

Appendix 1B

SERVICE SPECIFICATIONS: FOR PHARMACIES & COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLBEING SETTINGS

Service Specification No.	PH01
Service	Public Health Enhanced Services (PHES): Provision of Chlamydia Screening (including Gonorrhoea) and Chlamydia Treatment to 15-24 year olds (and above 25 years for partners) in Pharmacies and community health and wellbeing settings
Authority Lead	Sue Burrige, Public Health Principal– Sexual & Reproductive Health
Provider Lead	PROVIDER NAME
Period	1st April 2026 to 31 st March 2029 <i>(with the option to extend for +1 year + 1 year)</i>
Date of Review	Annual review

1. Background and context

1.1. National Context

Sexual and reproductive health is an important and wide-ranging area of public health. Most of the adult population of England are sexually active, and having the correct sexual health interventions and services can have a positive effect on both individuals' and population health and wellbeing. Sexual ill health is not equally distributed among the population and inequalities in access to contraception and sexual health services and those affected by sexual ill health exist, which are often further heightened by stigma, sometimes associated with sexual health. Sexual health is influenced by a wide range of social factors including social and cultural norms, education level, health literacy, economic status, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation and behaviours which impact on people's health. This was highlighted in a recent ['call to action' report, published by the Local Government Association \(LGA\), Association Directors of Public Health \(ADPH\) and English HIV and Sexual Health Commissioners Group \(EHSCHG\)](#) in 2024. It is vital that targeted interventions to address sexual health inequalities are implemented to improve sexual health outcomes and reduce inequalities within the population.

The impact of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) remains greatest in young people under 25 years, gay and bisexual men and men who have sex with men (GBMSM) and black and minority ethnic (BME) groups. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) disproportionately affects minority groups such as gay and bisexual men, black African communities and other ethnic minority groups. Despite testing, treatment, and prevention (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) services being universally accessible and free, reducing late diagnosis remains a challenge and a key priority for public health.

Chlamydia infection is the most commonly diagnosed bacterial Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) in England and disproportionately affects young, sexually active women aged 15 to 24 years. Chlamydia infection often has no symptoms, but if left untreated, can result in serious health consequences including pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), ectopic pregnancy and tubal factor infertility (TFI). The National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP) is an important public health initiative for improving sexual health outcomes for young people through early detection of chlamydia infection and reducing the reproductive health harms associated with untreated chlamydia infection. The programme also aims to reduce re-infection and onward transmission of chlamydia as well as highlighting awareness of good sexual health behaviours and practice.

In 2021, the aims of the NCSP shifted to emphasise a focus for opportunistic chlamydia screening among women, due to the harmful, reproductive effects of untreated chlamydia occurring predominantly in women and other people with a womb or ovaries. Therefore, in practice, although everyone (including men and partners of someone with chlamydia) can still get tested if needed, all sexually active and asymptomatic young women should be proactively offered a chlamydia screening in community settings. The NCSP recommends that all sexually active women under the age of 25 years should get tested annually for chlamydia or after having sex with a new partner.

Community pharmacies are a health, social and a community asset, with strong links to the local and vibrant communities. [Community pharmacy](#) teams have the trust and support of the public and can be accessed in a variety of locations. They see people in every state of health and are well placed to play an important role in supporting people with sexual health, reproductive health and HIV. The NCSP standards, published by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) recommends chlamydia screening to take place in core community services, including community pharmacies. They are accessible to all, especially deprived communities who may not access other conventional NHS services, helping to reduce health inequalities and the burden on existing providers.

It is important to widen the opportunity within the community to offer testing for STIs, including HIV and to recommend local integrated contraception and sexual health services (iCaSH), including promoting on-line testing services.

Many organisations, including pharmacies are already engaging in the provision of sexual health, reproductive health and HIV services e.g. supply of oral contraception, emergency hormonal contraception, Chlamydia screening and treatment, pregnancy testing, condom distribution, sexual health promotion and providing information on HIV.

It is the responsibility of local authorities to commission 'enhanced' services to compliment services provided under the core integrated Contraception and Sexual Health contract. Therefore, Bedford Borough Council will be contracting providers to deliver Chlamydia and gonorrhoea screening and treatment for uncomplicated Chlamydia infection.

