

### **Sexual Health Services (considering the following contracts).**

- 1) Sexual Health Services Community (SHS) (delivered by HCRG Care group). This includes a clinical outreach service commissioned as part of the sexual health head contract. The outreach service will focus on those who may have a social disadvantage in accessing sexual health services, targeting young people, the homeless, sex workers, travelling communities, LGBTQ+ and people with a learning disability. In addition, HCRG manage and monitor GPs in primary care who deliver Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) and Chlamydia screening as part of the National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP).
- 2) Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) delivered by pharmacies (directly contracted). Demand led contract – payment for each person accessing the service.

### **Evidence based equality analysis**

- To assess the impact of the current sexual and reproductive health service offer in CW&C to ensure that the Council is meeting its Public Sector Equality Duty as required by the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011.
- By conducting an Equality Analysis, the Sexual Health Service in Cheshire West and Chester Council aims to identify and address any potential disparities or barriers to ensure that its services are accessible, inclusive, and equitable for all individuals, regardless of their characteristics or circumstances.
- Sexual health services are a mandatory service which is commissioned by the local authority. Other aspects of sexual health services are the responsibility of health and integrated care boards (ICBs) formerly CCGs, and other elements are commissioned by NHS England.

#### The local authority commission:

- Comprehensive sexual health services including most contraceptive services and all prescribing costs, but excluding GP additionally provided contraception.
- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) testing and treatment, chlamydia screening and HIV testing.

- Specialist services, including young people’s sexual health, teenage pregnancy services, outreach, HIV prevention, sexual health promotion, services in schools, college, and pharmacies.
- Please note references to women throughout this document includes cisgender women, transgender men and non-binary (assigned female at birth).

**Lead officer:** Strategic Commissioning Programme Manager Public Health

**Stakeholders:** Residents of Cheshire West and Chester: adults and young people, HCRG Care Group, GP Practices, Pharmacies, Integrated Care Board (ICB).

For each of the areas below, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a positive, negative, or neutral impact, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a high, medium, or low assessment. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e., disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact –some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence.

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g., an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

Target group / area	Neutral	Positive	Negative
<b>Race and ethnicity</b> (Including Gypsies and Travellers, refugees, asylum seekers etc.)	Current provision of services allows all people to access sexual health services local to them via the sexual health services, GP primary care and pharmacy offer regardless of their race or	HCRG Care Group have commissioned DA Languages and Language Line who offer face to face, virtual, BSL translation that includes resources to be	

	<p>ethnicity. People accessing services can do so without racial or ethnic discrimination.</p>	<p>made available in multiple languages.</p> <p>HCRG collect demographic data to identify areas which require targeted work and used to plan service delivery.</p> <p>HCRG have links with the travelling communities and work with race, ethnicity and equality groups to bridge the gap of inequality.</p>	
<p><b>Disability</b> (as defined by the Equality Act - a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)</p>	<p>Services are contracted to and must operate an Equality and Diversity Policy which complies with the requirement of all current equality legislation, and in particular, the Equality Act 2010 and any subsequent amendment of the act and this is stated within contracts for sexual health services and GP primary care.</p> <p>During recommission providers will be required to demonstrate how their Equality and Diversity policy is embedded in their service</p>	<p>The community sexual health service has implemented an accessibility framework which ensures that people with a disability are listened to, and then appropriate changes and reasonable adjustments are made for patients to access the service. Examples are captured at performance meetings which include additional time for appointments for people with autism, hearing loop at the check in desk at Chester Fountains.</p>	<p>Some community pharmacies are closing which may have a negative impact in some areas of the borough which may include rural areas.</p> <p>HCRG Care Group's outreach team works with people with learning disabilities but there is a gap for sensory provision (British Sign Language users and Visual Impairment).</p> <p>There are no hearing loops at the spoke sites.</p>

	<p>delivery. There will be a robust performance monitoring framework in place to effectively monitor the quality of care to service users.</p> <p>Main sexual health contract requires staff to attend Equality and Diversity training which is monitored at quarterly performance review for all staff.</p> <p>HCRG Care Group ensure Disability Access across all services which have easy access routes. The sexual health service has audio loops and access all types of interpretation via a contacted supplier.</p>	<p>Accessible service for people who use wheelchairs. All HCRG Care Group sexual health services are located on the ground floor.</p> <p>Hearing Loop at main hub at the fountains in Chester.</p> <p>HCRG Care Group are working with an inclusive employer's organisation to share best practice and upskill the staff team.</p>	
<p><b>Sex</b> (male or female)</p>	<p>Providers are required to operate within the guidance of The Equality Act 2010 which provides the legislative framework, guidelines for assessments and specifies that all assessments should</p>	<p>Any person, regardless of sex can access the services. However, some services are only for women and young people.</p> <p>HCRG Care Group offer contraceptive counselling to ensure people accessing the</p>	<p>While the council ensures commissioned services have, and will continue, to provide staff who fully represent different genders, including clinical staff e.g., nurses and doctors, it cannot always be guaranteed. This situation will</p>

