important factor in regards to both the risk to human health and to assets ([CCRA3 Wildfire Report](#)). Wildfires can cause serious localised air pollution, leading to implications for human health.

The most important immediate health risk posed by air pollution from wildfire smoke is the onset of acute lower respiratory disease (ALRI) as a result of high concentrations of PM2.5.

Other impacts of wildfire emissions may also exacerbate symptoms of chronic conditions, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) increasing the overall mortality risk for those who are exposed ([CCRA3 Wildfire Report](#)).

Craig Hope, Wildfire Officer from South Wales Fire and Rescue Service explains how recent fires relate to climate change:

“A high-pressure system centred to the East of the UK brings sunny days, dry easterly winds and low humidity which rapidly dries out the dead annual vegetation. This weather pattern is associated with large wildfires on the uplands.

Highs at this time of year are not abnormal, but a sustained high is unusual. What is also unusual is that these early season fires are normally self-extinguished at night as the temperature drops below dew point and the vegetation becomes wet. We (in Wales) are not getting night-time temperatures low enough to achieve dew point, which is another reason these wildfires are burning for multiple days.”

In response, the Healthy Hillside project has been established as a collaborative approach to wildfire management in the South Wales valleys. Healthy Hillside is steered by four partners; South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Natural Resources Wales, The Wildlife Trust for South and West Wales and Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council. The project incorporates a Health Impact Assessment, working with the wider partnership including Public Health Wales.

Haf Leyshon, Project Manager for the Healthy Hillside Project says: “Through working together across Government, Charities, Landowners, and our public services we can create a sustainable approach to preventing large scale wildfires. A package of education, land management and firefighting techniques can enable a Wales wide approach to reducing this risk. The Healthy Hillside project aims to develop key learning and practices for future work.” For more information about Healthy Hillside, visit our social media pages @Hillside_Wales where you can access safety tips and keep up to date with our latest work. To get involved with the project, email HealthyHillside@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

Greener Primary Care Framework and Award Scheme



There is a recognition that climate change is the biggest threat to health and wellbeing in the medium and long term, and the consequences are likely to be wide ranging and adverse. As a result there has been an increased call to action for all health care professionals. The Greener Primary Care Framework is a Wales specific scheme which originated in the Primary Care Hub, Public Health Wales and is open to all four primary care contractor professions; General Practice, Community Pharmacy, Dental and Optometry. It has been developed in collaboration with an Expert Group consisting of Welsh Government policy officials, professional bodies and clinicians and is aligned to the NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan.

Since September 2021 the framework has developed at pace and the scheme is due to be

formally launched nationally during the week commencing 6th June 2022 alongside World Environment Day. The framework consists of over 50 actions across a broad range of categories such as waste and procurement; of which 29 are applicable to all primary care settings and the remainder being contractor-specific. Each action is aligned to the NHS Wales Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 goals and ways of working, Prudent Healthcare principles and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, where possible. The charity Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS) have been commissioned to develop, manage and maintain the online framework.

A national pilot across all health board areas in Wales has recently concluded. Over 140 expressions of interest were received to join the national pilot, of which 12 practices across the four independent contractors were selected. The pilot took place over eight weeks and each practice was tasked with completing a minimum of three actions, including a commitment to submit

evidence to the online framework. Qualitative and quantitative feedback has been gathered which the Primary Care Hub are currently analysing, and the results will inform final amendments to the Framework ready for June 2022..

The national launch will be supported by the Minister for Health and Social Services and the Minister for Climate Change. The Primary Care Hub will be promoting the launch of the framework during the first week of June (WC 6th) with a webinar being hosted via Public Health Network Cymru during this week. Please keep a look out on our [website](#) for further information and if you are interested in hearing more about the work or would like to get involved please contact greenerprimarycare@wales.nhs.uk.

— Healthy Working Wales

The Healthy Working Wales (HWW) programme, delivered by Public Health Wales on behalf of the Welsh Government, works with Welsh employers to create healthy and safe working environments that support the health and wellbeing of their staff. Organisations across Wales have a key role to play in tackling climate change, and our goal of a net zero Wales by 2050; developing innovative practice to sustain and regenerate the planet, ensuring good work that is fair for all employees and building a skilled and inclusive workforce.

