

Public health Local services agreements 2021

Service specification sign-up

Community Pharmacy: Condom distribution scheme for young people

Contract expiry date: 31 March 2023

Specific Training/Accreditation: Please refer to specification for full details of requirements. No accreditation/training certificate need to be returned.

Pharmacy:
Pharmacy registration code:
<p>I declare that I am competent to provide this service and have registered to use Pharmoutcomes¹,</p> <p>Name and designation:</p> <p>Signature:</p> <p>To be signed only by the contractor or authorised person</p>
<p>For and on behalf of EAST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1UE</p> <p>Signed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Authorised Signatory</p>

Payment: £3.00 per distribution

Payment will only be made via Pharmoutcomes

If you are not registered with Pharmoutcomes, raise a helpdesk request via [Pharmoutcomes | pharmoutcomes.org](https://pharmoutcomes.org) to receive a username and password. Details will be required of your store, contact information, and an email address to issue the login details.

¹ PharmOutcomes is a web-based system which helps community pharmacies provide services more effectively and makes it easier for commissioners to audit and manage these services.

Public Health Local Service Agreement 2021

This service specification should be read in conjunction with the Public Health Local Service Agreement (PHLSA) contract document. In addition to the service specific elements set out in this specification all Terms and Conditions set out in the PHLSA must be adhered to by providers delivering this service

Community Pharmacy: East Sussex C-Card Condom distribution scheme for young people

Contract length: This service specification runs from 1st October 2021 up to 31 March 2023

Introduction

The East Sussex C-Card scheme is a free and confidential co-ordinated condom distribution network for young people aged 13 – 24 years in East Sussex. It aims to provide quick and confidential access to condoms, supported by evidence based, accurate contraceptive and sexual health information, and sign posting to comprehensive contraceptive and sexual health services. The scheme has been established in East Sussex for a number of years and currently includes providers from a wide range of organisations and sectors. East Sussex NHS Healthcare Trust (ESHT) coordinate the scheme.

To register for a C-Card, a young person must to go to a ‘Registration’ point (usually a youth agency, educational establishment, sexual health clinic, general practice or pharmacy) and go through a process of induction with a trained worker who has assessed their suitability for the scheme. Young people over the age of 16 can also register for a C-Card online at [Condoms | eastsussexsexualhealth.co.uk](https://condoms.eastsussexsexualhealth.co.uk)

The young person then receives their C-Card with a personal registration number, entitling them to free condoms at any of the distribution or ‘Pick Up’ points displaying the C-Card logo – including a number of GP surgeries, pharmacies and other community venues.



The best way for sexually active people of any age to avoid an STI is to use a condom when they have sex. It is important that young people should be able to access condoms easily and feel confident about carrying and using them. Many local areas have already developed ‘C-Card’ schemes. These allow C-Card holders to obtain free condoms from a range of outlets such as pharmacies, as well as more traditional providers such as GPs and clinics.

Source: Department of Health (2013) A Framework for Sexual Health Improvement

Aims and objectives of the service

The aim of the C-Card service is to improve the sexual health and wellbeing of young people in East Sussex by providing quick, easy and confidential access to free condoms.

Specific objectives of the service

- To provide young people with quick and confidential access to condoms.
- To provide sign posting to comprehensive contraceptive and sexual health services

Expected outcomes

The expected outcome of the service is to improve the sexual health and wellbeing of young people in East Sussex by providing quick, easy and confidential access to free condoms.

Service outline and standards

Service outline

This PHSLA specification is for the distribution of condoms only. A separate delivery agreement must be in place in order to offer registration of young people to the scheme.

Distribution

Distribution outlets are not expected to provide further sexual and reproductive health advice, but should be able to refer the young person to local services for further help and support. The principles of distribution include:

- Identifying the young person's C-Card status
- Determining condom type preference
- Supplying the young person with condoms and updating their C-Card
- Consideration of a chlamydia test offer or signposting to other services
- Recording of monitoring information

There is no formal limit to the amount of times a young person may visit for condoms. The service aims to encourage familiarisation and consistency with condom use among young people, not to police or restrict access. However, applying responsible distribution supply limits and maintaining awareness of visit frequency are methods to help prevent misuse of the scheme.

The numbers of condoms to be made available to young people will be:

- condoms per visit for those aged 13 and 14
- 12 condoms per visit for 15 to 24 year olds.

