News in brief: up to 28 million Britons live with chronic pain

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Problems such as low back pain are thought to affect at least 35 per cent of adultsJACOM STEPHENS/GETTY IMAGES

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Up to 28 million Britons are living with chronic pain, new estimates suggest. Problems such as low back pain or osteoarthritis affect between 35 per cent and 51 per cent of British adults.

Experts estimate that 43 per cent of adults have pain that has lasted for more than three months and they warned that the figure was likely to rise as the population ages.

In the study, published in the journal *BMJ Open*, experts examined data from 19 studies that involved almost 140,000 UK adults. They found that chronic pain prevalence increased with age, affecting almost two thirds of people over 75. The authors wrote: “Chronic pain affects between one third and one half of the population of the UK, corresponding to just under 28 million adults, based on data from the best available published studies. Chronic pain prevalence rises steadily with age, affecting up to 62 per cent of the population over the age of 75, suggesting that chronic pain may increase further still, in line with an ageing population.”

They also found that around eight million people suffer moderate to severely disabling chronic pain and women are more likely than men to be affected by pain in general.

**British executive charged with murder of Kenyan ‘who could not have killed herself’**  
A post-mortem examination of a Kenyan woman who died from a gunshot wound at the home of a British business executive proves that she could not have shot herself, prosecutors told a court in Nairobi*(Anna Dubuis writes).*

Richard Alden, 52, is accused of the murder of Grace Wangechi Kinyanjui, 42, who died on June 4 in Karen, an affluent suburb of Nairobi. Mr Alden, from Cowbridge, South Wales, says that Ms Kinyanjui, a business manager at a security company, shot herself by accident. A report on the post-mortem examination, provided to the court yesterday, says that Ms Kinyanjui died from a single gunshot to the right side of her back which exited on the left side of her neck. The report “indicates that she could not have shot herself”, according to an affidavit signed by the investigating officer.

Catherine Mwaniki, for the prosecution, said that Mr Alden would soon be charged over a falsified firearm licence and fake firearm certificate. She said his guard and house help could become prosecution witnesses and called for him to remain in custody to prevent intimidation of witnesses.

Cliff Ombeta, for Mr Alden, argued that having a fake licence was only an allegation. He denied that Mr Alden would be a flight risk or intimidate witnesses. Judge Jessie Lesiit will make a decision on bail on June 30.

Mr Alden, who has three children with his French wife Martine, has been living in Kenya since 2013 when he became chief executive of Wananchi Group, one of east Africa’s biggest internet providers.

**Schoolboys give their friend a sporting chance**  
A group of schoolboys linked arms to allow a classmate with Down’s Syndrome to win a race at their sports day. The year six pupils at Wrawby St Mary’s primary school, near Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire, took a joint decision to come joint second behind Rory Kettles, 11.

Rory’s mother Ros, who works in family support at North Lincolnshire council, said: “After he crossed the finish line he was really excited and just kept saying ‘I won! I won!’. He’s in such a lovely class — all the children have always included Rory — but they’re an especially lovely bunch.”

The boys will move on to secondary school in September. Mariclare Potterton, the head of Wrawby St Mary’s, said: “I’m incredibly proud of all the children. Just before the race they asked if it was OK. They had obviously been discussing it beforehand. It was so emotional.”

**Drawer full of bras, but women wear only two**  
One in three women use the same two bras in rotation despite having dozens in their drawers, according to a study by Rigby & Peller, corsetieres to the Queen. A third of the 2,000 women polled said they would just throw away a new bra after finding that it doesn’t fit properly, while a similar proportion have been wearing their same favourite two bras for more than ten years. More than 60 per cent of women said that they didn’t have any underwear that made them feel confident.

**‘Sociable’ horse shot in face with longbow arrow**  
A colt that was shot in the face with a longbow was lucky to survive, the RSPCA said. Hertfordshire police have appealed for witnesses after Widget, a skewbald cob-type yearling, was found injured in a field on Saturday evening. An arrow had passed through his nasal cavity and eye socket but stopped short of his brain. The horse, described as a “sociable little chap”, was recovering well after treatment at the Royal Veterinary College in North Mymms, although the RSPCA said that it was too early to know whether he would lose an eye. Detective Sergeant Dan Stoddart, the investigating officer, said: “This is a senseless, cruel crime and we are doing all we can to find the person responsible.”

**Solicitor took overdose to escape abuse memories**  
A solicitor haunted by being sexually abused as a child died after taking an overdose, an inquest was told. Rebecca Wilkins, 34, from Worcester, suffered a cardiac arrest in hospital on February 19. Her inquest was told that the marathon runner had taken tablets before to escape flashbacks to the abuse she suffered from age five. Andrew Cox, assistant coroner for Worcestershire, recorded a verdict of accidental death. Her sister, Louise Wilkins, said: “She was bright, she was fun. But, I think she was also very sad.”

**Child killer dies in jail**  
A child killer has been beaten to death in a maximum security prison. Sidonio Teixeira, who was jailed for life in 2007 for the murder of his three-year-old daughter, died after being attacked in a workshop at Long Lartin prison in Worcestershire. Victor Castigador, a 61-year-old inmate originally from the Philippines, was being questioned by police. Teixeira was understood to have been attacked with a blunt instrument hidden in a sock at about 9am on Monday.

**TV show investigated**  
Ofcom is to investigate *Loose Women*, the ITV show, after Katie Price’s disabled son, Harvey, 14, swore live on air. The boy joined the model on the show last month to discuss internet trolls. The media watchdog confirmed that it had received ten complaints after the episode on May 17. Harvey, who is visually impaired and autistic, has been the target of online abuse.

**Siblings’ £2m squabble**  
An elderly brother and sister came to blows over their late father’s £2 million fortune, the High Court has heard. Fay Crabbe, 74, is alleged to have “slapped” her brother Edward Townsend, 67, when they met to discuss the fortune left by Ted Townsend, who died in 2004 after building a caravan business in Oxfordshire. The hearing to resolve the estate continues.

**Bragg splits from wife**  
Lord Bragg has separated from his wife of 43 years to move in with the woman he had an affair with more than 20 years ago. The broadcaster said that he and his wife, Cate Haste, 70, an author, had agreed to an amicable separation. He is said to have rekindled a relationship with Gabriel Clare-Hunt, 60, a former film assistant with whom he had an affair in 1995.

**Water ‘blown off Venus’**  
Venus may have been stripped of its oceans by an “electric wind” that sent its water whizzing off into space, a study suggests. In spite of a surface temperature of 460C (860F) Venus is thought to have contained about as much water as Earth several billion years ago, according to scientists at Nasa and University College London writing in the journal *Geophysical Review Letters*.