	<p>be specific to individual and their sex.</p>	<p>service are informed and supported around their options.</p> <p>The sexual health outreach team deliver health promotion and training for professionals that promotes equality across all people and their abilities.</p> <p>Chaperones are offered as part of the community SHS offer.</p> <p>HCRG Care Group have been accredited with a GOLD award for Pride in Practice accreditation by the LGBT Foundation. This is a standard which ensures that all lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people have access to inclusive healthcare that understands and meets the needs of our communities.</p>	<p>be monitored at contract review if applicable.</p>
<p><b>Gender identity</b> (gender reassignment)</p>	<p>Providers are required to operate within the guidance of The Equality Act 2010 which provides the legislative</p>	<p>HCRG Care Group has updated policies in place to support and safeguard equality and diversity in the</p>	<p>HCRG computer systems due to be updated in Autumn 2024.</p>

	<p>framework, guidelines for assessments and specifies that all assessments should be specific to individual which includes gender identity.</p> <p>The sexual health service is working to update their computer systems to allow for the ability to capture gender reassignment.</p>	<p>workplace. Workshops are available for colleagues to attend around equality and mandatory training is completed yearly. HCRG Care Groups' Pride in Practice accreditation will support the improved outcomes of this target group.</p> <p>HCRG Care Group have been accredited with a GOLD award for Pride in Practice accreditation by the LGBT Foundation. This is a standard which ensures that all lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans people have access to inclusive healthcare that understands and meets the needs of our communities.</p>	
<p><b>Religion and belief</b> (including lack of belief)</p>	<p>Current service across SHS, GP Primary Care and Pharmacy services are open to anyone regardless of their religion and belief.</p> <p>Under the current SHS contract, in relation to</p>	<p>HCRG Care Group's mandatory training for staff include awareness and how to support and treat patients of all religious and belief backgrounds.</p>	

	<p>religion and belief, all providers are required to operate within the guidance of The Equality Act 2010 which provides the legislative framework, guidelines for assessments and specifies that all assessments should be specific to individual.</p>	<p>HCRG Care Groups have monthly Clinical Governance Updates in the team where there is a discussion of upcoming events within the religious calendar, national health calendar and HCRG initiatives regarding equality and diversity. Training updates are provided to widen staff knowledge and promote open discussion within the team. This allows for increased awareness and inclusivity for people accessing services.</p> <p>HCRG outreach service works with communities who may not traditionally access sexual health services.</p>	
<p><b>Sexual orientation</b> (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual and others)</p>	<p>The current sexual health contract requires the provider to operate within the guidance of The Equality Act 2010 which provides the legislative framework, guidelines for assessments and specifies that all assessments should be</p>	<p>As part of the sexual health outreach, HCRG will run groups specifically with people who identify as LGBTQ+.</p> <p>HCRG Care Group have delivered information and training sessions with inclusive employers, has a</p>	

	<p>specific to individual. This includes reference to sexual orientation.</p>	<p>central equality and diversity champion, which all ties into the Pride in Practice accreditation.</p> <p>Locally the sexual health services partners with Chester Pride to deliver incentives focused around LGBTQ+ that includes Chester Pride sponsorship, the box project, sexual health podcasts and HIV testing week.</p>	
<p><b>Age</b> (children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults 25 – 50, younger older people 51 – 75/80; older people 81+. Age bands are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs)</p>	<p>The contract provides an integrated service for both young people and adults.</p> <p>SHS providers are required to operate within the guidance of The Equality Act 2010 which provides the legislative framework, guidelines for assessments and specifies that all assessments should be specific to individual which includes age.</p>	<p>The current 2017 JSNA states that young people (YP) who engage in early sexual intercourse are more likely to display risky sexual behaviours. There are separate YP clinics are delivered in some areas of the borough.</p> <p>Chat sexual health service for 13 – 18 years allows YPs to text the service and gain a response within 24 hours.</p> <p>HCRG have completed the Your Welcome self-</p>	<p>Some areas of the borough do not have dedicated YP clinics. The service is looking to roll out dedicated YP clinics at the spoke services and the outreach team will deliver targeted outreach in agreed community settings.</p> <p>Development work in progress to increase SHS provision in schools and colleges.</p> <p>The 2017 JSNA identifies that there are a higher proportion of people aged over 65 when compared to the rest of</p>



