

# Let's talk about sex!

Healthwatch Cheshire

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## Introduction

Between September 2018 and February 2019, Healthwatch Cheshire East and Healthwatch Cheshire West undertook research regarding people's experiences of using Sexual Health services across Cheshire.



## Objectives of this session

- To provide an insight into the planning and delivery of specific topic-based projects.
- To identify a range of methods to obtain information and enable conversations about sensitive topics.
- Share experience of managing a project during a recommissioning process.



## Why Sexual Health?

Examples of comments from people during general engagement activity:

- *“There is not enough information for young people. There is no drop-in clinic for young people in Nantwich.”*
- *“Had to go to the Sexual Health Clinic as I couldn't get GP appointment for a repeat of the pill.”*
- *“Had my coil fitted at Macclesfield Hospital which was a good service. Would have been easier at my GP but they don't do it.”*



## Why Sexual Health?

Staff at Sexual Health Clinics also told us:

- *“There is a real need in this area, particularly amongst young people. There is a lack of nurses/doctors who were not trained to fit coils. This has an impact on women locally as they would have to travel - which could prove difficult for the patient.”*
- *“There is a real need to support patients with psychosexual conditions. This can range from a one-off appointment to a period of counselling sessions. We are seeing an increasing need.”*



## Why Sexual Health?

- Highlighted as an area of focus by Public Health in both local authority areas.
- Recommissioning process taking place in both Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester, albeit with slightly differing timescales.
- Previous report by Healthwatch Cheshire West in January 2017.
- Cheshire East Council and Body Positive had recently conducted their own surveys, which Healthwatch Cheshire East and Healthwatch Cheshire West have been credited for helping to promote. Scope for our work to complement the findings of these surveys.
- Opportunity to engage more with young people whom these previous surveys had found difficult to reach.

## Aims of our project

- To determine the public's experience, knowledge and accessibility of Sexual Health services across Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester.
- To ensure that services advertised were a true reflection of what is delivered within the various locations.
- To find out about any barriers people felt may exist in accessing Sexual Health services.
- To understand how people would like to access Sexual Health services in the future.
- To inform Local Authorities, Clinic Commissioning Groups and GPs how to support the Sexual Health and wellbeing of the population of Cheshire.
- To provide additional information and insight to commissioners during the process of recommissioning services and delivering of new contracts.



## What we did

- Desktop research to ascertain level of available information and reality checks.
- Enter and View visits to Sexual Health Clinics.
- Mystery Shopper visits to Sexual Health Clinics.
- Survey of people's experiences.
- Engagement with specific groups.





## Holding sensitive conversations



## Holding sensitive conversations



## Sensitivities

- Has been a contentious issue for both of the local authorities in Cheshire. In 2016, East Cheshire NHS Trust were awarded the contract in Cheshire West and Chester over Countess of Chester NHS Trust to deliver sexual health services and carried significant changes to the service. This attracted a considerable amount of publicity.
- In 2019, Cheshire West and Chester awarded the contract to a private provider, Virgin Care. This led to media, public, and political concerns of 'privatising the NHS' in the run up to local elections.
- Also in 2019, Cheshire East awarded their contract to Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen Hospitals NHS Trust.
- Beware of unconscious bias.
- Ensuring we are the voice of 'The People'

## Impact of report

### Feedback from Service Commissioners - Cheshire East:

*“The report provides tangible and robust evidence which will be used as a starting point to help inform the service review and develop services going forward.”*



### Feedback from Service Commissioners - Cheshire West and Chester:

*“Receiving feedback, both positive and offering recommendations, is integral to ensuring that the service meets the needs of the communities it serves. Recommendations from the report will be reviewed shared with the new provider.”*





Thank you!