Through the current HWW Awards Programme, employers have been encouraged and supported for many years to proactively manage their environmental impact. Employers are asked to consider ways they can reduce their carbon footprint and mitigate the impact of their operations, thus ensuring sustainability is an integral part of their business practice and culture. thriving communities that are able to collaborate and learn from each other.



For larger organisations, our Platinum Corporate Health Standard Award further encourages organisations to think wider than their own organisation, supporting other organisations to consider their own sustainability actions, and thus building thriving communities that are able to collaborate and learn from each other.

HWW held a Commendations Event in December 2021 with entries from employers for awards across a range of categories. Our 'Visionary Commendation for Sustainability' winner was Bridgend College. The College impressed judges through their innovative Climate Emergency Strategy which sets out a commitment to be net zero by 2040 with the College leading a partnership to plant at least 60,000 trees by the end of 2025 both on campus and off campus.

Equally, the runner-up employer, BCB International, a manufacturer and supplier of protective equipment for front line staff, has undertaken a range of activities such as installing solar panels and moving to electric fleet vehicles whilst participating in other green space initiatives. A report on the key themes from Commendation entries and a recording of the event can be found [here](#).

As part of the [HWW podcast series](#), our Employer Action on Environmental Sustainability episode hears from guest speaker Sue Husband OBE, Director of Business in the Community Cymru. Sue highlights the importance of employer action on sustainability, suggests the pandemic can be seen as an opportunity for organisations to reflect and refocus on reducing their' carbon footprint, and showcases some of the Welsh organisations who have already implemented sustainable actions:

- Bluestone National Park resort want to be the most responsible short break resort in the UK. In working towards this goal they have stopped selling bottled water on site and instead offer a free fresh water supply across the resort with fizzy water available in their bars. Holiday makers are told in advance to bring their own reusable bottles, thus saving around 42,000 plastic bottles. Bluestone have also considered sustainability in their procurement. They now use a local business, Pengarreg Laundry, as they pack products in sustainable packaging, are closer to site thus reducing mileage, and employ local people. As a result, over 200,000 single use plastic items have now been eliminated every year.
- South Wales Police are turning green too, this includes their fleet and development of a state-of-the-art Police Learning College that addresses climate change impacts and helps to fulfil their commitment to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.
- Castell Howell Foods is engaged with a range of Welsh Government initiatives such as The Economic Contract and the Economic Action Plan. Through this and their partnership with both the National Farmers Union and 3 Welsh Food Clusters, they are working hard towards their own net zero targets.
- Media company Sky have launched the first TV to be certified as a carbon neutral product and their new product, Sky Glass, saves energy by bringing three devices into one.

Employers have a vital role to play in taking action to become more sustainable as well as helping, guiding and supporting their employees and clients to become more sustainable. Those businesses that actively engage their workforce in the changes they need to make are likely to benefit from a more engaged and motivated workforce leading to improved staff wellbeing and productivity and better business results: “It’ll be companies that see tackling climate change as part of future proofing their business that really prosper in this changing world.” Sue Husband OBE, Business in the Community Cymru BITC’s toolkit for businesses, Seven Steps for Climate Action, can be found [here](#).

Podcasts

Listen to our latest podcast

Healthy Schools

What is the Welsh Network of Healthy School Scheme and Healthy and Sustainable Pre-school Scheme? What is a Whole School/Setting Approach? What does a 'healthy' School or Pre-school look like?

[Listen](#)

More Podcasts

[Basic Income, Health and Wales](#)[Listen](#)[Valleys Regional Park](#)[Listen](#)[Vaccine Hesitancy in Wales](#)[Listen](#)[See all podcasts](#)

Contribute to our Podcast?

