



## Top Health News

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### World-first fully robotic heart transplant completed

In a landmark move, the world's first fully robotic heart transplant has been successfully performed on a 16-year-old suffering from end-stage heart failure in Saudi Arabia, King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre has announced.

The procedure, which took two and a half hours to complete, was practiced seven times over a three-day period in virtual reality.

Dr Feras Khaliel led the surgery; he is head of cardiac surgery and director of robotics at KFSHRC. Dr Khaliel and his team – which he selected based on “harmony and coordination” – prepared

for the procedure for weeks.

CEO at KSHRC, Dr Majid Al Fayyad, has described the news as a “transformative leap”.

He added: “This remarkable achievement would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our visionary leadership, who have prioritised the development of the healthcare sector, paving the way for a transformative leap in healthcare services, unlocking new possibilities to elevate the quality of life for patients both locally and globally.”

KFSHRC has been ranked 1st in the Middle East and Africa and 20th globally

in the list of the world's top 250 academic medical centres for the second year running.

KFSHRC collaborates with medical institutions across the world to advance global understanding of minimally invasive organ transplants.

Deputy executive director of academic and training affairs at KFSHRC, Dr Ali Alshehri, recently wrote a piece for the National Health Executive digital magazine explaining how to navigate through post-pandemic challenges in medical education through interdisciplinary collaboration.

[Louis Morris, National Health Executive](#)

### New electrical stimulation treatments for patients detailed at Bath conference

A series of new electronic stimulation products and treatments to help people with health conditions including were exhibited and discussed at a conference in Bath last week.

The International Functional Electrical Stimulation Society (IFESS) UK conference hosted academics, clinicians, industry figures and people with a range of disabilities and medical conditions looking to find out more about the burgeoning field of research.

Taking place on the University of Bath campus between 1 and 3 September, the event comprised one day of workshops and a two-day conference, where the latest developments in the field were shared.

The conference was chaired by the

University's Dr Ben Metcalfe and Dr Dingguo Zhang, alongside Professor Ian Swain (Bournemouth University) and Dr Tamsyn Street of Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust, which is home to the National FES Centre at Odstock Hospital.

Sponsors of the conference included Kurage and the Bath Institute for the Augmented Human, recently created to develop and deploy technology to enhance people's physical and cognitive abilities.

Dr Ben Metcalfe, co-chair of the conference and Bath's Head of Department of Electronic & Electrical Engineering, said: “We were delighted to host IFESS 2024 at Bath.

“IFESS not only showcases the latest

innovations in neuromuscular stimulation but also inspires a collective commitment to improving rehabilitation outcomes and enhancing the quality of life for individuals worldwide.

“Over 150 delegates attended the event, and we heard from leading innovators as well as inspirational speakers with a personal lived experience of disability.”

Workshops at the event focused on issues including the use of electrostimulation in rehabilitation of patients with neurological conditions following amputations, the treatment of geriatric and home health patients, and how to equip clinicians to bridge the gap between research and clinical practice.

[Health Tech Digital.com](#)

# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER



## New XEC Covid variant starting to spread

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People have started catching a new Covid variant that could soon take off and become the dominant type, according to scientists.

Identified in Germany, in June, cases of the XEC variant have since emerged in the UK, US, Denmark and several other countries, say users on X, external formerly known as Twitter.

It has some new mutations that might help it spread this autumn, although vaccines should still help prevent severe cases, experts say.

For those more likely to become seriously ill from Covid, the NHS offers a

free booster shot.

The vaccines have been updated to better match recent variants, although not XEC, which has emerged from earlier Omicron subvariants.

Prof Francois Balloux, Director of the Genetics Institute at University College London, told BBC News that although XEC has a "slight transmission advantage" over other recent Covid variants, vaccines should still offer good protection.

He says it is possible XEC will become the dominant subvariant over the winter though.

Director of the Scripps Research Translational Institute, in California, Eric Topol says XEC is "just getting started".

"And that's going to take many weeks, a couple months, before it really takes hold and starts to cause a wave," he told the LA Times.

"XEC is definitely taking charge.

"That does appear to be the next variant.

"But it's months off from getting into high levels."

[Michelle Roberts, BBC News](#)

## New screening trial could save thousands from prostate cancer

A £42m screening trial aimed at revolutionising the treatment of prostate cancer has been launched in the UK.

Thousands of men will be involved in its initial phase, which will begin in a few months. Several hundred thousand volunteers could be recruited as the programme progresses in coming years, say the trial's organisers.

The trial, known as Transform, has been funded by Prostate Cancer UK with significant support from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), Movember and several other partners, and has been set up because the condition has remained an intractable health problem in the UK for decades. One in eight men get prostate cancer in the UK and around 12,000 die

## Recipe of the Month - Gnocchi with pea pesto, asparagus & watercress

### Recipe

- Handful fresh mint leaves
- 2 tbs pine nuts
- ½ a lemon
- 200g frozen garden peas
- 30g vegetarian Italian hard cheese
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped
- 1 tbs extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ tsp sea salt flakes
- 300g fresh gnocchi
- 125g asparagus
- Handful cherry tomatoes
- 2 handfuls watercress



Blog and Photo credit: Corrie Heale

every year.

Yet there is no screening service available to pinpoint the disease's early, treatable stages. Symptoms frequently do not appear until the cancer has spread and has become incurable.

"The aim of Transform is straightforward," said Dr Matthew Hobbs, the director of research for Prostate Cancer UK. "We want to find the most effective, least harmful methods to screen the UK's adult male

To see the method for this recipe, and for more recipes from Corrie, sign into [www.heales.com](http://www.heales.com) and click on Healthy Eating Blog.

population for prostate cancer and catch the disease in its early stages."