		<p>assessment which will be updated annually to promote ease of access for young people wanted to access sexual health services.</p> <p>Clinic times and days are kept under review to monitor attendance and can be changed if there is a low uptake of use.</p> <p>Specific performance indicators for young people accessing the service allow for targeting of services where needed.</p>	<p>England which may require targeted work to ensure this age group know how to access services and what services are available.</p>
<p><b>Care Experienced</b> (all young people and adults who have been in the care of Cheshire West and Chester Council - for a period of 13 weeks or more - from the age of 14 years. This includes those children/young people for whom the Council currently or have previously held corporate parenting responsibilities)</p>	<p>All sexual health services are open to anyone requiring support including those who are care experienced.</p>	<p>HCRG Care Group have links with the local safeguarding group and are attending regular meetings with local agencies. The local sexual health service has a flagging system in place to ensure any vulnerable people are supported appropriately and the necessary measures are put into place to support service users and staff.</p>	<p>Further promotion of service needed via social workers and care leavers service.</p>

		<p>HCRG Care Group has a national safeguarding lead, with a local lead and champion based within the service.</p> <p>Recent survey and service development has been shaped following co-production with care experienced young people.</p> <p>Services promoted via social workers and Council officers working with Children in Care Council.</p>	
<p><b>Carers</b> (people who care for others, informally or formally)</p>	<p>The sexual health service is open to anyone requiring support including those who care for others. Services are open at varying times and locations to allow for ease of access by people to include those with caring responsibilities.</p>	<p>HCRG Care Group have links with the local safeguarding group and are attending regular meetings with local agencies. The local sexual health service has a flagging system in place to ensure any vulnerable people are supported appropriately and the necessary measures are put into place to support service users and staff.</p>	

		<p>HCRG Care Group has a national safeguarding lead, with a local lead and champion based within the service.</p> <p>Quarterly education and training sessions delivered by HCRG are targeted towards carers.</p>	
<p><b>Rural communities</b></p>		<p>The current budget envelope set against sexual health services in the local authority allows the community SHS to operate across the borough with a main hub and spoke model.</p> <p>GPs across CW&amp;C deliver LARC and chlamydia testing as part of their contract from GP practices.</p> <p>Pharmacies delivering emergency hormonal contraception are spread across the borough, including in rural areas, allowing for ease of access.</p>	<p>Workforce across GPs surgeries is an issue which translates into limited rural access to contraceptive services. However, HCRG are providing training for GPs to increase the number of professionals who can fit contraceptive devices.</p> <p>Some community pharmacies are closing which may have a negative impact in some areas of the borough which may include rural areas.</p> <p>There are some gaps across the borough for easy access to sexual health services. However, the local sexual health services are exploring</p>

			additional outreach and spokes clinics for seldom heard communities.
<p><b>Areas of deprivation</b> (include any impact on people living in poverty who may not live in areas identified as deprived)</p>		<p>HCRG Care Group SHS Clinics in areas of deprivation.</p> <p>The sexual health outreach team provide clinically led provisions in these communities which will include all demographics to support with the challenges of accessing sexual health services.</p> <p>GPs are across the borough including in areas of deprivation.</p> <p>Pharmacies are in all areas of the borough including deprived areas. HCRG Care Group are working with pharmacies to be able to offer more services and signposting, such as, testing, condom distribution and treatments.</p> <p>The most recent 2017 JSNA identifies that those living</p>	<p>Some community pharmacies are closing which may have a negative impact in some areas of the borough which may include areas of deprivation.</p>

		<p>with high levels of deprivation are amongst other things disproportionately affected by sexually transmitted infections (STIs), display more risky behaviours, is linked to teenage pregnancy. The digital offer provided by HCRG Care Group allows people to order STI kits online. Access in other areas of the local authority via the satellite clinics including areas of deprivation allow for ease of access.</p>	
<p><b>Human rights</b> (see guidance note for key areas to consider)</p>	<p>The Human Rights Act 1998 underpins the SHS contract and is referenced within the contract documentation and is part of the providers statutory obligations.</p>	<p>Access to a Language Line in all clinics and dedicated safeguarding and outreach teams locally and nationally.</p> <p>Staff trained to use evidence based safeguarding tool with young people to spot the signs of abuse, exploitation and radicalisation. Where needed this information would be shared with the police.</p>	

