

Public Health Agreement for Chlamydia Screening in Pharmacy

1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022



SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

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1.0. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this specification is to set out the agreement for opportunistic Chlamydia screening and treatment in community pharmacies for the target population of under 25 year olds, as defined by the National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP).

1.2. In Surrey Chlamydia screening packs are currently distributed via a number of outlets. Providers currently taking part in the Chlamydia Screening Programme (CSP) will continue to do so under the terms of the CSP SLA. This service is to encourage supply of screening packs through healthcare premises, in order to reach a larger number of the target population and to improve uptake of Chlamydia screening.

2.0. Background

2.1. Genital Chlamydia trachomatis infection is the sexually transmitted infection most frequently diagnosed in genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics in England. Prevalence of infection is highest in sexually active young men and women, especially those aged less than 25 years. Untreated infection can have serious long-term consequences, particularly for women, in whom it can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), ectopic pregnancy and tubal factor infertility. Since many infections are asymptomatic, a large proportion of cases remain undiagnosed, although infection can be diagnosed easily and effectively treated.

2.2. The Government launched The National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP) in 2005. The objective of the programme is to control Chlamydia through the early detection and treatment of asymptomatic infection, preventing the development of sequelae and reducing onward transmission of the disease. The aim is a multi-faceted, evidence based and cost effective national prevention programme in which all sexually active young men and women under 25 years of age, and those under 16 years of age deemed Fraser competent, are aware of Chlamydia, its effects, and have access to services providing screening, prevention and treatment. An opportunistic approach is used bringing on board a diverse combination of healthcare and non-healthcare screening venues to deliver the programme. Chlamydia screening is currently carried out across England primarily through GUM clinics and GP surgeries, but also the voluntary and business sectors play a key role in delivering the NCSP.

2.3. The NCSP covers the whole country and is managed by the Public Health England (PHE). National standards apply to the programme and following Health Lives, Healthy People (2010) White Paper funding has been provided to Local Authority to commission all sexual health services.

2.4. Chlamydia Screening Offices (CSOs) coordinate the service locally. Screening, using first-void urine samples or self-taken vulva vaginal swabs, is initiated in a range of settings both clinical and non-clinical, or packs are supplied for clients to take home for self-testing and return. Samples are sent to a laboratory for analysis using the nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT) and the results are returned to the CSO; clients are then informed of their result and contact tracing is conducted with people with positive results and treatment is offered to people who screen positive and their partners. Some areas also screen samples for Gonorrhoea.

2.5. In November 2005 a two-year partnership between the Department of Health (DH) and Boots the Chemists to pilot free Chlamydia screening and treatment for 16 to 24 year olds within the greater London area commenced. The pathfinder was independently evaluated by TNS Healthcare. The evaluation shows considerable promise with over 87% of young people reporting they would recommend the service. The evaluation is available on the [DH website](#).

3.0. Agreement

3.1. This Enhanced Pharmacy service agreement is between the Council and the Provider, in this instance, the Pharmacy Contractor. The authorised officer empowered to act on behalf of the Council is the Director of Public Health. The proposed agreement is in respect of the period. The Council will review and cap this service after 6 months if the findings prove lack of test uptake/return. The Council will service a 3 month termination notice to either stop or revise the service.

4.0. Service description

4.1. Pharmacies will provide Chlamydia screening kits to sexually active males and females under the age of 25, for example when purchasing condoms, dispensing oral contraceptive pills, and supplying Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC), in agreement with the local Chlamydia Screening Office. Advice on how to utilise the kit, how to return it for testing and what will happen following completion of the test will be provided in line with the approach adopted by the local Chlamydia Screening Office. The service will form part of the locally run NCSP.

4.2. Pharmacies will provide:

- A test kit distribution and information service encouraging clients to return completed tests. Samples are sent to the laboratory in the prepaid envelopes provided.
- Treatment to patients as advised by the CSO, in line with the requirements of a locally agreed Patient Group Direction (PGD). (CSO will be responsible for contact tracing, using a client identifier token/form)

4.3. Pharmacies will offer a user-friendly, non-judgemental, client-centred, and confidential service, in line with 'You're Welcome quality criteria' accreditation.

