### In brief

**Babies born at weekends are at slightly higher risk of death and complications in the first seven days**, a study published in the BMJ has found. Researchers at Imperial College London identified four of seven factors were significantly worse for mothers and babies. In particular the perinatal mortality rate was 7.3 per 1,000 babies delivered at weekends, 0.9 more than for weekdays. The authors draw no definitive conclusions and note that several factors may have influenced the findings.

**Children can wait up to six months for face-to-face assessments by specialist local mental health services**, according to the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The average waiting time between referral and assessment by local child and adolescent mental health services ranged from one week to more than 26 weeks. The average waiting time was nearly two months. Go to tinyurl.com/pegrgnc

**Stronger controls on price promotions for unhealthy food and drink, greater control over food advertisements aimed at young people, and a tax on full-sugar drinks are among the recommendations for tackling childhood obesity in a new report from the Commons health committee. The committee wants the government to take ‘bold and urgent’ action to address the rising levels of obesity in children and young people.** Go to tinyurl.com/qdum622

**Charity CLIC Sargent has launched a free online guide on relationships and sex for young people aged over 16 with cancer.** With a mixture of video, written content and FAQs, the guide includes advice on body image, safer sex, sexual identity and communication. Go to www.clicsargent.org.uk/relationships

### News

#### Alder Hey employs extra nurses for move to Springfield Park

**AN INCREASE in nurses at a trailblazing children’s hospital has helped smooth a potentially difficult transition for patients moving from the hospital’s old site.** The new Alder Hey Children’s Hospital in Liverpool, built in the grounds of Springfield Park, is one of the biggest children’s hospitals in Europe, with 270 beds including 48 critical care beds. It opened its doors to patients in October.

Project lead, nurse and former RCN president, Andrea Spyropoulos said the hospital’s nurses had been ‘amazing and fundamental’ in making the move run smoothly.

‘We hired 70 nurses in anticipation of the move and took on all nursing students who qualified in the six months preceding the move,’ said Ms Spyropoulos.

‘We were understaffed two years ago, but we recognised that, if we wanted the new environment to work, we had to increase staffing levels. ‘It has made a big difference and it was necessary to cope with the level of care we wanted to deliver.’

The £250 million project began when it was decided the original Victorian building, which celebrated its centenary this year, was no longer fit for purpose.

#### England spends more than £1 billion to treat malnutrition

**CARING FOR malnourished children costs the NHS more than £1 billion a year, according to a new report.** The findings from the National Institute for Health Research Southampton Biomedical Research Centre and the British Association for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (BAPEN) showed malnutrition affected 4% to 15% of all children accessing health care.

Malnutrition treatment for children cost the NHS £1.176 billion, or 6% of a total £19.6 billion spent on malnutrition in England in 2011/12.

The Cost of Malnutrition in England and Potential Cost Savings from Nutritional Interventions report said malnutrition increases healthcare use and interventions would reduce costs. ‘It is necessary to invest money before the financial benefits can be reaped,’ the report stated.

RCN professional lead for children and young people Fiona Smith said children’s nurses were well placed to tackle the issue.

‘Nurses, health visitors and midwives working with children, young people and their families have an important role in promoting good nutrition and enabling young people themselves to make healthy lifestyle choices,’ she said.

#### Osborne announces student bursaries will be replaced by loans

**BURSARIES FOR nursing students are to be replaced by loans, chancellor George Osborne announced in his spending review and autumn statement.**

Mr Osborne said the move, which will see publicly funded nursing bursaries phased out, will create ‘up to 10,000 new training places’ in this term of parliament.

Concerns have been raised that the decision will saddle students with more debt.