Registration and re-registration procedures are in place to ensure young people benefit from a regular assessment which will encourage positive sexual health behaviours. Re-registration at a registration outlet is required after the young person has requested

condoms 16 times (i.e. once there is no further space available on the C-Card to record the date of distribution) or if six months have passed since a young person under the age of 16 has used the C-Card. Detailed distribution protocols and processes are provided in the East Sussex C-Card Guidance.

Registration

C-Card registration activity is not included within this service specification. A separate delivery agreement must be in place in order to offer registration of young people to the scheme (see **East Sussex C-Card guidance or contact esht.ccardeastsussex@nhs.net for further details**).

ESCC does not provide payments for C-Card registration activity as there are numerous existing registration outlets in youth and community settings across the county. Providers can however choose to offer C-Card registration to increase their distribution activity by signing up to the additional delivery agreement. Young people over the age of 16 can also register for a C-Card online at [Condoms | eastsussexsexualhealth.co.uk](https://condoms.eastsussexsexualhealth.co.uk)

Managing the service

The Provider is required to:

- Display, or show/explain to young people, a notice explaining use of data collected as part of the C-Card service.
- Have an agreed complaints and feedback procedure that service users can use to log complaints or concerns. These will always be fed back to the scheme co-ordinator at ESHT according to the East Sussex C-Card suggestions and complaints procedure.
- Have and adhere to its confidentiality policy at all times when providing the C-Card scheme. This policy will be displayed in an area where young people accessing the scheme can see it.
- Have and adhere to its child protection and safeguarding policies at all times when providing the C-Card scheme. All staff will have been trained in child protection and safeguarding.
- Have and adhere to its information governance policy at all times when providing the C-Card scheme.
- Have a designated post holder and deputising post with responsibility for reporting and managing serious incidents. Your agency/organisation will agree with the Council its procedure for the reporting of serious incidents, which will be in accordance with the Councils policy for 'The Management of Serious Incidents Reported by Providers of Public Health Services'.
- Ensure sufficient staff coverage to ensure continuity of service, should circumstances arise, that will enable fulfilment of the terms of the contract.
- Ensure management time is available to provide effective management of the service including regular individual and group supervision.
- Ensure that sufficient management time is available for contract management, including attendance at any requested meetings in relation to the contract.
- Demonstrate that the organisation is sufficiently financially robust and will use the allocated funds for the purpose of delivering and developing the service.

- Ensure that the service complies with all the Health and Safety standards outlined in the Terms and Conditions of Contract.
- Effectively utilise information technology (IT) to facilitate accurate recording and monitoring data.
- Ensure adequate cover arrangements are put in place for holidays and sickness.
- Ensure all staff members that have contact with organisations and groups carry and make available service recognisable appropriate forms of identification.
- Submit accurate and timely monitoring and performance data.

Service standards

The detailed service standards are provided in the East Sussex C-Card Guidance and local protocols provided by ESHT and ESCC, which may be updated from time to time.

Principles relating to the provision of all contraception and sexual health advice services for young people

- The welfare of the young person is paramount.
- Young people have the right to education about sex and relationships.
- Young people should be kept safe and protected from abuse.
- Services must reflect the needs of young people taking account of religion, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, health or disability.
- Young people should be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about sex and relationships.
- Young people have the right to confidentiality of personal information unless it compromises the rights of others or themselves or places others or themselves at risk of harm.
- Young people have the right to privacy in the place they live consistent with the right to personal safety and welfare.
- Young people have the right to choose to make, break or refrain from personal relationships.

Standards relating to the East Sussex C-Card scheme

- The C-Card scheme is provided only by appropriately trained practitioners who keep up to date with new service developments.
- Where possible, the C-Card Scheme should be delivered as part of a broader range of sexual health services.
- The C-Card scheme supports the aim and objectives of the National Chlamydia Screening Programme.
- C-Card scheme outlets will aim to achieve You're Welcome quality criteria for young people friendly health services.

You're Welcome

You're Welcome provides good practice guidance that is based on local practice and evidence of what will improve the experiences and health outcomes for young people. The core themes of You're Welcome include:

- Accessibility
- Publicity
- Confidentiality and consent
- Environment
- Staff training, skills, attitudes, values
- Joined-up working
- Involvement of young people in feedback, monitoring and evaluation
- Health issues for adolescents

Specific service standards and responsibilities of the provider

- All staff working with young people will ensure young people are aware of the limits of confidentiality within the C-Card Scheme, in line with Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures.
- All staff working with young people are expected to be responsive to the needs of individual young people regarding age, learning ability, culture, religion, ethnicity, sexuality and gender.
- All staff should have a current working knowledge of community provision offering sexual health and contraceptive services (including young person specific and outreach services).

