



‘Leading improvement in sexual health across the south west’

South West Sexual Health Board Newsletter Autumn 2018

Chair’s Update

Thanks for reading the Autumn Newsletter. Please feel free to circulate it widely to anyone who might be interested and to get back to me with comments, suggestions and additions to the circulation list.

The South West Sexual Health conference held on 2nd May 2018 at Taunton Racecourse was a great success. The theme of the day was digital innovations and future opportunities, with a mix of plenary presentations, short-fire talks, panel discussion, workshops and poster presentations. Following on from the success of this year’s conference I am pleased to confirm that a further conference is to be organised for June 2019.

The Office submitted a response to the recent sexual health inquiry launched by the Health and Social Care Committee based on an input from the Commissioners Network. The submission took into account investment into sexual health, concern around sexual health services, funding, changes and the digital shift. The Office will offer witnesses as and when requested by the Health and Social Care Committee.

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Work plan update

The **sexual health workforce project** was originally initiated so that we might gain a clearer view of the existing sexual health workforce and their training needs. The sexual health workforce is diverse and includes a mix of specialists and generalists. There are specialists in both community sexual and reproductive health (CSRH) and genitourinary (GU) medicine and HIV. The generalist workforce includes GPs, practice nurses, pharmacists, school teachers, school nurses and college tutors.

For more information on any aspect of the Directors of Public Health Network and Office for Sexual Health South West please contact: wendy.lawton@southglos.gov.uk

Trying to establish a clear picture of the workforce is not straightforward as there are so many people involved in the delivery of sexual health. Although some professionals focus exclusively on sexual health, a large proportion of the workforce work in alternative fields with the provision of sexual health alongside other services such as midwifery, health visiting and school nursing. Establishing a clear view of the full sexual health workforce presented a huge task.

The Office therefore started by carrying out a scoping exercise to gain an understanding of the key elements of the potential project. This exploratory work uncovered the full scale of the possible work to be undertaken. The Office Board decided that attempting to address all the issues identified would be impossible and so proposed that the initial project should concentrate on a few key elements.

The project began by reviewing the electronic staff records (ESR) which were able to provide a useful picture of the specialist workforce. This was followed by the development of a training register, highlighting the range of training opportunities available locally.

Prior to taking this project further, the Office Board has suggested that the Commissioners assess the information gathered so far and identify the potential focus for future work. Any proposals for the development of this workstream will be considered by the Board.

Work is continuing on the development of an **online resource** for the Office with funding from PHE being made available to progress this piece of work over the coming year.

A communication plan is being developed to promote the **south west sexual violence online directory** (www.survivorpathway.org.uk) and to raise awareness and engagement with the website.

Information and Research

The latest **academic and evidence into practice** presented at the South West Sexual Health Programme Board in September by Dr Patrick Horner, Consultant Senior Lecturer, School of Social and Community Medicine, University of Bristol, included the following topics:

- Changes to BASHH guidelines for Chlamydia, Non-gonococcal urethritis (to be updated when *M. genitalium* guideline is finalised) and draft Gonorrhoea and forthcoming *M. genitalium* guidelines. <https://www.bashh.org/guidelines>
- BASHH Clinical Effectiveness Group Update on the treatment of *Chlamydia trachomatis* (CT) infection September 2018
<https://www.bashhguidelines.org/media/1191/update-on-the-treatment-of-chlamydia-trachomatis-infection-final-16-9-18.pdf>
- BASHH 2018 UK national guideline for the management of infection with *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* <https://www.bashhguidelines.org/media/1195/gc-draft-for-consultation.pdf> There is a form available for feedback at <https://www.bashh.org/guidelines> in the Guidelines out for consultation section which should be sent to Dr Mark Fitzgerald: mark.fitzgerald@doctors.org.uk.



Academic Update
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Please also find attached a briefing note with regard to **azithromycin antimicrobial resistance in the South West**



N. gonorrhoeae not susceptible to Azithro

The latest report from the **Gonococcal Resistance to Antimicrobials Surveillance Programme** was published in October and is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gonococcal-resistance-to-antimicrobials-surveillance-programme-grasp-report>.

In brief, between 2016 and 2017, gonococcal isolates collected through PHE's sentinel surveillance system showed:

- no resistance to ceftriaxone
- an increase in azithromycin resistance from 4.7% to 9.2%
- an increase in resistance to ciprofloxacin from 33.7% to 36.4%
- an increase in the cefixime modal MIC from 0.015 mg/L to 0.03 mg/L
- a decline in penicillin resistance from 13.9% to 10.8%.

However, in 2018, one case of ceftriaxone resistance was confirmed by the national reference laboratory. This case was extensively-drug-resistant *N. gonorrhoeae* (XDR-Ng) and [details have been published here](#).

Rachel Campbell, PHE Public Health Specialist for **Health and Justice South West**, updated the September Programme Board on the recent sexual health audit which has taken place in one area of the South West. It is planned to roll out the audit across the wider south west secure adult establishments. The audit is being undertaken using the standards from the BASHH Guidelines.

The audit is being undertaken by a collaborative working group which includes PHE Sexual Health Facilitator, H&J NHSE/PHE, Integrated Healthcare provider, sexual health provider, local authority leads and prison. The data will be presented to the Programme Board to discuss the actions for the group and further work from the outcomes.

Two additional questions were added to the tool, relating to access to SARCS and a further question around the provision of transgender, sexual health services and pathways to identify good practice and possible gaps.

Events and Resources

National HIV Testing Week 2018 starts on **Saturday 17 November** - campaign briefings are now available via the [HIV Prevention England](#) website.

PHE has launched a third round of the sexual health campaign "**Protect Against STIs. Use a condom**" The focus of this activity will be readiness for sex, as we know that sex isn't always planned and the best option is to be prepared by routinely carrying condoms. Visit the campaign website via this link: <https://www.nhs.uk/protect-against-stis-use-a-condom/home>

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During October [MHRA launched the STI self testing kits phase of their fake meds campaign](#), focusing on MHRA seizing nearly 10,000 faulty HIV & STI kits in the last three years. Coverage encourages the public to buy from a safe and legitimate provider and ensure the tests are easy to use and have clear instructions – this includes tell-tale signs of bad quality tests.

A comprehensive and collaborative strategy to enable public health professionals to use **behavioural and social sciences to improve health and wellbeing** has been published by PHE and is available via this link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-peoples-health-applying-behavioural-and-social-sciences>

25 November 2018 marks the **International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women**. This date is also the start of the [16 Days of Action](#) - a time to inspire action to end violence against women and girls - which ends on 10 December, International Human Rights Day. **#SW16Days**. In partnership with the South West Domestic Abuse Network, Public Health England South West will be actively supporting the 16 Days of Action, with a mix of communications and stakeholder engagement. The aim in 2018 is to focus on engaging workplaces in the prevention and response to domestic and sexual violence and abuse. The campaign will create a 16 day calendar with daily suggestions of action for businesses and other stakeholders to mark the 16 Days of Action and will also promote the [South West Survivor Pathway](#) and [White Ribbon Campaign](#).

Click on these links for the **latest information, news and highlights** from [BASHH](#), [Brook](#), the [Eddystone Trust](#), the [RSE Hub](#) and the [Terrence Higgins Trust](#).