1.3 Local Context

The population demography and health needs of communities in Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes vary. For more information, please refer to: the local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), and the Sexual Health Needs Assessments (SHNA) for Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire, and Milton Keynes.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessments

- [Bedford Borough JSNA](https://bedford.jsna.uk/) (https://bedford.jsna.uk/)
- [Central Bedfordshire JSNA](https://centralbedfordshire.jsna.uk/) (https://centralbedfordshire.jsna.uk/)
- [Milton Keynes JSNA](https://miltonkeynes.jsna.uk/) (https://miltonkeynes.jsna.uk/)

Sexual Health Needs Assessments

- [Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire](https://centralbedfordshire.jsna.uk/download/2l6jx/2e2/SHNA%202022.pdf)
(https://centralbedfordshire.jsna.uk/download/2l6jx/2e2/SHNA%202022.pdf)
- [Milton Keynes](https://miltonkeynes.jsna.uk/download/2ronm/f4g/SexualHealthHNA_MK%20Final.pdf)
(https://miltonkeynes.jsna.uk/download/2ronm/f4g/SexualHealthHNA_MK%20Final.pdf)

1.4 Evidence Base

- [A Framework for Sexual Health Improvement in England](#) (Department of Health, 2013)
- [National chlamydia screening programme \(NCSP\) standards](#) 8th Edition (UK Health Security Agency, 2022)
- [National Chlamydia screening programme \(NCSP\): programme overview](#) (UK Health Security Agency, 2021)
- [Chlamydia clinical guidance 2015](#) (British Association for Sexual Health and HIV, last updated September 2018)

- [Women's Health Strategy for England](#) (Department of Health and Social Care, 2022)
- [Sexually Transmitted Infections in Primary Care](#) 2nd Edition (Royal College of General Practitioners, 2013)
- [You're welcome - Quality criteria for young people friendly health services](#) (Department of Health, 2011)
- [Data Protection Act](#) (Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, 2018 and Home Office)
- [Fraser Guidelines](#) (1985)
- [Caldicott Guidelines](#) (Department of Health, published 2020)
- [The Pharmacy Offer for Sexual Health, Reproductive Health and HIV – A resource for commissioners and providers](#) (PHE March 2019)

2. Key Service Outcomes

Pharmacies/ Health providers will work as part of a wider network of sexual and reproductive health providers, to provide a comprehensive service to the populations of Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes.

This specification sets out expectations of the Authority for:

- Screening young people aged 15-24 years as part of the National Chlamydia Screening Programme (dual testing for gonorrhoea)
- Treating positive clients and attending partners for Chlamydia, in line with local Patient Group Direction (PGD) arrangements
- Providing advice and onward referral in relation to longer term needs related to sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing

The service will also contribute to the achievement of the following Public Health strategic outcomes:

- To provide access to high quality contraception and sexual health services to residents.
- To reduce the rate of STIs.
- To increase the detection rate for Chlamydia among those aged 15-24 years.

The Provider will also contribute to the achievement of the following local outcomes:

- To support women to make an informed choice in relation to contraception and sexual health.
- To improve the sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing of the local population.
- To reduce inequalities in sexual and reproductive health amongst MSM, Black African communities and other vulnerable groups.
- To improve the diagnostic rate for Chlamydia by offering routine screening.

- To promote safer sexual practice to reduce rates of sexually transmitted infections.
- To develop increasingly user-focused sexual and reproductive health services.

3. Scope

This service specification forms a part of the agreement between the Local Authority and the provider. Bedford Borough Council is the lead commissioning authority on behalf of Central Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes City Councils.

This service specification refers to types of chlamydia treatment detailed in the PGDs issued by the local authority.

This service specification will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary, to maintain and improve the quality of the service. The local authority will review all available evidence regarding the service provision and reserve the right to revise the service specification considering any emerging new evidence and best practice guidance.

4. Applicable Service Standards

The aim of this service is to improve access to the high-quality provision of Chlamydia screening (including gonorrhoea) and treatment of Chlamydia infection.

4.1 Service Objectives

- To promote the National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP) and its importance, through appropriate awareness raising, promotion and training and provide a range of resources to sites to promote the service.
- To refer clients, especially from underserved groups, into mainstream contraceptive and sexual health services.
- To increase access to the National Chlamydia Screening Programme by providing additional locations where clients can access screening.
- To increase access to treatment for Chlamydia infection.
- To increase the knowledge of risks associated with STIs, e.g. through supporting local and national sexual and reproductive health campaigns.
- To refer clients who may have been at risk of STIs to an appropriate service.