The provider must nominate a lead worker for each outlet. The provider is responsible for:

- Ensuring all staff operating the scheme have attended C-Card training.
- Providing initial support and guidance for all practitioners involved in the scheme to contribute towards delivering a high quality service.
- Checking distribution forms for quality and completeness.
- Completing required monitoring information
- Monitoring supplies for the scheme, including ordering new stock in a timely manner and checking the expiry date of condoms.
- Promoting the scheme appropriately on their site.
- Being the first point of contact for the C-Card coordinators at the outlet, and providing feedback from staff to the coordinators about the scheme.
- Dealing with complaints according to the scheme policy.

Specific responsibilities of the C-Card scheme coordinators (East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust)

The C-Card scheme coordinators will:

- Develop and provide C-Card scheme guidance
- Arrange training for C-Card outlets
- Provide information and advice regarding operation of the scheme
- Arrange for the supply of C-Card products free of charge (e.g. C-Cards, condoms and lubricant)
- Coordinate monitoring and evaluation of the scheme

Client / patient involvement

The Provider is required to:

- Ensure service users are well informed so they can communicate their needs and views and make informed choices.
- Ensure service user feedback is used to improve services.
- Assist and participate in evaluation of the scheme, contributing staff views

Communications

ESCC and ESHT is responsible for wider promotion of the C-Card scheme. Promotional materials such as leaflets, posters and window stickers are available to all C-Card outlets. The service provider is responsible for promotion of the service within the outlet. The provider will have an agreed advertising mechanism for the scheme within the outlet.

Providers of the scheme will be promoted via the East Sussex Sexual Health website.

www.eastsussexsexualhealth.co.uk

Interdependences and partnership working

Success of the scheme is dependent on a wide range of organisations promoting the C-Card service to young people, registering young people with a C-Card and providing a sufficient number of access points to distribute condoms. Organisations/sectors that may be involved in the scheme include: ESCC, local NHS organisations, pharmacies, GP surgeries, local colleges and schools, youth groups and other community and voluntary sector organisations. Signposting young people to alternative registration outlets and/or distribution outlets may be required in case of short-term non-availability of the service (e.g. due to stock shortage or non-availability of trained staff). An update to list of C-Card outlets and providers of postal condoms is available at Condoms | eastsussexsexualhealth.co.uk

Pharmacies will provide Chlamydia/Gonorrhoea postal kits as an opt out test. Test kits will be supplied to pharmacies via the chlamydia screening programme. The Pharmacy will order sufficient supplies of condoms and chlamydia screening kits

ESCC will provide details of relevant referral points which provider staff can use to signpost service users who require further assistance. ESCC will disseminate information on the service to other providers and health care professionals in order that they can signpost patients to the service. Partnership working may be required with a wide range of organisations in order to promote the C-Card service to young people and signpost young people to registration outlets and/or distribution outlets.

Eligibility and referral criteria

- Young people aged 13-24 and resident in East Sussex are eligible for the C-Card scheme.
- Young people may self-refer to the C-Card scheme. Formal referral to the scheme is not required, although sources of signposting may include: ESCC staff, staff from local NHS organisations, pharmacies, GP surgeries, local colleges and schools, youth groups and services, and community and voluntary sector organisations.

Stock Management

- C-Card products will be supplied to providers free of charge by ESCC.
- C-Card products (condoms, lubricant, C-Cards and C-Card stickers) should be ordered using the C-Card order form (see Appendix 1). Forms should be sent to esht.ccardeastsussex@nhs.net
- The provider will hold the specified list of products required to deliver this service and will hand out such products are required by clients on request on the production of a qualifying C-Card.
- Condoms will be kept in a cool (maximum 30 degrees) dry and secure place, only accessible to staff involved in the scheme.
- Condom stock will be maintained and ordered by providers in a timely way in line with the numbers of condoms that are being distributed.
- Providers will ensure that condoms distributed to young people will not be due to expire within 2 months of issue.
- Only staff who have attended East Sussex C-Card training will distribute condoms.
- Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea, test kits will be supplied free of charge by the local chlamydia screening service commissioned by ESCC.

Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children

The Provider must ensure that service users, and anyone using the service, are safeguarded from any form of abuse or exploitation in accordance with written policies and procedures to be agreed with the commissioner prior to the commencement of the service and that meet the standards and regulations set out in:

- East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures (2013)
- The Sussex Multi Agency Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults produced by the Safeguarding Adults Boards of Brighton and Hove, East Sussex and West Sussex (2007)
- Section 3.13 of the Terms & Conditions of Contract ('Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Children')
- The Provider will share information with the following relevant organisations: Police, Probation Service, Adult Social Care and Children's Services if an individual delivering the service or a trained individual discloses information that would indicate a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm and/or admitted to an offence for which they have not been convicted.

If the provider is worried about a child or teenager who might be at risk of harm or in danger;

- In an emergency call 999
- Otherwise contact the Single Point of Advice (SPOA) team:

Phone: 01323 464222

Opening hours: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

Email 0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk

For out of hours enquiries please contact the Emergency Duty Service.

01273 335906 or 01273 335905

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Requirements

This service relates to the distribution element of the C-Card scheme. Staff undertaking distribution alone, and operating the service in line with the C-Card guidance protocols, are not likely to require a DBS check. If individual organisations choose to provide the C-Card registration (by signing up to a separate delivery agreement – see Section 4.1) they will need to assure themselves that they are operating in line with the relevant DBS legislation. Further information is available on the GOV.UK website. Further information is available on the [GOV.UK website](#).

Accreditation and training

The Provider is required to:

- Employ suitably experienced, qualified and skilled staff to successfully deliver and manage the service.
- Support, train, supervise and appraise all staff who are employed to ensure they remain competent and deliver.
- Ensure staff members are trained to submit accurate and timely monitoring and performance data.
- Ensure staff members engage with continued professional development, including appropriate training.
- All staff distributing condoms must have received sufficient training in order ensure that they have the knowledge, skills and competence required to provide a good level of C-Card service for young people. Training is arranged for C-Card outlet staff by the coordinators of the C-Card scheme (ESCC).

Training outcomes include:

- An understanding of the aims and objectives of the C-Card Scheme
- An understanding of the importance of confidentiality
- A thorough understanding of Fraser guidelines, child protection procedures and the law
- An understanding of the benefits of young people being ready for and delaying sex
- An understanding of the different types of condom,
- A good knowledge of sexual health, including the different STIs and how they are contracted and prevented; other forms of contraception, and a knowledge of other local sexual health services

- Ability to offer a chlamydia test
- A thorough understanding of the C-Card Scheme's guidance and processes (registration, distribution, monitoring, stock ordering)
- There is an expectation that all practitioners involved in the scheme will attend further training to regularly update their knowledge and skills relating to working with young people around sexual health, relationships and contraception.
- Staff will attend C-Card update training every three years.
- The provider will inform ESCC of all trained members of staff operating the scheme so that accurate records of current C-Card practitioners can be maintained.
- The provider will inform ESCC when a trained member of staff has left the organisation so that accurate records of current C-Card practitioners can be maintained.
- The provider will ensure that a C-Card guidance manual and signposting information will be kept in an accessible place for all staff. All staff involved in the scheme will have read these documents and be aware of where they are kept.

Payment

Payment will only be made via PharmOutcomes. Register direct with PharmOutcomes and raise a helpdesk request to get a username and password for PharmOutcomes. Details will be required of your store, contact information, and an email address to issue the login details.

ESCC will remunerate the provider participating in this service the sum of £3.00 for each distribution encounter where condoms have been supplied to a young person. The remuneration will automatically be calculated by the scheme monitoring system at the end of each calendar month, provided that all data is entered onto the system in a timely manner.

There is no remuneration for registration of young people, however providers are encouraged to enable suitably experienced and trained staff to be able to offer registration as a means of driving subsequent distribution throughput at the outlet.

Providers participating in any of the following services should consider offering C-Card alongside to young people:

- Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) to under 25s and Chlamydia screening
- Chlamydia screening

ESCC will remunerate the provider for supply of Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) and/or chlamydia tests in accordance with the separate service agreement, if participating in that service. ESCC will remunerate the provider for supply of Pregnancy test kits using the C-Card order form only if participating in the PHLSA: *Community Pharmacy Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) to under 25s and Chlamydia screening*, and in accordance with the separate agreement for that service.

