

Title of Report	DPH annual report (2023) <i>Healthy Sexually: working hand-in-hand to improve the sexual and reproductive health of young people in the City of London and Hackney</i>
For Consideration By	Health and Wellbeing Board
Meeting Date	29/06/2023
Classification	Open
Ward(s) Affected	All
Report Author	Sandra Husbands, Director of Public Health; Chris Lovitt, Deputy Director of Public Health; Danny Turton, Public Health Registrar

This report is for information and discussion.

Why is the report being brought to the Board?

The report is being brought to the Health and Wellbeing Board prior to publication and as part of launching the report. The Board is asked to take note of the recommendations made in the report and to make any observations or suggestions, as appropriate, relating to their implementation. Members of the Board are asked to continue their support of work in the field of sexual and reproductive health.

Has the report been considered at any other committee meeting of the Council or other stakeholders

The recommendations made in the Annual Report were discussed at the LBH Adults, Health and Integration Directorate Leadership Team (AH&I DLT) meeting on 1 March 2023.

1. **Background**

The Director of Public Health (DPH) has a statutory responsibility to prepare an annual report on the health of the local population. This is an independent report. The DPH is responsible for its content and structure while the local authority has a corresponding statutory duty to publish it. The report is an opportunity to draw attention to an aspect of the local population's health and to consider areas where further action might be recommended.

Last year's Director of Public Health annual report (available [here](#)) was published in April 2022 and looked at the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children and young people in the City of London and Hackney. This year's report focuses on young people's Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH).

Hackney has a young, ethnically and sexually diverse population. It has a proud history of providing a wide range of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services to its residents. The DPH report provides an overview of these services, but focuses in particular on younger people (those under 30) and on testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). This is because young people access sexual health services more frequently than other sections of the population and, when they do access services, they are more likely to be diagnosed with an STI. Furthermore, the City of London and Hackney have recorded significantly higher rates of newly diagnosed STIs than the London or England averages for the past ten years of available data.

Notwithstanding relatively high levels of STIs in the community, there has been a marked reduction in the number of STI tests being performed since the COVID pandemic. The overall number of STI tests across the sector fell by 57% from 2019/20 to 2021/22 (HSHS Sexual Health Equality Audit 2022). This takes into account both primary and secondary care as well as online services provided by [Sexual Health London](#). The DPH report aims, therefore, to encourage stakeholders to continue working together, and with the communities they serve, to bring STI testing back up to pre-pandemic levels and to continue working to enhance access to SRH services across the board.

The report makes five broad recommendations, aimed at both service providers and commissioners. These are:

1. Community involvement is essential to providing high quality services: health providers and commissioners should reconfirm, and put into action, their commitment to collaborate with young people in the co-production of services.

2. Services must be easily accessible to young people: refine existing SRH services and explore new initiatives in collaboration with young people to make accessing services as easy as possible.
3. Young people must be aware of when and how to access support: improve young people’s awareness of services and their willingness to access them.
4. Focus on enhancing collaboration and partnership working: continue to develop collaborative working practices across SRH and beyond to mitigate pressures on services and improve user experiences.
5. Continue to identify and address inequalities in SRH: ongoing research and audit, undertaken in collaboration with communities, is recommended to identify inequalities and communicate findings to all concerned partners. Such research should be coupled with a commitment to address inequalities that are identified.

1.1. Policy Context:

Please detail which, if any, of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy priorities this report relates to?

Enhancing the sexual and reproductive health of our community through collaborative working and building people’s confidence to access services will benefit mental health, social connection and help mitigate financial insecurity.

- Improving mental health
- Increasing social connection and
- Supporting greater financial security
- X All of the above**

Please detail which, if any, of the Health & Wellbeing Ways of Working this report relates to?

The report advocates a community-centred public health approach¹ with collaboration at the centre of all new initiatives. The first recommendation made in the report is for health providers and commissioners to reconfirm their commitment

¹ Community-centred Public Health is an approach to tackling public health issues which is adopted “to enhance individual and community capabilities, create healthier places and reduce health inequalities” (PHE 2020 briefing, *Community-centred public health: Taking a whole system approach* available [here](#)). See further [Health Matters](#) (28 February 2018) and the PHE/NHS England [guide to community-centred approaches](#) (2015).

to working with communities to co-produce new initiatives and when developing existing services.

- Strengthening our communities
- Creating, supporting and working with volunteer and peer roles
- Collaborations and partnerships: including at a neighbourhood level
- Making the best of community resources
- X All of the above**

1.2. **Equality Impact Assessment**

Has an EIA been conducted for this work?

- Yes
- X No**

1.3. **Consultation**

Has public, service user, patient feedback/consultation informed the recommendations of this report?

Yes. The recommendations were informed by the results of two separate mystery shopper reviews conducted by Future Insight Partnership Projects and by Healthwatch Hackney as well as other recent consultations with young people across the borough.

Have the relevant members/ organisations and officers been consulted on the recommendations in this report?

Yes. Consultations were held widely with stakeholders across the SRH field, within the LBH Council, local and regional NHS partners and with voluntary sector organisations. Stakeholders were also sent an early draft of the report for their comments and feedback.

1.4. **Risk Assessment**

Formal risk assessment has not been undertaken.

1.5. **Sustainability**

Sustainability is not addressed in the report as it offers broad recommendations to be implemented as considered most appropriate by stakeholders and commissioners.

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Appendices	Appendix 1: Update on recommendations made in last year's Director of Public Health Annual Report (2022) Appendix 2: A model of Sexual and Reproductive Health services