4.4. Pharmacies will link into existing local networks of sexual health and community contraceptive services so that there is a robust and rapid referral pathway for people who need onward signposting to services that provide on-going contraception, for example long acting reversible contraception (LARC) and diagnosis and management of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

4.5. Pharmacies will provide support and advice to clients, including advice on safe sex, condom use and advice on the use of regular contraceptive methods, when required.

5.0. Aims and intended service outcome

5.1. To increase access to the NCSP by providing additional locations where clients can access screening.

5.2. To increase access to treatment of Chlamydia infection, if deemed appropriate.

5.3. To increase access for young people, to sexual health advice and referral on to specialist services where required.

5.4. To increase clients' knowledge of the risks associated with Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).

5.5. To strengthen the network of contraceptive and sexual health services to help provide easy and swift access to advice.

6.0. Service outline

6.1. The pharmacy will offer sexually active males and females less than 25 years of age a Chlamydia screening service; this will comprise provision of a kit, full advice, and information on STIs and sexual health. The Pharmacy will assist clients in filling the appropriate forms and will promote the need to complete and return the test for assessment and explain the benefits for screening. Clients less than 16 years of age will be provided with the service if deemed Fraser competent. A locally agreed referral pathway will provide for the referral of clients less than 16 years of age who present for screening and who are not deemed to be Fraser competent.

6.2. The service will be provided in compliance with Fraser guidance¹ and Department of Health guidance on confidential sexual health advice and treatment for young people aged less than 16 years².

¹ Fraser Guidelines – based on a House of Lords ruling; A health professional can give advice or treatment to a person under 16 without parental consent providing they are satisfied that:

- The young person will understand the advice
- The young client cannot be persuaded to tell his or her parents or allow the doctor to tell them that they are seeking contraceptive advice
- The young client is likely to begin or continue having unprotected sex with or without contraceptive treatment
- The young person's physical or mental health is likely to suffer unless he or she receives contraceptive advice or treatment

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

- 6.3. The Pharmacy staff shall complete the appropriate consent and demographic documentation with clients who consent to screening and shall describe the screening process and how results will be communicated to the client. The client shall be supplied with a Chlamydia screening kit, supplied by the CSO (or via other locally agreed arrangements).
- 6.4. Where a suitable toilet facility is available, the pharmacist will encourage clients to carry out the test within the pharmacy and forward the completed test to the lab in accordance with arrangements made with the CSO.
- 6.5. Where a suitable toilet facility is unavailable, pharmacist will provide a postal kit and will encourage clients to either return it to the pharmacy for forwarding it to the lab or post it using the pre-paid envelopes provided. (Note: postal kits may be subject to delays and clients must be made aware of the 72-hour window for tests to be accurate)
- 6.6. The part of the pharmacy used for the provision of the service must provide a sufficient level of safety and privacy (including visual privacy where appropriate), which in most circumstances will be at the level required for the provision of the Medicines Use Review service³.
- 6.7. The pharmacy contractor must have a standard operating procedure in place for this service. The pharmacy contractor must ensure that pharmacists and staff involved in the provision of the service are aware of and operate within national and locally agreed protocols.
- 6.8. The Pharmacy contractor must ensure all pharmacy staff are trained to provide packs and information during advertised opening hours and during absence of accredited pharmacist will contact and signpost the client to next nearest pharmacy for treatment.
- 6.9. The pharmacy must maintain appropriate records to ensure effective ongoing service delivery and audit. Records are confidential and should be stored securely, for no longer than is necessary, but in line with the annual auditing process.
- 6.10. Pharmacists may need to share relevant information with other health care professionals and agencies, in line with local and national confidentiality and data protection arrangements, including the need for the permission of the client to share the information.
- 6.11. The Council will provide a framework for the recording of relevant service information (including the national core dataset) for the purposes of audit and the claiming of payment.
- 6.12. The Council will provide up to date details of other services which pharmacy staff can use to refer on clients who require further assistance. The information should include the location, hours of opening and services provided by each service provider. The information will be assigned an expiry date, linked to set reviews of that data, in order to allow pharmacy contractors to be assured that they are using the current version of the Council information.
- 6.13. The Council may arrange at least one contractor meeting per year to promote service development and update pharmacy staff with new developments, knowledge, and evidence.
- 6.14. The Council will be responsible for the provision of health promotion and other promotional material, including leaflets on EHC, long-term contraception and STIs to pharmacies.
- 6.15. The Council will coordinate the promotion of the service locally, including the development of publicity materials and the use of nationally produced material, in order to ensure young people and other local health care providers are aware that the service is available from local pharmacies. Pharmacies should use these materials to promote the service to the public and should ensure they coordinate their promotional activities with those of The Council. The Surrey Condom Distribution scheme (CDS) 'Get it on' should be promoted and young people directed to the [Healthy Surrey website's CDS page](#).
- 6.16. Clients over 18 should be encouraged to [order the 18yrs+ kits](#) from the CNWL website and promotional material handed out.