		Staff training is monitored annually as part of the annual report required for performance monitoring purposes.	
<p><b>Health and wellbeing and Health Inequalities</b> (consider the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, plus impacts on lifestyles and effects on health and care services)</p>	The sexual health service contractual performance reporting includes health improvement indicators on the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF).	<p>The sexual health outreach team provide clinical and non-clinical services across the borough.</p> <p>HCRG Care Group offer psychosexual counselling on a referral basis.</p> <p>HCRG delivers quarterly stakeholder training to support with the promotion and prevention of health and wellbeing in the community so that professionals have the skills to support all people of the borough.</p>	
<p><b>Procurement / partnership</b> (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)</p>	The future recommissioning will comply with corporate procurement guidance and processes which includes guidance on equality compliance and is underpinned by the Public Sector Equality Act.	Currently HCRG sexual health services are monitored on a quarterly basis as part of performance monitoring and a robust performance monitoring framework. In addition, there are regular	

	<p>the provider's compliance with the Equality Act will be monitored through usual contract management channels</p>	<p>development meetings which are underpinned by a development plan which allows the provider and commissioners to work together to reduce health inequalities.</p> <p>Updated equality and diversity policies are required annually as part of the contract monitoring.</p> <p>The recommissioning of services is an opportunity revisit the performance monitoring framework and update as necessary.</p> <p>People who access the service, including those in more vulnerable client groups and have lived experience will be included within the recommission.</p>	
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**Evidence**

**Action plan:** There is an ongoing development plan between HCRG Care Group and the local authority / commissioners. Six weekly meetings allow for regular monitoring and updating of this plan to allow for increased accessibility and quality of services. Quarterly performance meetings with HCRG are also in place to monitor the performance of the main sexual health service. All actions outlined in this action plan will be monitored and updated for the duration of this action plan. The Strategic

Commissioning Programme Manager who oversees Public Health service commissions is the responsible officer for all the actions outlined below.

Actions required	Priority	Outcomes required	Review date
Explore feasibility of having hearing loops at the spoke sites to bring offer in line with main clinic in Chester.	Medium	Increase accessibility with people who require the use of a hearing loop when using the satellite services.	1 July.2026
As part of the branding and marketing of the main service delivered by HCRG, ensure that people over 65 have access to information about sexual health services.	Medium	Regardless of a persons age, they are aware of and can confidently access the sexual health services when needed. Consider outreach provision to support this.	1 July 2026
Ensure dedicated YP clinics are available at different hubs. Gain feedback from YPs on the sexual health service.  Increase presence of SHS in schools and colleges.	Medium	YPs can easily access dedicated clinics across CW&C. Prevention of unplanned pregnancy and complications from sexually transmitted infections are reduced. Increase education and awareness.	1 July 2026
Monitor HCRG staffing compliment to ensure that there is a mix of male and female staff at quarterly contract meetings.	Medium	Ensure gender staffing mix to support everyone being able to comfortably access sexual health services. To be monitored as part of performance meetings.	1 July 2026



Pharmacy closures to be monitored as part of the public health risk register.	Medium	Ensure communication of closures where necessary.	1 July 2026
Support workforce development of primary care staff to ensure ease of access to Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC).	Medium	Increase in GP practices offering LARC, in all areas of the borough including rural areas.	1 July 2026
Increase access for additional outreach and spokes clinics for seldom heard communities as part of the outreach offer delivered by HCRG.	Medium	To increase access to people who may not be able to easy access traditional sexual health services.	1 July 2026
Engage organisations that support disabled people.  Link into deafness support network specifically their youth services, and possible vision support through their sight loss information line to ensure cohorts have access to information.	Medium	Ensure equity of access to sexual health services.	1 July 2026
Increase accessibility for people who have learning disabilities and / or need easy read documents to understand what the sexual health service does and how they can access it.	Medium	Easy read documents and links with organisations supporting people with learning disabilities.	1 July 2026

Strengthen links with Childrens and Adults social care teams and care experienced young people and young carers.	Medium	Increased accessibility for care experienced people and young carers. To be monitored as part of the development plan.	1 July 2026
Ability to capture gender identity being on HCRG computer systems following gender reassignment.	Medium	System updates due in autumn 2024. This will be tracked as part of the ongoing development plan.	1 July 2026

<b>Sign off</b>	Sexual Health Service Consultation / Recommission
Lead officer:	Strategic Commissioning Programme Manager
Approved by Tier 4 Manager:	Senior Manager, Strategic Commissioning (Children, Families and Public Health)
<b>Moderation and/or Scrutiny</b>	Date: 28.06.2024
<b>Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating</b>	Date: 01.07.2026