



Young People's Sexual Health and Teenage Pregnancy

1. Introduction

Young people (aged 16-24 years) experience the highest rates of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), with rates highest in those least likely to access health services. In 2009, 75% of Chlamydia diagnoses, 72% of gonorrhoea diagnoses and 65% of genital warts diagnoses were in women aged less than 25 years in England. Among females, rates of diagnosis of gonorrhoea and Chlamydia peak in those aged 19 years, while those of genital herpes peak in 20 year olds.

National rates of teenage pregnancy have been on an overall downward trend during the last decade, but remain high in comparison with other Western European countries. In 2009, there were 36,000 conceptions under the age of 18 in England - a rate of 38.2 pregnancies per 1,000 females aged 15-17 years. A large majority of teenage conceptions are unplanned and a significant proportion (49% in 2009) lead to an abortion.

Both teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are important indicators of health inequalities. High rates of teenage pregnancy are associated with the most socially deprived and excluded young people, and young people also have the highest rates of STIs and the poorest sexual health outcomes in the population.

2. The Local Picture

2.1 Teenage Pregnancy¹

- In 2009 (the latest annual data available) Hounslow's rate of pregnancy in females aged 15-17 was 37.4 per 1,000 women – below both the London rate of 40.7 per 1,000 and the England rate of 38.2 per 1,000. The latest quarterly data for Hounslow shows this reduction continuing during the first six months of 2010.
- In 2009, nearly two thirds (64%) of under-18 conceptions in Hounslow led to an abortion – slightly higher than the London average of 61%, and markedly higher than the England average of 49%. In 2009, for abortions to women aged under-19 in Hounslow, 16% were a repeat abortion, less than the London average of 17%, but higher than the national figure of 11%. Around 29% of all abortions undertaken by women aged under 25 years in Hounslow were repeat abortions in 2010, a figure higher than the national average (around 25%), but lower than that for London (32.3%). ([Table 1](#))
- Overall, between 1998-2000 and 2007-09, Hounslow's under-18 conception rate fell by 10%, compared to reductions of 14% for London and 11% for England as a whole. Hounslow's rate reduction was due to fewer conceptions leading to birth, as the rate of conceptions leading to abortion increased over this period – a similar picture to that seen nationally.
- Rates of under-18 conceptions at ward level in Hounslow vary significantly from under 30 per 1,000 population to 85 per 1,000 in 2005-07. Seven of Hounslow's 20 wards have under-18 conception rates that are among the highest 20% in England.

¹ Except where stated, data is from: Sheers D (2010) Modelled estimates of teenage motherhood by Local Authority. Department for Education.



- Estimates derived from birth data show there were around 160 mothers aged under-20 in Hounslow at the end of 2009.

2.2 Young People's Sexual Health

- In Hounslow, of those 16-17 year olds attending a community and sexual reproductive health (CSRH), 12.6% chose a long acting reversible method of contraception (LARC), compared to 11.3% for England as a whole. This was significantly higher than the rate for London (7.9%). ([Table 1](#))
- In 2010/11, Hounslow had a higher proportion of Chlamydia-positive 15-19 year olds than both the London and national averages (5.9% in Hounslow versus 5% for both London and England). Hounslow was on par with London in the same period for 20-24 year olds (4.2%), but lower than the national average (5.5%). The rate of Chlamydia in Hounslow's males aged 15-19 years was significantly higher than the London and national averages, with 6.1% testing positive in 2010/11, versus 3.9% and 3.4%, respectively. ([Table 2](#))

3. Strategic Leadership and Collaboration

The Teenage Pregnancy Partnership Board is responsible for reducing teenage pregnancy rates in Hounslow, led by a Local Authority Chair and accountable to the Children's Trust. The Board is also integral to the Children and Young People's Plan.

The Sexual Health Strategy Group is a partnership consisting of senior representatives and clinicians from Local Authority, NHS Hounslow, Great West Commissioning and West Middlesex University Hospital (WMUH) sexual health services. This group will form the basis of a future Sexual Health Board, in line with the Government's White Paper, [Healthy Lives Healthy People](#).

There is a Chlamydia Screening Group that meets monthly, which is responsible for achieving the target to screen 25% of young people aged 15 to 24 years for Chlamydia in 2011/12 (with a positivity rate of 2,400 per 100,000 population [2.4%]).

Current sexual health services for young people in Hounslow include the sexual health service at WMUH West, an integrated sexual health service which delivers a number of young people-friendly clinics (KISS clinics) throughout Hounslow, especially in areas experiencing high rates of teenage conception. These sexual health clinics are targeted at those aged less than 25 years and regular audits indicate that these are well attended. The GUM clinic is also 'You're Welcome' (young people-friendly) accredited. As of 2011, Hounslow takes part in the Pan London C-card (condom distribution) scheme which operates in numerous sites across the Borough. This replaces Hounslow's previous C-card scheme.

There is a Sexual Health Needs Assessment in development which will further set out the local need for young people's sexual health services across Hounslow.

4. Priorities

The key priorities for addressing teenage pregnancy and young people's sexual health in Hounslow in 2011/12 are:



- Develop a strategy for Hounslow on young people's sexual health which takes into account the Government's vision on how to tackle teenage pregnancy. This strategy should be operationalised into an action plan that incorporates how midwifery, health visitors, children's centres, youth offending teams, early intervention locality teams, schools, sexual health services and primary care can work together to prevent teenage pregnancy and STIs and improve young people's sexual health;
- Ensure the new strategy is led strategically by the Local Authority with strong partnership working via the Children's Health & Wellbeing sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board;
- Ensure a Borough-wide approach to high quality sex and relationship education across Hounslow with additional focus on hotspot areas;
- Ensure all young people have access to high quality, young people-friendly sexual health services;
- Provide appropriate support for teenage parents; and
- Ensure appropriate workforce development across the Borough.

5. Summary of Need

The table summarising the needs in this area has not been completed as it is not considered appropriate for Young People's Sexual Health and Teenage Pregnancy.