
In brief

Ivory Coast health services are depleted by conflict: The health situation in the conflict affected regions of Montagnes and Moyen-Cavally in Ivory Coast remains critical, with more than 50% of health centres and 62% of district hospitals not functioning, says the World Health Organization. Also, 58% of surgeons and gynaecologists and 72% of GPs (who have not received salaries for three months or have fled the conflict) are absent.

Cases of malaria rise by a third in UK: The number of reported malaria infections in the United Kingdom rose from 1370 cases in 2008 to 1761 in 2010, show figures from the Health Protection Agency. Most infected people had not taken precautions (850 (85%) of the 997 with information available). Over the past 10 years around half of all the cases have been in people who travel to West Africa or India, mostly to visit friends and relatives.

Spain's smoking ban has desired effect: One hundred days after Spain imposed a ban on smoking in public places, 64% of the citizens support the measure, 19% of smokers consume slightly less tobacco, and 10% smoke much less, shows a survey

of 1562 people by the Spanish Consumers and Users Organisation. Overall numbers of visits to restaurants and bars have not fallen.

Mother withdraws request for daughter to be sterilised: The mother of a 21 year old UK woman with "significant learning difficulties" has withdrawn her application for a Court of Protection ruling allowing her to be sterilised. The case originally came to court in February, the day before the woman was due to give birth to her second child, but was adjourned for expert evidence to be obtained. Now the mother has decided she no longer wants the sterilisation to go ahead.

Eradicating avian flu will take a decade or more: Eliminating the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian flu virus from poultry in the six countries where it remains endemic—Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, and Vietnam—will take 10 or more years and require consistent engagement rather than just an emergency response, says a report by the Food and Agriculture Organization. Avian flu in humans has a high death rate.

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