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Introduction

Welcome to this edition of the sexual health newsletter. You may recognise that although the style hasn't changed the title has and the former teenage conceptions newsletter has now transformed to become an all round sexual health newsletter. The aim of the new newsletter is for us to be able to incorporate a much wider audience and provide professionals working in all aspects of sexual health, with people of all ages a fuller update on the progress being made in sexual health services in Torbay.



Since the last newsletter, which was about a year ago now a lot of progress has been made. We have seen a small reduction in the number of teenage pregnancies and our sexual health review in April provided promising feedback. We have also continued to work closely with South Devon College, a video that young people have developed to help improve access to sexual health is in its final stages of editing and it is hoped that the video will also help to dispel some of the myths and pre conceptions that young people may have prior to visiting a sexual health service.

All of the recent improvements and developments in sexual health wouldn't be possible without the hard work and dedication of health professionals and staff all over Torbay. I would like to thank you all for your commitment and enthusiasm in improving sexual health for the residents of Torbay and I look forward to working with you all over the next year to build on the successes so far.

Debbie Stark
Director of public health for Torbay

Sexual health peer review

Last month we received the findings back from a sexual health peer review carried out by the national Support Team. The findings of the review were particularly important here in Torbay not only because we have high numbers of teenage conceptions but also because our sexual health services have been developed significantly in recent years to try and improve sexual health and outcomes for young people.

The review was very positive and highlighted the strong leadership and joint working between colleagues in the Care Trust, Torbay Hospital and Torbay Council. The strong structures in place and the efforts to respond to past issues, such as trying to prevent unwanted pregnancy were recognised. The report also strongly commended the willingness to share knowledge and expertise and learn from others in pursuance of implementing best practice.

As well as highlighting strengths the review has identified areas that can further be improved, such as developing training, targeting resources and services for young people who may be more vulnerable and ensuring further integration of the multidisciplinary staff within our sexual health outreach team.

The task in hand now for agencies right across Torbay will be to continue to build on the foundations that have been laid so far by ensuring that everyone has convenient access to sexual health and contraception information and services which meet their needs.

Teenage conception rates fall in Torbay

Torbay Care Trust and Torbay Council welcomed the latest figures for teenage conceptions, which show a drop in rates in the Bay.

The latest figures, which were published in February this show conceptions in those under the age of 18 have seen a 15 percent reduction from 2008 to 2009. The rate fell from 64.9 per 1000 in 2008 to 55.3 per 1000 in 2009. In actual numbers there were 131 conceptions in 2009 compared to 159 conceptions in the previous year.

The rate takes into account full term pregnancy and abortions in girls under the age of 18.

Debbie Stark, Director of Public Health for Torbay said: “We are encouraged by the latest figures in Torbay which reflect the work of NHS, the council and our other partners to ensure that the young people of Torbay have the very best opportunities for a full childhood.

“Although these figures are welcomed and are a step in the right direction, tackling teenage conception remains very much a key priority here in Torbay. The fact that a high number of these conceptions result in a termination indicates that these are unwanted pregnancies that could have been avoided.

“The Teenage Pregnancy Partnership Board will remain fully committed and focused on ensuring young people in Torbay have every opportunity to avoid unwanted pregnancies. We need to continue to build on the foundations that have been laid so far by ensuring that young women and men have convenient access to sexual health and contraception information and services which meet their needs.”

“We are very lucky in Torbay to have a workforce dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of young people. The task for everyone now will be to remain focused on providing high quality services and building upon the existing range of services to enable young people to carry on making safe and informed decisions about their lives, health and wellbeing.”

Sexual health video

Torbay Care Trust has been working with South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and South Devon College to produce a video for young people. The video has been created to try and dispel some of the myths around visiting a sexual health clinic and show young people that there is nothing to worry about.

The video was scripted, acted and directed by pupils at the South Devon College and will be launched in early October.

The video will be featured on the Sexwise website and will hopefully be shared with schools and other organisations as an educational tool.

