

Sexual Health Residents Survey May 2022

In May 2022 Southampton City Council ran a survey for residents to capture their knowledge and experience of sexual health services in the city. This was part of a broader health needs assessment undertaken by the council's public health team to better understand what residents need and to develop services to fit that. This is a summary of what you told us, and some examples of what we have done, or will do, to respond.

You said...

You like to access information about sexual health services online (89%), from your GP or Practice Nurse (47%) or from sexual health services themselves (33%).

You are most aware of services for sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing (89%) and least aware of the availability of HIV Prevention, Emergency Contraception and Termination of Pregnancy advice.

We did...

Based on the findings of the needs assessment and survey, a new contract has been secured from April 2024 for an integrated sexual health service for Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton that provides confidential, high quality sexual and reproductive health services that people can access through a mix of digital, remote and face to face options.

Lets Talk About It is the first point of contact for information about sexual health and for accessing services in Southampton. The website provides up to date and comprehensive information about the services available (online and face to face), opening times of clinics, and advice and guidance on a range of issues relating to sexual and reproductive health.

The integrated sexual health service supports GPs, practice nurses and pharmacies with training, information, advice and guidance relating to sexual and reproductive health.

We have reviewed and refreshed the information available online about services in Southampton to make sure information and advice is comprehensive and easily accessible. Lets Talk About It provides clear information and advice about the services available for STIs, HIV, contraception, and termination of pregnancy as well as a wide range of other issues.

The sexual health promotion team is working to increase awareness with a particular focus on those with more complex needs.

GPs in some parts of the city are using innovative methods to increase access and awareness of HIV testing and we are working to improve awareness of this amongst local residents.

You said...

You prefer to access sexual health services in person (79%), online (68%) or on the phone (44%).

You would like services to be provided by a specialist sexual health service (84%), a GP (67%) or a pharmacy (36%).

It is important to you that a sexual health service is private, nearby, has parking and public transport links and flexible opening times.

We did...

Sexual health services are now accessible in a variety of ways. The changes have been made to make accessing services easier and designed to help resolve problems or concerns in the first contact as much as possible.

- The website: [Lets Talk About It](#)
- By phone 0300 300 2016, offering advice and booking of remote/face to face consultations with a trained sexual health practitioner.
- Through local clinics at Bitterne Health Centre and Royal South Hants Hospital (for opening times see [Home | Lets Talk About It](#)).
- By creating a [Personal Health Record](#) online where you can book appointments, order tests and check results.
- Through local 'pop up' clinics.

The new contract means that people are supported to access the sexual health service that they need in the way they prefer and at a time that is right for them, with services on offer across specialist services and through primary care and emergency contraception and condoms available at a number of pharmacies.

The new contract for the integrated sexual health service provides improved digital and telephone access, as well as improved access to a clinic in the East of the city, and sustained access centrally.

We made sure that information about the location of each sexual health service, including how to get there and how to find the right location once you are at the health centre, is included on [Home | Lets Talk About It](#).

Nurses run drop-in sessions in educational settings and supported housing. They work with homeless healthcare projects and can also make home visits. There are also drop-ins organised at Royal South Hants hospital for young people and adults working in the sex industry.

The website also includes information on opening times.

We continue working to understand people's experience of accessing services so we can improve wherever needed.

You said...

Some of you said that you have not recently used a sexual health service because you couldn't get an appointment (48%), couldn't get through to the service on the phone (23%) or you didn't know about sexual health services (22%).

Those of you who had used a sexual health service did not find information about the service easily (22%), did not find it easy to get through to the service on the phone (61%), felt it took too long to get an appointment (49%) and felt you had to travel too far for the appointment (15%).

We did...

The integrated sexual health service has changed the way it supports people who call. The sexual health practitioner handling calls aims to resolve queries and address people's needs during the first call wherever possible. They are able to provide individual advice to callers, can order tests, book appointments and arrange for medication to be posted to callers if appropriate.

Lets Talk About It includes information about and the best times to call the sexual health phone line 0300 300 2016. If the line is busy, a callback can be requested that keeps your place in the queue.

The Sexual Health Promotion team continues to work across the city to increase awareness of how to access services and support.

The integrated sexual health service has been designed to improve convenience and access to online and in-person services. Many services are now available through the Lets Talk About It website e.g. ordering test kits and receiving results, booking face-to-face or online appointments, advice on self-managed care.

Changes mean that the sexual health practitioner handling calls on 0300 300 2016 is able to advise on the best course of action for the caller, which could be booking an appointment at an appropriate time, sending a test kit or even sending medication by post.

In-person local clinics are available at Bitterne Health Centre and Royal South Hants Hospital (for opening times see Lets Talk About It).