Sexual health in pharmacies

A CPPE workbook

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Health Education England

The University of Manchester
Acknowledgements

CPPE programme developer
Geraldine Flavell, regional manager

Design meeting contributors
Emma Anderson, East Midlands tutor, CPPE
Rachel Artis, community pharmacist, CCS (Crewe)
Hayley Berry, East Midlands tutor, CPPE
Dr Amanda Britton, vice president, Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Health (FSRH)
Geraldine Flavell, programme developer, CPPE
Dr Penny Goold, consultant physician, GUM and HIV, University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Trust
Jonny Hunt, sex education (SRE) consultant, Going off the rails
Lynn Inglis, commissioner for sexual health services, Birmingham City Council
Tim Morgan, community pharmacist and HIV Pharmacy Association (HIVPA)
Dr Nick Theobald, STI Foundation academic lead, British Association of Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH)

CPPE reviewers
Maria Bell, programme manager, Clinical & Health Services MSc/Diploma
Layla Fattah, course director, Independent Prescribing
Andrew Taylor, learning development pharmacist

Piloters
Mohammad Mir
Ayesha Khan
Khurshid Hussain

CPPE e-learning team
Paddy McLaughlin, editor
Clare Hallam, builder

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We have developed this learning programme to support your practice in this topic area. We recommend that you use it in combination with other established reference sources. If you are using it significantly after the date of initial publication, then you should refer to current published evidence. CPPE does not accept responsibility for any errors or omissions.

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Introduction

This workbook complements the e-learning programme Sexual health in pharmacies.

At various points in the e-learning programme, we ask you to work together in a group with your colleagues to share ideas in team exercises.

In addition you are asked to use these ideas and others to compile a standard operating procedure which you can all sign up to, to determine how you will handle all aspects of the sexual health service.

You can use this workbook to record your own ideas in response to the team activities, as well as any useful points that are raised by your colleagues.

Whether you are already offering sexual health services through your pharmacy or are working towards setting up a new service, completing this workbook will demonstrate your development and provide you with a portfolio of evidence to prove to your employer and the General Pharmaceutical Council that you are taking your learning seriously.

Local networks and referral pathways

Everyone is entitled to confidential advice and information on sexually transmitted infections (STIs.) As well as pharmacies which aspire to provide a level 1 service, other services may be found in:

- Genitourinary medicine (GUM) clinics
- General practice (via GPs and practice nurses)
- Sexual health clinics

The Medical Foundation for HIV and Sexual Health (MEDFASH) standard 8 requires STI service providers to have links with other providers so that clients can be referred, if necessary, promptly and efficiently.

This means that you need to know who does what in your local area. You need to make contact with them and to know their contact details, clinic or 'walk in' times, appointment lead times and other information that will help you fulfil this part of the service. You will need to prepare this before beginning your service.

Where to start?

If you have ever offered a sexual health service before, even emergency contraception, you will have some contact details. Pull these out now and start to complete the table on the next page:

Why not consider adding this information to your standard operating procedure for your sexual health service?
## Signposting and referrals contacts list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Services provided</th>
<th>Access times</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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Team exercise 1 – How do you feel?

Start by discussing how you all feel about getting more involved in the management of clients with STIs.

Write your notes here.

Team exercise 2 – Who can benefit?

If you are going to offer sexual health services, you will need to consider which of the customers using your pharmacy are most likely to benefit. Which groups of clients who use your pharmacy are most at risk of STIs and how would you identify these clients?

Write your answers in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client group</th>
<th>How I would identify these clients</th>
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Team exercise 3 – Who needs what?

Think about what you would want if you were a client needing access to sexual health services. If you need some clues, think about physical needs (eg, a place to sit), emotional needs (eg, not to be judged) and resources (eg, fast response).

Write your notes here.

Team exercise 4 – What does sex mean to us and our clients?

Make sure everyone has a copy of the resource *What does sex mean?* This was written by Jonny Hunt, the sex education consultant on the project team, and is aimed at young people who are confused about sex. What does it mean to you? Can you identify with its intentions or do you disapprove?