Monitoring and audit reporting

Monitoring and review arrangements

- Monitoring requirements are outlined in the East Sussex C-Card Guidance and local protocols provided by ESHT and ESCC, which may be updated from time to time.
- All staff will use the specified monitoring forms to record young people's data. All data will be recorded accurately and at the time of seeing the young person.
- ESCC will provide a framework for the recording of relevant service information for the purposes of audit.
- The contract will be monitored monthly and reviewed quarterly annually, in line with the financial year, by the commissioner in conjunction with the Contracts and Purchasing Unit.
- The service provider will be required to obtain the monitoring information required as per the C-Card guidance and report it to the commissioners as and when required.
- Geo-demographic data will be collected as required in the C-Card guidance and protocols.
- The annual review will consider compliance with the contract. Any aspect of compliance with this service specification can be considered.

Performance and quality indicators

- Performance and quality indicators are a measure against which the commissioner can judge how well the service is performing. They have been selected to evaluate specified outcomes and requirements and will be reviewed at least quarterly.
- Where underperformance against the KPIs occurs, the service provider will be expected to produce a recovery plan in agreement with the commissioner.
- The targets set will be reviewed with the provider after the first year of service.

Key performance and quality indicators

	Performance / Quality Indicator	Threshold	Method of measurement	Report Due
1.	Each outlet has a nominated lead C-Card worker.	100%	Communication via email to ESCC. ESCC provider records.	Annually and within four weeks of any change to staffing
2.	The provider will review its standard operating procedures and the pathways for the service on an annual basis to ensure compliance with C-Card scheme guidance.	100%	Annual sign up to service agreement	Annually

	Performance / Quality Indicator	Threshold	Method of measurement	Report Due
3.	The provider can demonstrate that staff involved in the provision of the service have undertaken required training and CPD.	100%	Self-declaration of training undertaken. ESCC C-Card training records.	Annually on request
4.	The provider cooperates with any locally agreed ESCC led assessment / evaluation of service user experience.	100%	Participation in evaluation	Annually on request
5.	Achievement / working towards You're Welcome quality criteria for young people friendly services.	100%	Completion of You're Welcome quality criteria assessment or evidence of working towards assessment	Annually

Key contacts

Enquires relating to the C-Card scheme can be made to:

Email: ccard.publichealth@eastsussex.gov.uk

Telephone: 01273 336052

Ross Boseley, Specialist Support Manager

Tel: 01273 336228 / email: ross.boseley@eastsussex.gov.uk

Tracey Houston, Public Health Business Manager

Tel: 01273 481932 / email: tracey.houston@eastsussex.gov.uk

East Sussex C-Card scheme order form

An online version of this form is available at

<https://www.eastsussexsexualhealth.co.uk/forms/east-sussex-c-card-scheme-order-form>

Please complete this form to order East Sussex C Card scheme products

Sexual Health Improvement – First floor, Avenue House Clinic, The Avenue Eastbourne.
BN21 3XY or esht.ccardeastsussex@nhs.net

For any other questions please phone **0300 1314545**

Delivery details

Date of order	
Organisation name	
Name of C-Card outlet / service	
Contact name	
C-Card outlet code (if applicable)	
Delivery address	
Postcode	
Telephone number	
Email address	

Product and description	Quantity (1 box = 144 condoms)
Exs Regular (standard size)	box(es)
Exs Snug Fit (tighter fitting)	box(es)
Exs Magnum (larger size)	box(es)
Exs Mixed Flavoured condom (mixture of coloured and flavoured condoms – suitable for oral sex)	box(es)
Exs Latex free condoms (<i>non-latex</i>) Normally limited to 1 box per order	box
Exs Air Thin (<i>thinner</i>)	box
Opaque Water Based Lube (<i>10ml sachets</i>) Multiple orders of 500 only	box(es) of 500 sachets
C-Cards Provided to a young person as part of registration to the scheme	Pack Size 50
C-Card window stickers (REGISTRATION & PICK UP POINT) Use these to advertise your venue as a C-Card outlet – max. 3 per order	
C-Card window stickers (PICK UP PONT) Use these to advertise your venue as a C-Card outlet – max. 3 per order	
C-Card information leaflet for young people:	Pack Size 50
Chlamydia Screening Unisex Test Kits (Order from PreventX - contact esht.ccardeastsussex@nhs.net for further info)	Box of 36 Test kits
East Sussex Sexual Health Information Contact Cards.	Pack Size 50
Pregnancy Tests	Order from public.health@eastsussex.gov.uk

Your order will be confirmed by email and dispatched to you within 7 working days.

