

Public Health Agreement

for

Chlamydia Screening and Treatment in Pharmacy

1ST April 2025 to 31st March 2028

BETWEEN Surrey County Council **AND** Pharmacy

1. Introduction
2. Background
3. Agreement
4. Service Description
5. Aims and Service Outcome
6. Service Outline
7. Notification of Results and Contact Tracing
8. Treatment of Infection
9. Quality Indicators
10. Fees
11. Requirements

Appendix 1 - Payment structure

Community Pharmacy Specification- Chlamydia screening and treatment

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.
- 1.3 Surrey County Council Public Health Team strongly encourages pharmacies to offer both emergency contraception and chlamydia screening and treatment services, as this enables patients to address immediate sexual health needs in one location. It promotes early detection and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) while also offering access to preventing unintended pregnancy. This is particularly important for young people who might not readily seek these services elsewhere; this approach helps to normalise sexual health conversations and encourages proactive care.

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 National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP) was first introduced in 2003 with the aim of preventing onward transmission and the harms of chlamydia through early detection and treatment. Since that time understanding of chlamydia infection and how best to control it has developed. To ensure the design, implementation and evaluation of the NCSP is based on best available evidence, Public Health England (PHE) (now known as UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)) convened a review of the evidence on the recommended way forward.

As a result of the review, in 2021, the NCSP has changed its focus to reducing the harms from untreated chlamydia infection. The harmful effects of chlamydia occur predominantly in women so the opportunistic screening (that is the proactive offer of a chlamydia test to young people without symptoms) should focus on women*, combined with:

- reducing time to test results and treatment
- strengthening partner notification
- re-testing after treatment

For testing provided by pharmacies in Surrey, everyone aged 15-24 years can still access testing.

*References to women includes cisgender women, transgender men and non-binary (assigned female at birth) people who have not had hysterectomy or bilateral oophorectomy.

- 2.3 The provision of Chlamydia testing and treatment for under 25 year olds in community pharmacies in Surrey generates significant social value by playing a crucial role in improving easy access to essential sexual health services. It helps reduce the stigma associated with sexually transmitted infections (STIs) by offering a confidential, convenient, and non-judgmental environment for young people to seek testing and treatment. This approach encourages early detection and treatment, reducing the spread of chlamydia, preventing long-term health complications such as infertility, and ultimately supporting healthier communities. By integrating these services into community pharmacies, it ensures that testing is accessible to those who might otherwise avoid traditional healthcare settings. It aligns with the commitment to improving overall public health and wellbeing in Surrey and ensuring no one is left behind.
- 2.4 The specialist Integrated Sexual Health Service in Surrey (provided by Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL)) coordinate the chlamydia screening programme locally for Surrey. For the purpose of the NCSP in Surrey, the Specialist Integrated Sexual Health Service will be identified as the Chlamydia Screening Office (CSO). 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. Patients 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 sexual partners (irrespective of the age of the partner). In Surrey, samples are also screened for Gonorrhoea.

3.0 Agreement

- 3.1 This Locally Commissioned 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 Council and provider will serve 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 dispensing oral contraceptive pills, supplying emergency contraception, supplying condoms under the c-card scheme or using other pharmacy services.

Advice on how to use 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 Sexual Health Service in Surrey.

- 4.2 Pharmacies will provide:
- a) A test kit distribution and information service encouraging clients to return completed tests. Samples are sent to the laboratory in the prepaid envelopes provided.
 - b) 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-judgmental, 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 safer sex, condom use and advice on the use of regular contraceptive methods, when required.