- To strengthen the local network of contraceptive and sexual health services to help ensure easy and swift access to advice.

4.2 Service Model

All service delivery should be in line with current standards for the delivery of sexual and reproductive healthcare, as set out by the [British Association for Sexual Health and HIV \(BASHH\)](#) and the [National Chlamydia Screening Programme Standards \(UKHSA\)](#).

5. Clinical Service Delivery

Clinical service delivery should be in line with guidance published by the [British Association for Sexual Health and HIV \(BASHH\)](#) and the [National Chlamydia Screening Programme Standards \(UKHSA\)](#).

Clinical service delivery is formed of two parts, under this specification

Part A: Screening and Part B: Treatment.

All Providers, under this service specification, are expected to deliver **Part A: Screening** and those Providers with suitably qualified professionals (i.e., Pharmacists/ qualified Health Professionals) are recommended to additionally deliver **Part B: Treatment**.

Part A: Screening

The Provider will promote and provide opportunistic Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea (dual test) screening kits to young women aged 15-24 years (and partners aged above 25 years)

- The Provider has a duty to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea (dual test) screening test kit offer
- Use promotional materials to advertise the availability of opportunistic testing to the target group
- Promoting and initiating opportunistic screening to those aged 24 years and under at every opportunity, i.e. contraceptive consultations, travel consultations and other consultations with young people
- Discussing Chlamydia and gonorrhoea with young people aged 24 years and under, highlighting the risks of infection, benefits of testing and discussing the process for management of a positive screen
- Providing a Chlamydia and gonorrhoea dual testing kit (either a urine container or a self-swab kit), together with verbal guidance on the method for sample collection and processing
- Ensuring that any samples collected on site are sent to the laboratory
- Providing every young person with a clear explanation of the results notification process, this is managed by the [local contraception and sexual health service](#)

- Providing patient advice / written information on the use of condoms to prevent sexually transmitted infections, and provide details of the local C-Card Scheme for the provision of free condoms
- It is considered good practice for Pharmacies to offer a dual Chlamydia screening test kit to any female under the age of 25 years provided with Emergency Hormonal Contraception.
- Providers should promote the local integrated contraception and sexual health services (iCaSH Bedfordshire and iCaSH Milton Keynes) for a full-service offer, particularly for males and people over 25 years.
- To order resources such as dual chlamydia & gonorrhoea screening test kits visit:
 - [Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire](https://www.icash.nhs.uk/professionals/icash-beds-partners/)
[\(https://www.icash.nhs.uk/professionals/icash-beds-partners/\)](https://www.icash.nhs.uk/professionals/icash-beds-partners/)
 - [Milton Keynes](https://www.icash.nhs.uk/professionals/icash-milton-keynes-partners/)
[\(https://www.icash.nhs.uk/professionals/icash-milton-keynes-partners/\)](https://www.icash.nhs.uk/professionals/icash-milton-keynes-partners/)

Part B: Treatment

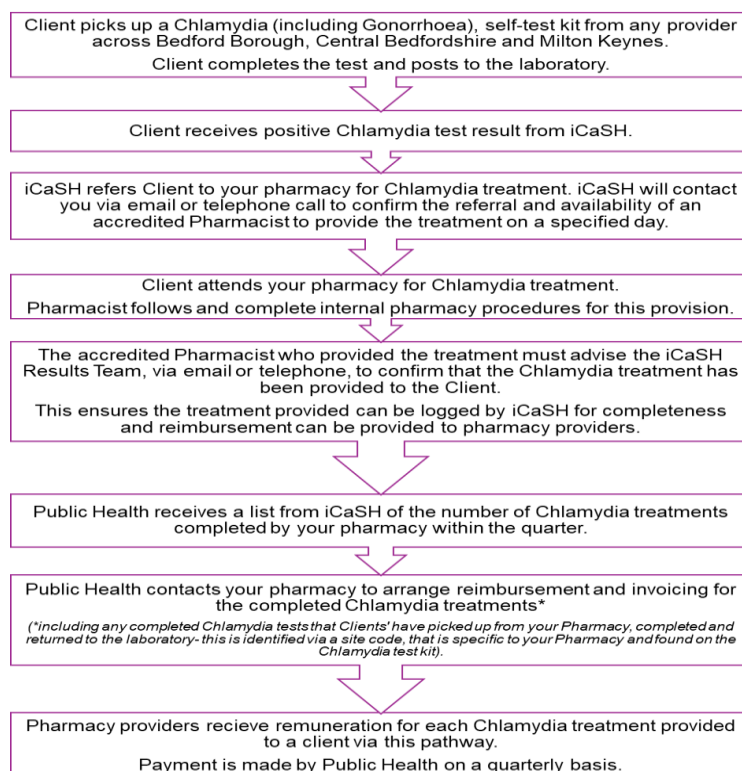
Treatment provision will involve:

- The Provider has a duty to ensure that the accredited Pharmacists/ Health Professional and relevant staff are aware of the services offered, and that all requests for Chlamydia treatment are sensitively referred to the accredited Pharmacist/ Health Professional on duty without delay.
- Accredited Pharmacists/ Health Professionals, who have completed the requisite training and signed local PGDs, must personally counsel and administer medication to any client requesting Chlamydia Treatment.
- Receiving notifications for Chlamydia treatment, from the integrated contraceptive and sexual health service Provider, for those patients that require treatment and have chosen their Pharmacy/community setting as their preferred treatment site. Alternatively, patients and their sexual partners may choose to be treated at their local integrated contraception and sexual health service or a local pharmacy
- Ensuring timely access for the client to attend for treatment to reduce onward transmission
- Supply treatment for Chlamydia under a current agreed PGD, free of charge to clients aged 15 to 24 years (and above 25 years for partners).
- The accredited Pharmacist/ Health Professional will assess the need and suitability for a client to receive Chlamydia treatment in line with the current version of the PGDs and the inclusion and exclusion criteria to be applied during provision of the service.

- Results for Chlamydia testing and treatment are managed by the local integrated contraception and sexual health service (iCaSH www.icash.nhs.uk) and via secure email, iCaSH should be advised of the treatments for Chlamydia provided for their records at:
 - Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire – ccs-tr.icashbedfordshireresults@nhs.net
 - Milton Keynes - ccs.icash.milton.keynes.education@nhs.net
- Failure to advise the iCaSH Results Team that Chlamydia treatment has been provided could compromise payment as screening and treatment is verified by laboratory-tested samples and treatment information given to the Results Team. All invoices for contracted activity are cross-referenced prior to authorisation.
- Responding promptly to sexual health providers when contacted re: outstanding patients for whom they have not received confirmation of treatment
- The Chlamydia and gonorrhoea* results process notifies clients of their test results and informs those who test positive of the need for treatment. Clients who are Chlamydia positive will be encouraged to take their partner along with them for screening and treatment; partners can be treated prior to a Chlamydia screen.
- Where the Chlamydia treatment is not appropriate, the Provider's accredited Pharmacist/ Health Professional will provide advice and onward referral to a service that can provide treatment, further advice and care, as outlined in the current PGD.
- Documentation for all service delivery should be in line with professional and local, internal pharmacy protocol and supporting documents.

**** Clients who are identified as gonorrhoea positive must be treated at specialist contraception and sexual health services.***

Chlamydia Treatment Pathway



5.1 Safeguarding

When the service user is under 16 years of age, Pharmacists/ Health Professionals must comply with Fraser Guidelines and local child protection procedures if any safeguarding concerns are identified. Advice can be obtained from:

- Local Children's services
 - [Bedford Borough Integrated Front Door \(previously MASH\)](#)
 - [Central Bedfordshire Children's Services](#)
 - [Milton Keynes MASH](#)
- iCaSH
 - [iCaSH Bedfordshire](#) (Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire)
 - [iCaSH Milton Keynes](#)

6. Service Environment

It is recognised that community pharmacies offer extended opening hours and good access for residents. The availability of an accredited Pharmacist to provide these services will support the service aims and intended outcomes by providing access to these services when other providers are not available. Other community health and wellbeing settings can offer testing kits that are convenient for residents to access.

Services will be available to all clients regardless of sexual orientation, age, gender, ethnicity or religious beliefs.