Please note that your order may be delayed if we have not received regular quarterly monitoring returns for C-Card activity undertaken by your service (not applicable to new C-Card outlets / pharmacies using the Pharm Outcomes system)

Background and evidence base

Condoms can protect against unintended pregnancy and many STIs including HIV, chlamydia and gonorrhoea. They offer less protection against STIs transmitted by skin-to-skin contact, such as genital herpes and warts. In the UK in 2011, the cost of treating STIs (excluding HIV) was estimated at £620 million.²

Cost can be a major barrier to condom use, particularly for poorer people. Social norms and religious and cultural beliefs can also prevent people from using them because of stigma or embarrassment.³

NICE guidance on [sexually transmitted infections: condom distribution schemes and contraceptive services](#) with a focus on young people up to the age of 25 provides detailed recommendations on the roles and responsibilities of different staff groups in improving access to high quality contraceptive services⁴. The evidence suggests that condoms are an important part of improving sexual and reproductive health outcomes.

Condoms, when used correctly and consistently, are highly effective in preventing HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). A large body of scientific evidence shows that male latex condoms have an 80% or greater protective effect against the sexual transmission of HIV and other STIs. A review conducted in 2000 by the United States Institute of Health, concluded that condoms are effective in protecting against HIV transmission to women and men and in reducing the risk of men becoming infected with gonorrhoea. Subsequent reviews and research has suggested that condom use is associated with statistically significant protection of men and women against several types of STI including chlamydia, gonorrhoea, herpes and syphilis (WHO 2004).

Although the effectiveness of condoms in reducing teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections has been questioned, significant studies have suggested that it is not so much the condom itself but the non-use, inconsistent use, and breakage that can lead to failure in protection. The effective use of condoms increases with experience of use, which supports the efficacy of providing a scheme where young people are instructed on how to fit a condom, correct lubricant use and information about the transmission of STIs, particularly through oral and anal sex.

Risky sexual behaviour may be influenced by a number of factors:

- low self-esteem
- lack of skills (for example, in using condoms)

² Unprotected Nation 2015 – An update on the financial and economic impacts of restricted contraceptive and sexual health service. Family Planning Association.

³ NICE (2017) sexually transmitted infections: condom distribution schemes NG68

⁴ NICE(2014) Contraceptive services for under 25s PH51

- lack of negotiation skills (for example, to say ‘no’ to sex without condoms)
- lack of knowledge about the risks of different sexual behaviours
- availability of resources, such as condoms or sexual health services
- peer pressure
- attitudes (and prejudices) of society which may affect access to services ⁵

In July 2014 Public Health England (PHE) and the sexual health charity Brook published guidance on developing and running local C-Card schemes. The guidance highlights that C-Card schemes provide the following opportunities:

1. To educate young people about condoms, relationships and all aspects of sexual and reproductive health.
2. To normalise and promote condom use as part of healthy sexuality and a healthy sexual culture
3. To give professionals working with young people the chance to talk about sexual and reproductive health, and to promote healthy relationships.
4. To build a bridge into, and between, services
5. To promote coordination and integration between sexual and reproductive health services
6. To increase the numbers of young people accessing services.
7. To embed condom distribution into wider sexual and reproductive health delivery.

Read the guidance at: [C Card Guidance | brook.org.uk](https://www.brook.org.uk/c-card-guidance)

This specification and the East Sussex C-Card guidance draws on the PHE/Brook guidance and NICE guidance on **sexually transmitted infections: condom distribution schemes and contraceptive services with a focus on young people up to the age of 25** issued in March 2014⁶. The NICE guidance provides detailed recommendations on condom distribution schemes and on the roles and responsibilities of different staff groups in improving access to high quality contraceptive services.

Further information is available at:

[Sexually transmitted infections: condom distribution schemes | nice.org.uk \[ng68\]](https://www.nice.org.uk/ng68)

[Contraceptive services for under 25s | nice.org.uk \[ph51\]](https://www.nice.org.uk/ph51)

In East Sussex professionals should also follow ESCC best practice guidelines on the provision of contraception and sexual health advice services for young people⁷ The guidelines clarify processes, roles, responsibilities and to ensure consistent, safe practice across the local authority by staff working with young people.