If you are interested in recording a podcast with us, get in touch via email: publichealth.network@wales.nhs.uk

Videos

Watch our latest video

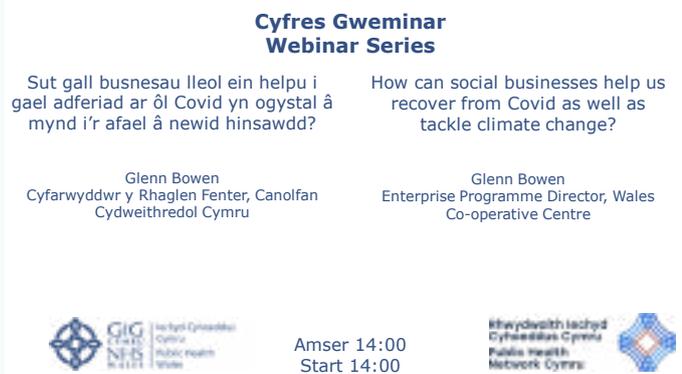


Climate and Health in Wales

There is an opportunity for Wales to embed the One Health approach, integrating multiple disciplines across the system and bringing together partners from the human, animal and environmental sectors to work on issues that intersect these domains.

[Watch](#)

More Videos

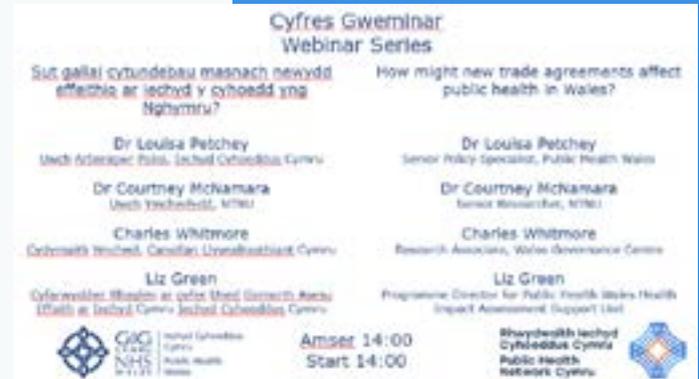


How can social businesses help us recover from Covid as well as tackle climate change?

In this webinar we heard from Glenn Bowen who is the Enterprise Programme Director for the Wales Co-operative Centre. Glenn gave an overview of social enterprises, co-operatives and employee owned business and the opportunities for co-ops and social enterprises in health and social care and the renewable energy sector.

[See all videos](#)

[Watch](#)



How might new trade agreements affect public health in Wales?

Trade agreements have the potential to affect health and well-being in Wales in many ways – from the food we eat to our healthcare services, job market and ability to invest in public services. They may also affect the ability of the Welsh Government to improve public health through new policy.

[Watch](#)

The Grapevine

Green Opportunities

The Health and Sustainability Hub publish Green Opportunities, a quarterly e-briefing which captures learning and identifies best practice to support the implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations Act through a green recovery from COVID-19, given the challenges and inequalities which the pandemic has further exposed.

https://phwwhocc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/PHW_Winter_2021_E-briefing-English-FINAL.pdf

This edition focuses on the ways in which we can move towards a circular economy –

one which reduces waste to zero by keeping everything in use - products that will last longer, can be repaired or ultimately can be dismantled and the components reused.

Hopefully, you will find inspiration on a range of sustainable opportunities to contribute towards a healthy, fair and sustainable future for Wales.

We would be grateful if you could share with your wider networks.

Please also share any feedback, we welcome all comments.

Lupus Support: Staying connected



Lupus

Lupus is a complex, chronic autoimmune disease disproportionately affecting women.

Diagnosis is often difficult as lupus can mimic other illnesses and presents with different symptoms in each person. Receiving a diagnosis and living with lupus can be life-changing, isolating and emotionally difficult to cope with. Despite this, good support from healthcare professionals, education about the disease, and the ability to talk with others who understand can help empower someone living with lupus



Cardiff Lupus Group

Our support group started in early 2019 with its first meeting in the Star Hub, where we had an informative presentation from a local rheumatologist. We are a volunteer peer-led group that aims to listen to members and provide them with the right support. During the COVID-19 pandemic we couldn't continue our regular meetings but knew that this wouldn't stop us from providing support to our members, especially as they were even more isolated. Considering that many people with lupus are at high risk from COVID-19, we decided to try something new and make the best use of technology. Thanks to support from LUPUS UK's head office and funding from the National Lottery Community Fund, we were provided with a software licence for virtual meetings.

