

28th March 2022

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Maggie Throup MP,
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Vaccines and Public Health,
House of Commons,
London,
SW1A 0AA

Dear Under Secretary of State,

Lead Exposure and Poisoning Prevention

In a letter to Dame Cheryl Gillan in 2019, your predecessor, Jo Churchill MP, stated that *“prevalence is likely to be higher in at-risk populations, in whom lead exposure may be a public health concern”*. A Unicef report estimates that 186,117 to 281,542 UK children have dangerous concentrations of lead in their blood. This could be costing the country 0.31% of GDP or £6bn per year.

It is, therefore, very disappointing to find that there is no mention of lead exposure or lead toxicity in the NHS Long-Term Plan nor the “Giving Every Child The Best Start In Life” programme. It is probable that many UK children have had a very poor start to life by being exposed to life-changing amounts of lead.

Lead toxicity is associated with a wide range of health problems including:

- Reproductive – miscarriage, pre-term birth, low birth weight, delayed puberty
- Neurological - IQ loss, decreased hearing
- Psychological - problem behaviours, ADHD, depression, anxiety, panic
- Cardiovascular – heart attack, stroke, increased blood pressure
- Renal – reduced kidney function

Please will you ensure lead exposure and toxicity is included in the NHS Long-Term Plan and the “Giving Every Child The Best Start in Life” programme and also support the following:

1. Screening of children for elevated blood lead concentrations (EBLC).
2. Research into the prevalence of EBLCs in children.
3. Inclusion of lead risks in the Healthy Homes and Buildings White Paper.
4. Ensuring the UK matches the new, lower, EU limits on lead in food.
5. Provision of more information on the dangers of lead exposure to the following:
 - a. Health care providers, particularly GPs.
 - b. Housing leaders – tenants and housing associations, professional bodies.
 - c. Tradesmen and DIYers.

The Lead Exposure and Poisoning Prevention ([LEAPP](#)) Alliance



Our "[Manifesto for a Lead-Safe UK](#)" explains the issue in much more detail with full references to scientific papers and government sources.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Pye
LEAPP Alliance

Endorsed by:

- Steve Norris as a Member of the LEAPP Alliance.
- Frank Sheppard, Lead Containing Materials Association
- Hesaan Sheridan, Heritage Testing
- Dr Simon Reddy, Lead In The Water
- Dr Caroline Taylor, Senior Research Fellow, University of Bristol
- Dr Ludovica Gazze, Assistant Professor, University of Warwick
- Dr Andrew Turner, Reader in Environmental Science, University of Plymouth
- Professor Erik Millstone, Science Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex
- Dr Jane A Entwistle, Professor of Applied Geochemistry and Health, Northumbria University
- Dr Lindsay Bramwell, Research Fellow in Environment and Health, Northumbria University
- Dr Ashley Mills, Public Health Data Scientist, Centre for Health Services Studies, University of Kent
- Julia Klein, parent

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