In addition, clients will have access to / receive:

- A consultation room clearly designated as an area for confidential consultations
- A welcoming atmosphere and environment
- Care managed by trained, competent and updated staff
- Confidential, non-judgemental advice
- The opportunity to give anonymous feedback, positive or negative, about the service

6.1 Self Care

The client will receive comprehensive advice on their self-care, which will include:

- Information and/or signposting to local contraceptive and sexual health services
- Safer sex and appropriate advice to prevent pregnancy and STIs
- Clear verbal instructions and written materials in a range of languages, where available, and signposting to specialist support services, if required

7. Reporting and monitoring

- The Provider will maintain a confidential, secure and up-to-date register of clients supplied with Chlamydia treatment, including the batch number, expiry date and recording of adverse incidents.
- Client records are confidential and must be stored securely at the accredited pharmacy/ Healthcare Provider for 8 years if the client is believed to be over 16 and until the clients 26th birthday if they are believed to be under the age of 16.
- All suspected adverse reactions must be reported via the yellow card system to the MHRA/CSM or on the website at <https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk/>. All adverse reactions should be reported; even if it is not certain that the medication administered has caused the reaction, or if the reaction is well recognised, or if other drugs were given at the same time.

- All records and record keeping should comply with the requirements of the RPSGB's Standards of Good Professional Practice.
- Any serious incidents should be reported to the Public Health Principal, Sexual & Reproductive Health

8. Clinical Audit

The Provider may be required to participate in audits that will assist to assess the effectiveness of service delivery and develop any identified improvements, as requested by the Public Health Principal for Sexual and Reproductive Health.

9. Eligibility to Deliver Services

- The provision of Chlamydia treatment can only be provided by an accredited Pharmacist/ Health Professional under local PGD arrangements.
- Supply of dual Chlamydia Screening test kits can be undertaken by any appropriately trained member of the Provider who is deemed competent by the accredited Pharmacist/ Health care Professional to support this service.

9.1 Accreditation

The Accredited Pharmacist/ Health Professional must have satisfactorily completed:

- [CPPE Declaration of Competence for Chlamydia Screening and Treatment](#) or equivalent competence relevant to their role and organisation.
- Safeguarding Foundation Level Training or equivalent (updated annually via LSCB or CPPE)
- Safeguarding Children and Young People against Child Sexual Exploitation (updated annually via LSCB or CPPE)

In addition, the Provider's accredited Pharmacist/ Health Professional must also:

- Read and sign-up to service delivery outlined in this contract.
- Read and sign-up to the current local PGDs.
- Hold a current DBS clearance (no more than 3 years old).
- Be able to demonstrate ongoing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) relevant to the service delivery.
- Self-assessment Declaration of Competency must be reviewed at least every two years.

Accredited Pharmacists/ Health Professionals are responsible for maintaining the clinical knowledge appropriate to their practice by attending relevant study days, courses, and

applying evidence-based practice. This should be kept in a personal portfolio as evidence of declaration of competence and may be requested by the local authority at any time.

To deliver the contracted service outlined in Specification PH01 of this contract, the delivering Pharmacist/ Health Professional must meet the necessary requirements.

10. Remuneration

Claims can be made for the following:

Activity	Payment
A completed dual Chlamydia and gonorrhoea test Only completed tests can be claimed, these are <i>identified via a site code, that is specific to your Pharmacy and found on the Chlamydia test kit</i>	£10.00
Chlamydia Treatment-including Consultation and drug cost	£20.00

Payments can be claimed quarterly in arrears, based on actual activity, with the required supporting information accompanying the invoice template provided.

Bedford Borough Council makes no commitment on the volume of activity made available to a Provider under these services and reserves the right to withdraw services dependent on the available budget.

11. Interdependencies and networks

- Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes City Councils, Public Health Teams
- Local Integrated Contraceptive and Sexual Health Service (iCaSH Bedfordshire and iCaSH Milton Keynes)
- The National Chlamydia Screening Programme UKHSA
- Local Safeguarding Boards (for adults and children)

12. Relevant Clinical Networks

- Participate (where possible) in the local Sexual Health Network group and actively contribute to the further development of clinically appropriate treatment regimes, services and pathways for Sexual Health
- Keep up to date with developments and information on local contraception and sexual health services and any issues highlighted by The Authority.



Working together to improve the health
and wellbeing of our communities