Some of our members had never had the opportunity to meet another person with lupus despite being diagnosed for many years. Our virtual meetings provided all of them the opportunity to meet, and openly talk. To help provide the best tools for coping with this disease, we have regularly invited guest speakers to discuss topics that matter to our members, not as a webinar but as an interactive conversation where everyone participates.

We also became more active on social media to reach many of those who use these platforms as their main source of communication. Additionally, we set up a mobile chat group to enable regular communication with the other members. The feedback has been wonderful; our members have been supporting each other, developed more understanding about lupus and have felt less lonely, especially during critical moments such as flares of their disease.

Next steps

We are currently moving towards hybrid support: in-person and virtual meetings. We're also working on new projects and initiatives to support the mental health of people with lupus in Wales. We would like to see more people with lupus being able to access specialist healthcare services and we aim to improve the long-term quality of life for people with lupus. We hope that this initiative motivates and encourages other support groups to find solutions that help their members. LUPUS UK has support groups based in Cardiff, Pembrokeshire & Carmarthenshire, and North Wales. For contact information, please email headoffice@lupusuk.org.uk or call 01708 731251.



News

05-05-2022

Comic Relief Community Fund in Wales

[Read](#)

05-05-2022

WHO/Europe to launch new sugar and calorie reduction initiative led by the United Kingdom

[Read](#)

03-05-2022

£2.4m for projects to reduce NHS Wales emissions

[Read](#)

14-04-2022

PrEP Awareness Campaign in Wales

[Read](#)

13-04-2022

Nearly £8m in funding to extend employment support services

[Read](#)

13-04-2022

Rural communities face pivotal time of change as 'Triple challenge' impacts take effect

[Read](#)

[See all news](#)

Events



25-05-2022
2:00pm-3:00pm

[Register](#)

Public attitudes and behaviours during the COVID-19 pandemic, a behavioural science approach

The webinar will highlight examples of how behavioural science was used in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



10-05-2022 -
11-05-2022

[More](#)

Improvement Cymru National Conference

The Improvement Cymru National Conference will be held online on 10-11 May 2022. It brings together everyone interested in and working on improvements across health and care in Wales to celebrate, network and learn.



17-05-2022
9:30am-12:30pm

[More](#)

ACE: Building resilience in the face of adverse childhood experiences

This course is aimed at professionals working with children & young people who are interested in building an understanding of ACE's.



14-06-2022
8am-4:30pm

[More](#)

Improving Health and Increasing Activity Conference

This conference will focus on how to adopt a preventative health approach across your community through the promotion and prescription of physical activity.

[See all events](#)

Topics

[See all topics](#)

- A** Accidents and injury prevention
Adverse Childhood Experiences
Air Quality
Alcohol and substance use and misuse
Approaches and methods in public health practice
Arts and health
- B** Behaviour change
Biodiversity and greenspace
Built environment
Cancers
Cardiovascular conditions
Carers
Children and young people
Climate change
Communicable diseases
Community
Community assets
COVID-19
- D** Debt and benefits
Diabetes
Diet and nutrition

Early Years
Education and training
Employment
Environment
Ethnicity
Evaluation
- F** Foodborne communicable diseases
Fuel Poverty
Further, higher and tertiary education
- G** Good, fair work
- H** Health in all policies
Health inequalities
Health related behaviours
Homelessness
Housing
Housing quality
Human rights and social justice
- I** Income and resources
Influenza
- L** Learning difficulties
LGBTQ+
- M** Maternal and new born health
Men
Mental health conditions
Mental ill-health
Mental wellbeing
- N** Natural environment
Non-communicable diseases
- O** Offenders
Older adults
Oral health
- P** People
Physical activity
Planning
Poverty
Precarious work
Preschool (including WNHPSS)
Prevention in healthcare
- R** Respiratory conditions
- S** School (Including WNHPSS)
Sexual health
Sexually Transmitted Infections
Smoking and vaping
Social capital
Spirituality
Stress, coping and resilience
Suicide and suicide prevention
Sustainable development
Systems thinking in public health
- T** Transport
- U** Unemployment
- W** Water and sanitation
Wellbeing of Future Generations
Wider determinants of health
Women
Working age adults

Next Issue

Behaviour Change in Public Health