Write your notes here.
Team exercise 5 – Sex acts card game

Download and print the *Sex acts card game* from the e-learning resources tab. Arrange the cards in a line from lowest level to highest. Follow the instructions on the first card and run the activity as suggested. What did you learn about people’s attitudes to sex?

Write your notes here.

Team exercise 6 – Common or rude?

As with many other aspects of language, different localities across the country describe sexual intercourse, anatomy and infections differently. This exercise is designed to gather awareness of local terms, then to agree whether it is appropriate to use any of them when talking with people accessing your services for sexual health.

You will have written down on a piece of paper all the words that you can think of which refer to the penis, vagina, sexual intercourse, STIs or masturbation.

Discuss the lists of words you have made, adding to each other’s as appropriate. For each of the words used, discuss whether you would use it in discussion with a client about sex. Which words are too rude, or crude, ever to be used in a professional setting? Which words are useful for talking to people more informally?

If you need help with understanding commonly used sex-related terms look them up in the Sextionary. (Search online for ‘sextionary’).
Team exercise 7 – Are you shocked?

Working as a group you will have seen the reaction of colleagues to certain statements that were read out relating to sex.

Make notes here about your observations of this activity and the possible implications for your day-to-day practice.

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Team exercise 8 – Risky behaviours

List all the risky sexual behaviours you can think of that could result in transmission of an STI. Remember to use the Sextionary if you don’t understand any terms.

Write your answers here.

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For an introduction to the topic of sexual activities and risk look at the sexual activities webpage on NHS Choices. Did you miss any of the activities listed? Add any that you missed to your list above.
Team exercise 9 – Complicating factors

So far you have thought about sexual activities that can lead to the transmission of STIs, but there are certain complicating factors to take into account which can make the risk of passing on STIs much greater. Engaging in sexual activity while under the influence of alcohol is one example.

Can you think of any others?

Write your answers here.

Team exercise 10 – Talking about preventing STIs

As well as testing for and treating STIs and carrying out a sexual health consultation you will need to talk to customers about the prevention of STIs, possibly when they haven’t even asked for your advice.

Have a discussion with your colleagues about how to talk to customers about using a condom properly and other methods of preventing STIs and select the actual words you would use.

Write your answers here.

Why not consider adding this information to your standard operating procedure for your sexual health service?
Team exercise 11

Consider what headings you would use to describe the information governance or record-keeping aspects of a sexual health service for the standard operating procedure.

How will you audit your service? What information should you keep for audit?

Write your notes here.

Team exercise 12

What does clinical governance mean to you?

Consider what headings you would use to describe the clinical governance requirement of a sexual health service for the standard operating procedure.

Write your notes here.

Why not consider adding this information to your standard operating procedure for your sexual health service?
Finalising the standard operating procedure

**Team exercise 13**

Finalise the standard operating procedure for the service you are about to undertake, using everything that you have learnt in this programme and the headings below.

Attach it as an appendix to this workbook.

**Clients**
Who are the target clients for the service?
How are they to be recruited? Posters? Leaflets? Advertising?
When should they be referred to other healthcare professionals?
What information will they be offered?
What advice will they be given?
What consent will be required for the service?

**Operators of the service**
Who is going to operate the service?
Who is the clinical governance lead?
By when will they complete their Declaration of competence?
Who will get consent from clients?
How are they to be trained?

**Location of the service**
Where will the service be carried out?
What changes need to be made to bring the location up to an acceptable standard?
Does the location allow confidential discussions to take place?

**Record keeping**
What records need to be kept?
Who will make the records?
Where will the records be kept?
Is this secure enough?

**Reporting**
What needs to be reported?
How often?
To whom?

**Results handling**
Partner notification
Treatment

**Team exercise 14**

Discuss the knowledge and skills that you think you will need to review after one year to keep your competence up to date.

Add your ideas to your standard operating procedure.
Contacting CPPE
For information on your orders or bookings, or any general enquiries, please contact us by email, telephone or post. A member of our customer services team will be happy to help you with your enquiry.

Email
info@cppe.ac.uk

Telephone
0161 778 4000

By post
Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education (CPPE)
Manchester Pharmacy School
1st Floor, Stopford Building
The University of Manchester
Oxford Road
Manchester M13 9PT

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