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|  | Reply to | Christina Gray |
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| Telephone | 0117 9224682 |
| E-mail | [Christina.gray@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:Christina.gray@bristol.gov.uk) |
| Date | 2nd April 2024 |

Dear Pharmacist

**Re: Public Health Services – Sexual Health Contract extension**

I am writing to you in relation to the sexual health contract due to end 31st March 2024; the Council proposes to extend this contract until 31st March 2025.

Most of the terms and conditions of the contract shall continue to have full force and effect, however there are a few updates and changes to the service specification which are highlighted in this letter below.

The revised service specification is enclosed, and key changes are highlighted in red.  Please also note the updated Annex C – Clinical Governance.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for continuing to provide such a high-quality sexual health provision for our citizens.

**Updates on sexual and reproductive health in primary care and the wider system:**

**Abortion rates**

Over the past five years, we have seen an increase in the number of abortions across Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. More than a third of the reported abortions are accounted for by women aged 24 and under.

Please be reminded to provide free emergency hormonal contraception (EHC) via Patient Group Direction (PGD) to young women aged 24 and under. Women under 25 can also be referred to unity for an emergency copper intrauterine device. All women under 25 attending pharmacy for an EHC appointment should be offered a pack of condoms free of charge. The transaction should be recorded on PharmOutcomes as part of the EHC consultation record. They should also be encouraged to undertake a chlamydia self-testing kit.

**Gonorrhoea**

We continue to see a sustained rise in gonorrhoea cases across Bristol. Highest case numbers have been amongst those aged 19 – 34 years but there has also been a steady increase in those aged 35 – 64 years. Groups most impacted include heterosexual adults aged under 25 years and the GBMSM population. Uptake of free condoms through the C-card scheme and community and specialist services appears to have decreased.

Please be reminded that the **C-card scheme has been extended up to the age of 25 years** and pharmacies will continue to be a condom pick-up point for young people aged 13-24. Pharmacies should also consider becoming a C-Card registration point. You are requested to record all C-Card registrations and condom pick-ups on Pharmoutcomes (and Therapy Audit if possible – an online database hosted by Brook). Full training on the C-Card scheme is run every two months via Zoom. To book onto this training or for support to get C-Card promoted or re-started in your outlet, please contact [c-card.bristol@brook.org.uk](mailto:c-card.bristol@brook.org.uk).

**Chlamydia Screening**

Although uptake of chlamydia screening has increased in Bristol, the detection rate remains too low and distribution of chlamydia screening kits in pharmacies remains very low. Please be reminded that screening kits should be offered to all females aged 16-24 to support access to opportunistic chlamydia screening in accordance with the updated National Chlamydia Screening Programme ([English National Chlamydia Screening Programme (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1058780/NCSP_Standards_Eighth_Edition_March_2022.pdf).

**Harmonising pharmacy contracts & payments across BNSSG**

There is general consensus for harmonisation of pharmacy sexual health contracts to support system working and address variation in activity and patient outcomes. A deep dive has been undertaken to examine these contracts along with other public health contracts. Recommendations for alignment are currently under review with proposals for harmonisation to come into effect in 2025 in line with the recommissioning of integrated sexual health services.

**Recommissioning update**

Integrated sexual health services including STI and HIV testing, chlamydia screening, HIV prevention, STI treatment and partner notification, all forms of contraception, and health promotion are being reprocured for the whole of BNSSG, with the new service going live in April 2025. Extensive engagement with the public, service users and health professionals has been undertaken to inform the design of the service, including engagement with primary care colleagues. In conjunction with this, Bristol City Council will also be reprocuring their primary care sexual health services by direct award to take effect in April 2025. The new service specifications will draw on the outcomes of the harmonisation work described above and through engagement events that will be undertaken during 2024-25 with our general practice and community pharmacy colleagues.

To enact the contract extension, please sign the letter below, scan, and return to [PH.Commissioning@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:PH.Commissioning@bristol.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

Christina Gray

Director of Public Health

On behalf of Bristol City Council

On behalf of xxxxxxxx, I agree to an extension of the contract on the above terms.

Signed…………………………………………………….

Designation……………………………………………...

Date……………………………………………………….