7.0. Notification of results and contact tracing

- 7.1. The CSO will be responsible for partner notification in relation to Chlamydia and will refer clients to a local participating pharmacy or other venue for treatment.

³ The requirements for consultation areas are detailed in the Pharmaceutical Services (advanced and enhanced services) (England) Directions 2005 as amended.

7.2. Verbal and written advice on the avoidance of STIs and the use of regular contraceptive methods, including advice on the use of condoms⁴, shall be provided to the client. This should be supplemented by a referral to a service that can provide further advice and care where appropriate.

8.0. Treatment of infection

8.1. The pharmacy will provide a treatment service, in accordance with the locally agreed guidance which complies with the core requirements⁵ of the NCSP. The pharmacy shall assess the suitability of the client to receive the locally agreed antibiotic treatment, in line with the inclusion and exclusion criteria detailed in the PGD. Where appropriate a supply will be made in accordance with instructions from the CSO; where a supply of the specific antibiotics is not appropriate; the client should be referred to the local specialist service.

9.0. Quality indicators

9.1. The pharmacy has appropriate health promotion material available (as advised by the Council) for the client group, actively promotes its uptake and is able to discuss the contents of the material with the client, where appropriate.

9.2. The pharmacy reviews its standard operating procedures and the referral pathways for the service regularly.

9.3. The pharmacy participates in a Council organised audit of service supply as and when required.

9.4. The pharmacy co-operates with any locally agreed Council -led assessment of client experience such as working towards 'You're Welcome Quality Criteria' accreditation.

10.0. Performance monitoring and payment

10.1. Payment will be made monthly in arrears.

10.2. All claims are made via the pharmoutcomes portal made available by the public health team.

10.3. The number of validated tests for each pharmacy will be entered by the CSO each month and will be included in the monthly claim generated by pharmoutcomes.

10.4. See Appendix 1 for payment structure.

10.5. The Council has the right to audit a pharmacy against the claims received. Reasonable notice will be given the pharmacy prior to the audit.

11.0. Requirements

11.1. Pharmacists wishing to provide this service may be required to attend CSO and Council arranged training event and must have completed the following CPPE Open Learning Packs on:

- Sexual health in Pharmacies
- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

Attendance at the CSO and Council arranged workshop and annual update workshops arranged thereafter is encouraged as good practice.

11.2. All pharmacists accredited to provide Chlamydia Testing and Treatment have to have registered with CPPE learning record online before approval to supply will be given by the Commissioner.

11.3. If a trained pharmacist moves on, it is the responsibility of the provider to let the commissioner know there is a vacancy and who is replacing them, with a timeframe.

11.4. The pharmacy should be registered as a healthy living pharmacy level 1 with the RSPH.

11.5. By providing this public health service you agree to sharing of anonymised activity data with Surrey LPC for the purposes of service development.

Background information – not part of the service specification

The following documents and websites provide background information on Chlamydia screening and treatment:

- [National Chlamydia Screening Programme](#)

⁴ Commissioners may wish to consider the inclusion of condom supply as part of the service and the integration of participating pharmacies into the local Chlamydia screening programme.

⁵ [National Chlamydia Screening Programme Core Requirements](#)

- [UK National Guideline for the Management of Genital Tract Infection with Chlamydia trachomatis](#)
- [The Manual for Sexual Health Advisors](#)

CPPE training which may support this service:

- Sexual health in Pharmacies
- Chlamydia screening and treatment: Community Pharmacy Enhanced Service – Public Health Event
- Contraception Open Learning Pack
- Dealing with difficult discussions e-learning
- Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults e-learning and associated e-assessment
- Child health: working with the NSF for Children, Young People and Maternity Services

Appendix 1

Payment structure – Chlamydia Screening

Screening – test sent to laboratory	£10
Treatment – See patient Group Direction (PGD)	£20 + drug tariff price on pharmoutcomes