⁵ NICE (2007) Sexually transmitted infections and under-18 conceptions: prevention

⁶ NICE(2014) Contraceptive services for under 25s PH51

⁷ESCC (2010) East Sussex best practice guidelines on the provision of contraception and sexual health advice services for young people

Sexual health of young people

Sexual activity and knowledge of local services

Most people become sexually active and start forming relationships between the ages of 16 and 24, however about a third of all young people (16-24s) have reported that they had sexual intercourse (with someone of the opposite sex) before age 16.⁸

Sexually transmitted infections

In 2017, there were 422,147 diagnoses of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) made in England, around the same number that was reported in 2016⁹

- There were 7,137 diagnoses of syphilis reported in 2017, a 20% increase relative to the year prior and a 148% increase relative to 2008
- There were 44,676 diagnoses of gonorrhoea reported in 2017, a 22% increase relative to the year prior; this is of concern given the recent emergence of extensively drug resistant *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*
- There were 441 diagnoses of first episode genital warts in 15 to 17 year old girls in 2017, a 90% decrease relative to 2009; this decrease is largely due to the high coverage National HPV Immunisation Programme in school-aged girls
- There were 2,361 fewer chlamydia diagnoses made among 15 to 24 year olds in 2017 than in 2016, a reduction of 2%
- The impact of STIs remains greatest in young heterosexuals 15 to 24 years; black ethnic minorities; and gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (MSM).

Consistent and correct use of condoms can significantly reduce the risk of STIs. The availability of condoms should be promoted through media campaigns as well as through local services including condom distribution schemes.

Teenage pregnancy

It is widely understood that teenage pregnancy and early motherhood can be associated with poor educational achievement, poor physical and mental health, social isolation, poverty and related factors. There is also a growing recognition that socio-economic disadvantage can be both a cause and a consequence of teenage motherhood¹⁰. Whilst teenage pregnancy rates have been reducing both nationally and locally, rates within East Sussex vary considerably. Under-18 conception rates in Hastings (24.5 per 1000 for women aged 15-17) and Rother (18.8/1000) in 2016 were higher than the East Sussex (16.1/1000) and national (18.8/1000) averages.¹¹

⁸ Mercer et al. (2013) Changes in sexual attitudes and lifestyles in Britain through the life course and over time: findings from the National Surveys of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (Natsal), in *The Lancet*. Published online November 26, 2013
[http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(13\)62035-8](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(13)62035-8)

⁹ Sexually transmitted infections and screening for chlamydia in England, 2017 Health Protection Report Volume 12 Number 20.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/713944/hpr2018_AA-STIs_v5.pdf

¹⁰ Office for National Statistics (ONS) under 18 conception data 2016. Available
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/conceptionandfertilityrates/bulletins/conceptionstatistics/2016>

¹¹ Ibid

The percentage of conceptions in women under 18 that lead to termination of pregnancy is higher in East Sussex (54.2 %) than England as a whole (51.8 %). There is variation across the county, with Lewes having the highest percentage of conceptions among women under 18 leading to termination of pregnancy (69.2%) and Rother having the lowest (25.9%)¹²

Policy context

While sexual relationships are essentially private matters, good sexual health is important to individuals and to society. It is therefore important to have the right support and services to promote good sexual health. Sexual health covers the provision of advice and services around contraception, relationships, sexually transmitted infections (STIs, including HIV) and termination.

The Department of Health's (2013) Framework for Sexual Health Improvement adopts a life-course approach which recognises that age-appropriate education, information and support is required to help children and young people make informed and responsible decisions. Ambitions within the framework include building knowledge and resilience among young people and improving sexual health outcomes for young adults, ensuring that:

- All children and young people know how to ask for help, and are able to access confidential advice and support about wellbeing, relationships and sexual health.
- Young people have the confidence and emotional resilience to understand the benefits of loving, healthy relationships and delaying sex.
- All young people are able to make informed and responsible decisions, understand issues around consent and the benefits of stable relationships, and are aware of the risks of unprotected sex.
- All young people have rapid and easy access to appropriate sexual and reproductive health services.

¹² *ibid*