5.0 Aims and Intended Service Outcomes

- 5.1 To increase access to the NCSP by providing additional locations where young people aged 15-24 years 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 guidance:
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/gillick-competence-fraser-guidelines#skip-to-content> and the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Health (FSRH) Service Standard on Obtaining Valid Consent - October 2022
<https://www.fsrh.org/standards-and-guidance/documents/service-standard-on-obtaining-valid-consent-october-2022/>
- 6.3 The screening process and how results will be shared should be fully explained to the patient. Appropriate consent and demographic documentation should be completed with patients who consent to screening. The patient shall be supplied with a Chlamydia screening kit, supplied by the CSO.
- 6.4 Where a suitable toilet facility is available, patients will be encouraged 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, patients will be provided with a postal kit and will be encouraged 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 area of the pharmacy used for the provision of the service must provide a sufficient level of safety and privacy including visual privacy in a private consultation room.
- 6.7 The pharmacy contractor must have a standard operating procedure in place for this service. The pharmacy contractor must ensure that all pharmacy staff providing the service are aware of and operate within national and locally agreed protocols, including safeguarding and patient safety incident policies.
- 6.8 The Pharmacy contractor must ensure all pharmacists and staff involved in the provision of the service 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. Pharmacy staff should refer to their safeguarding policies.

- 6.11 PharmOutcomes should be used 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 can be used to signpost on clients who require further assistance. The information should include the location, hours of opening and services provided by each service provider.
- 6.13 The Council may arrange at least one contractor meeting per year to promote service development, update knowledge and evidence.
- 6.14 The Council and the Specialist Sexual Health Service will be responsible for the provision of health promotion and other promotional material, including leaflets on EC, long-term contraception and STIs to pharmacies. Please contact Public Health publichealthclaims@surreycc.gov.uk or the Specialist Sexual Health Service for further details.
- 6.15 The Council and the Specialist Sexual Health Service will coordinate the promotion of the service locally, including the development of publicity materials and the use of nationally produced materials, 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 c-card (Condom Distribution scheme) should be promoted and young people directed to the Healthy Surrey website's page - <https://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/sexual-health/contraception#ccard>
- Pharmacies can also sign up the Public Health Agreement for delivering the c-card in house. Contact publichealthclaims@surreycc.gov.uk for more information.
- 6.16 Clients over 18 years should also be provided with the details of how to order a full STI home testing kit from the CNWL website - www.sexualhealth.cnwl.nhs.uk/surrey-residents-only-order-a-self-testing-kit/

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.
- 7.2 Verbal and written advice on the avoidance of STIs and the use of regular contraceptive methods, including advice on the use of condoms (see section 6.15 on Surrey c-card Condom Distribution Scheme), shall be provided to the client. This should be supplemented by signposting to the Specialist Sexual Health Service that can provide further advice and care where appropriate.

8.0 Treatment of Infection

- 8.1 The pharmacist will provide a treatment service, in accordance with the locally agreed guidance which complies with the core requirements of the NCSP. The pharmacist 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 antibiotic is not appropriate; the client should be referred to the local specialist Sexual Health service.

9.0 Quality Indicators

- 9.1 The pharmacy has appropriate health promotion material available (as advised by the Council and Specialist Sexual Health Service) 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 signposting pathways for the service regularly.
- 9.3 The pharmacy participates in a Council organised audit of service supply as and when required. Reasonable notice will be given to the pharmacy prior to the audit.
- 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 PharmOutcomes 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 to the pharmacy prior to the audit

11.0 Requirements

- 11.1 Pharmacists wishing to provide this service are 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.

Available: www.cppe.ac.uk/gateway/sexual

Attendance at any CSO and Council arranged workshops and annual update workshops arranged thereafter is encouraged as good practice, and are also open to other pharmacy staff who may be involved in supporting service delivery.

- 11.2 All pharmacists accredited to provide Chlamydia Testing and Treatment must have registered with CPPE learning record online before approval to supply will be given by the Commissioner.
- 11.3 If a trained pharmacist leaves the pharmacy, it is the responsibility of the provider to let the commissioner know there is a vacancy and who is replacing them, with a suitable timeframe.
- 11.4 By providing this public health service you agree to sharing of anonymised activity data with Surrey LPC for the purposes of service development.

Appendix 1

Payment Structure – Chlamydia Screening

Screening – Test sent to laboratory	£10.61
Treatment – See Patient Group Direction (PGD)	£21.22 + drug tariff price on Pharmoutcomes