A thank you goes to all of the staff at Castle Circus Health Centre and the staff who helped to make this possible.

Young people friendly update

Following the national changes to the You're Welcome process and feedback from local coordinators in the South West a more user friendly process has been launched - 'Young People Friendly.' It is supported and endorsed by the Office of Sexual Health South West and has been adopted by Torbay and Devon. It ensures a framework for quality assurance through a process of verification and engagement with young people and the new 'Young People Friendly' scheme incorporates the Department of Health 'You're Welcome' quality criteria. It has also been developed in close partnership with local 'You're Welcome' strategic implementation and participation leads.



young people friendly

Young people, who are members of the regional division of the United Kingdom Youth Parliament, chose the final vibrant 'Young People Friendly' logo design and the 'Young People Friendly' quality assurance template has been designed to respond to feedback from local areas to make it as user friendly as possible for services to complete. As a result the new toolkit is extremely user friendly making it an enjoyable and not arduous task for services. The services that choose to take part in the process can expect to fill in the new user-friendly toolkit, then be verified by the participation or implementation lead along with two young verifiers (an essential part in the process as it involves young people), services may be asked to make improvements in regards to young people but will then be awarded with a certificate and window sticker.

To date one GP Surgery, Corner Place has undergone this new process of 'Young People Friendly' the first health service to achieve the award in its new format. They join eight other services which include Parkhill surgery and Chilcote surgery who have already achieved 'You're Welcome'. These services will automatically achieve the new 'Young People Friendly' certificate and window sticker.

If you would like to find out more about Young People Friendly please contact Siobhan Grady by email Siobhan.grady@nhs.net

Count me in

A new campaign has been launched by the Gay Men's Health Charity, the campaign called count me in aims to help stop the spread of HIV in the gay community. They are asking gay men to sign up to a five point action plan.

1. I will know my HIV status
2. I will not assume I know someone else's HIV status
3. I will take personal responsibility for using condoms
4. I will value myself and my health
5. I will stay informed about HIV and how it is spread

These five points get to the heart of why gay men are continuing to catch HIV. To find out more about the campaign and how you can get involved visit www.qmfa.org.uk/aboutqmfa/count-me-in

Reducing teenage conceptions seminar

If you missed the reducing teenage conceptions seminar that took place in 2010, don't despair.

There are three further seminars taking place on:

6th December 2011

31st January 2012

22nd March 2012

All of the sessions will take place in the Ballroom, Oldway Mansions between 09.30am until 12.30pm.

The seminars are free and are open to anyone working with young people or parents in Torbay and aim to raise awareness of issues for young people around relationships, sexual health, pregnancy and teenage parenthood.

To book a place please contact training@eddystone.org.uk

Please note that these sessions are a repeat of the seminar that took place last year.

Teens and Toddlers

Teens and Toddlers is a teenage pregnancy prevention, sexual health and youth development programme that raises aspiration, self esteem and educational attainment. It provides young people with a live, hand on experience of the enormous amount of work, responsibility and privilege it is to have a child. Also the nursery children that the teens are assigned to mentor are also deemed to need early intervention and would benefit from the mentoring.

'Teens and Toddlers' attempts to interrupt expected life trajectories of 'at risk' teenagers by giving participants the experience of the hard work involved in child care, whilst helping them to develop alternative goals to being pregnant, and providing them with the skills to make positive choices in their lives.

Research suggests that 97.4% of participants who completed the course did not become pregnant.

Teens and Toddlers have secured funding to enable Torbay to take forward this project locally. We are currently in the process of sorting out the details and hope to have the project up and running by January 2012.

Sexwize update

The website sexwize continues to go from strength to strength. Since its launch in June 2010 it has had around 180 visits per month, with the top pages consistently being viewed as local sexual health and contraception services, contraception and c-card.

If you provide a sexual health service and would like your information added or update or if you have content or an event that you wish to advertise within the professional's area of sexwize please contact Louise.pearson3@nhs.net

Does your service have a ready available supply of sexwize leaflets?