The prostate, a gland only found in men, is the size of a walnut and makes fluid which protects the tube that carries urine and sperm out of the body. When cancers develop there, they can remain without noticeable effect. It is only when these cancerous cells spread in some cases to the rest of the body that they trigger illness.

[Robin McKie, The Guardian](#)

# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER



[Click on the orange text for full article](#)

## New Mental Health Act statistics show urgent need for reform

Mental health leaders are calling for the government to fast-track reform, after new statistics revealed stark inequalities in how the Mental Health Act is used.

There were almost 52,500 new detentions under the act during 2023/24, which is broadly similar to past years, although incomplete data means the actual figure is probably slightly higher.

Using data from the subset of providers that submitted good quality data on

detentions, NHS England estimates that there was a 2.5% increase in detentions from last year.

There were approximately 25,500 new short term orders for 2023/24 as well as 5,600 new community treatment orders.

### Disparities in use

The new data also shows, however, that Black people and those living in areas of deprivation are almost four times more likely to be 'sectioned' under the act.

Black people are also over eight times more likely than white people to receive a community treatment order.

As well as demographically, the disparities are evident geographically with people living in North Central London five times more likely to be detained under the act than those in Somerset.

The Centre for Mental Health is calling on the government to speed up the reform of the Mental Health Act – something which it committed to during the King's Speech.

The organisation also emphasises that reforms must fully implement the 2018 review of the act and include capital funding for the regeneration of outdated mental health buildings. Changes are "long overdue" according to Andy Bell, CEO at the Centre for Mental Health.

[Louis Morris, National Health Executive](#)

## Workout of the month - Quick Workplace Mobility

### Exercises

1. Standing hip circles
2. Standing twist
3. Shoulder rolls
4. Upper back stretch

No reps, no sets, with these exercises you can do as many or as few, as you feel you need, as little or as often as choose to. r 10 repetitions with as little rest as possible for 4-5 rounds.

To see Carys performing the workout, and for details on how to do the exercises, log on to the Heales Medical Health and Wellbeing portal and check out the workout on our homepage.



Blog and Photo credit:  
Carys Swanton

## AI technology can detect early signs of over 1,000 diseases, say researchers

New AI technology can detect early signs of more than 1,000 diseases, long before there are any symptoms, according to new research.

The computer algorithm, called MILTON, analyses patient test results commonly collected by GPs to detect patterns in the data - and predict with high confidence a disease diagnosis many years later.

Pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca, which developed the artificial intelligence tool, said it will accelerate the development of more effective and

targeted treatments.

But it is also making the data freely available to other researchers, who could develop diagnostic tests that allow early preventative treatment to stop diseases in their tracks.

Slave Petrovski, who led the research, told Sky News: "For many of these diseases, by the time they manifest clinically and the individual goes to the doctor because of an ailment or visible observation that is far down the line from when the disease process began.

"There may have been a whole cascade of events that happened in the blood before it was symptomatic.

"We can pick up signatures in an individual that are highly predictive of developing diseases like Alzheimer's, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), kidney disease and many others."

AstraZeneca used data from 500,000 people who are part of the UK Biobank, a vast repository of health information.

[Byline](#)

# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER



## Health Promotion and Education

Heales Medical can help advise and manage proactive health promotion days that will encourage employees to adopt healthier lifestyles.

Our health promotion days specialise in the prevention of ill health and the promotion of health & well-being within your organisation.

Our services are delivered by high calibre, well qualified staff with a broad experience base and all results are assessed against National Clinical Guidelines.

During each assessment, the health professional will ask lifestyle questions about the employee's general health and give health advice.

After each assessment we will be able to provide results, advice and an information pack.

If you have any queries or are interested in having an event, please contact a Heales Occupational Health Advisor or Contract Manager for further information.



- ✓ Advice of physical activity
- ✓ Advice on healthy eating
- ✓ Advice on weight management
- ✓ Advice on stress management
- ✓ Advice on smoking, alcohol & drugs
- ✓ Understanding blood pressure
- ✓ Understanding blood cholesterol

## Health and Wellbeing Portal

For more resources see our Health and Wellbeing Portal!

Our portal has a wide range of information, tips and advice to help you support your health and wellbeing, including:

- Health Promotion Blog
- COVID-19 advice
- Health & healthy eating tips
- Health Newsletter archive
- Healthy lifestyle & exercise blog
- Vegetarian blog
- Accessible apps
- Specific information and tip pages for injury, illness and disability in daily life and in the workplace
- Occupational Health information

Pages and information will be updated and added to continually, if you have any suggestions, let us know at [carys.wheeler@heales.com](mailto:carys.wheeler@heales.com).

## Health Promotion Calendar

Click on the event to go to their website.

### OCTOBER

Stoptober

[01/10/24-31/10/24](#)

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

[01/10/24-31/10/24](#)

BackCare Awareness Week

[02/10/24-07/10/24](#)

World Mental Health Day

[10/10/2024](#)

World Menopause Awareness Day

[18/10/2024](#)

### NOVEMBER

November, Men's Health Awareness Month

[1/11/24-30/11/24](#)

Mouth Cancer Action Month

[1/11/24-30/11/24](#)

Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month

[1/11/24-30/11/24](#)

UK Malnutrition Awareness Week

[06/11/24-12/11/24](#)

World Diabetes Day

[14/11/24](#)

World COPD Day

[15/11/24](#)

International Stress Awareness Week

[30/10/24-3/11/24](#)