Young people have said they really like receiving information in this way because the leaflet is credit card sized and has lots of useful information. If you would like some Sexwize leaflets please contact kim.flemming@torbay.gov.uk or phone 01803 208903.

Healthwize update

Health Wize has been operating for two years. In this time it has established itself as a safe place for young people to access health specific services, drop in and ask questions, take leaflets or familiarise themselves with the service.

Since setting up in 2009 Health Wize has had around 2700 new clients through the doors. Although Healthwize offers information and interventions on a range of health topics from alcohol, drugs and smoking to mental health, approximately 90 per cent of young people access Healthwize for sexual health services.

As well as provide young people with convenient access to sexual health services, Healthwize engages in important interventions with young people, where workers have the opportunity to explore what else is going on in their life, if they are happy and taking things at an appropriate pace for them, all of which is an important part of building self esteem and encouraging delay in young people.

Healthwize can be found at the top of Union street, Torquay or you can contact the service on 01803 208414.

BPAS service

BPAS, the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, has been operating at Castle Circus Health Centre for nearly a year. The service operates alongside contraception services and clients can self refer to BPAS for consultation regarding unwanted pregnancies. Pre and post abortion counselling is available to all women who need to discuss feelings within a supportive non-judgemental environment.

Should they then wish to proceed with a termination all options are discussed and methods of treatments can be chosen to suit their own personal needs.

The BPAS contact centre for appointments is; 08457 30 40 30

Should you wish to discuss any individual clients Emma Huntington can be contacted on 07833050652 - emma.huntington@bpas.org

Findings from the young person sexual health consultation

Between March and July 2011, 219 young people, aged 11-19 completed a survey about sexual health services in Torbay. The aim of the survey was to identify how young people perceive services and record young people's experiences of services.

The consultation has been a useful exercise to identify exactly how young people perceive and use services in Torbay. We will now be using the information to ensure our services provide what young people want and ensure the promotion of services to young people effectively.

Some of the key findings from the consultation included:

- 37 percent of respondents who have not visited a service stated their first choice for accessing contraception and STI screening would be their GP. 30 percent stated their first choice would be to access a clinic and 16% percent would prefer to access Healthwize.
- 84 percent of respondents perceive their GP as a preferred service for contraception or STI screening due to 'trust' and feeling 'comfortable' with their GP.
- 13 percent of respondents perceive Healthwize as a preferred service for sex and relationship advice due to a good reputation and good advice.
- The top five qualities ranked by respondents considered to be the most important in a service are:
 - 1) Confidentiality
 - 2) Friendly
 - 3) Good reputation
 - 4) Close to home

5) Young person focussed

The recommendations that have come out of the report are as follows:

- Improve advertising and promotion of services to young people
- Promote services as confidential and friendly to young people
- Ensure that services are welcoming
- Promote services in schools and colleges so young people are aware of the location, opening times and services available
- Increase the number of services with 'Young People Friendly' status and maintain quality assurance by continuously involving young people in improving and shaping services
- Increase the number of services specifically aimed at young people across the Bay

If you would like more information about the consultation contact Emily.wilebore@torbay.gov.uk

Sexual health training

There is a wide range of sexual health training available in Torbay. The training is for any individuals who promote sexual health as part of their role.

The sexual health training programme is supported by the local teenage conceptions strategy and sexual health strategy for Torbay.

To find out about the latest sexual health training courses taking place throughout Torbay visit <http://www.eddystone.org.uk/training/>

Further information and advice

For further information and advice on how you can get involved or support the reducing teenage pregnancy agenda visit www.torbay.gov.uk/teenagepregnancy

Alternately contact:

Kim Flemming

Reducing Teenage Conceptions Strategy Manager

Tel: 01803 208903

Email: Kim.flemming@torbay.gov.uk

If you would like to contribute to the next edition of the Sexual health in Torbay newsletter, then please email any content or images to Louise Pearson, Communications Officer, Torbay Care Trust.

Louise.pearson3@nhs.net.