

Dear all,

This year's annual public health report focuses on sexual and reproductive health, particularly that of young people. While we have made significant progress in reducing teenage conceptions and have developed a variety of sexual health projects and services for young people, there is clearly much more to do as too many of our young people still experience poor sexual and reproductive health.

Prevention is so important. Young people tell us that they want a holistic approach to discussing their welfare and to be able to get that from an adult they trust. We will continue to improve young people's access to tailored information and support parents to have open conversations with their children as they grow up.

We will support frontline staff working with children and young people in schools, colleges, the voluntary sector and primary care to develop essential skills and attributes for talking about health issues with young people. Key areas to cover are: gender equality and healthy ways of relating, emotional wellbeing and self-

esteem, resisting peer pressure, online safety and managing risk (such as alcohol and drugs or abusive behaviours).

Schools in particular are a place where children and young people develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding about health. A strong Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme should link through to a whole school approach to promoting sexual health and wellbeing. We will continue to support schools in working towards this through our 'Healthy Schools' programme.

We continue to transform our sexual and reproductive services, here in Haringey and with partners across London, with newly designed services opening in 2017.

This wide range of services will incorporate technologies (including self-testing and online booking) making sure that residents are able to access services most appropriate to their needs.



## Recommendations

1. Continue to engage and train public sector staff to have open and honest conversations with parents, carers and young people
2. Schools should have strong PSHE programmes within a whole school approach to promoting healthy relationships, sexual health and wellbeing
3. Continue to co-produce with young people ways to communicate about relationships and sexual health
4. Continue to modernise sexual and reproductive health services, with residents, clinicians and partners

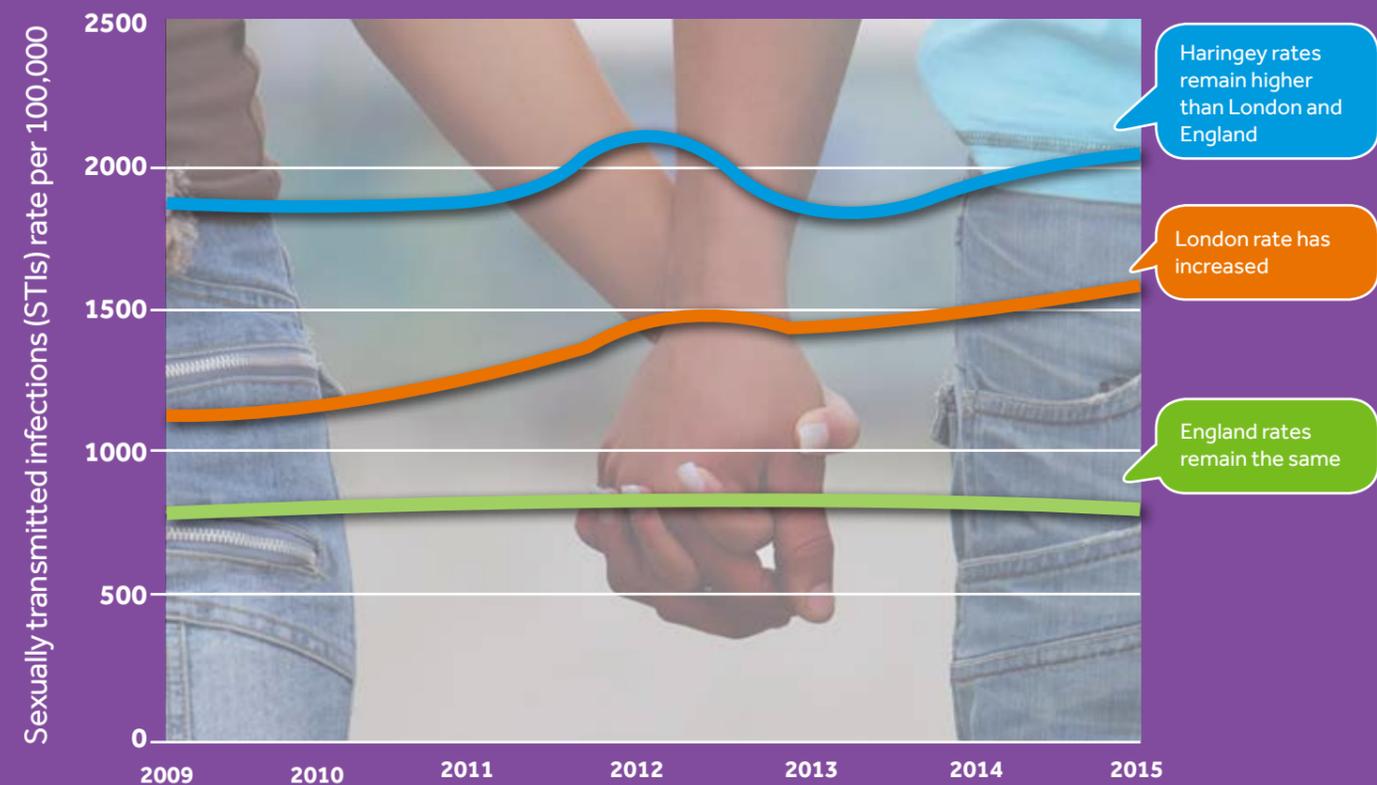
I would like to hear your stories, thoughts or ideas on how as a community we can promote good sexual health particularly among young people. Please contact me at [jeanelle.degruchy@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:jeanelle.degruchy@haringey.gov.uk)

For an update on recommendations from previous Annual Public Health Reports, please see: [www.haringey.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/annual-public-health-reports](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/annual-public-health-reports)

**Dr. Jeanelle de Gruchy**  
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## Annual Public Health Report 2016/17

# Sexual health matters



## Trend in sexually transmitted infections

Haringey London England

Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework (2016)

## Our changing sexual and reproductive lives

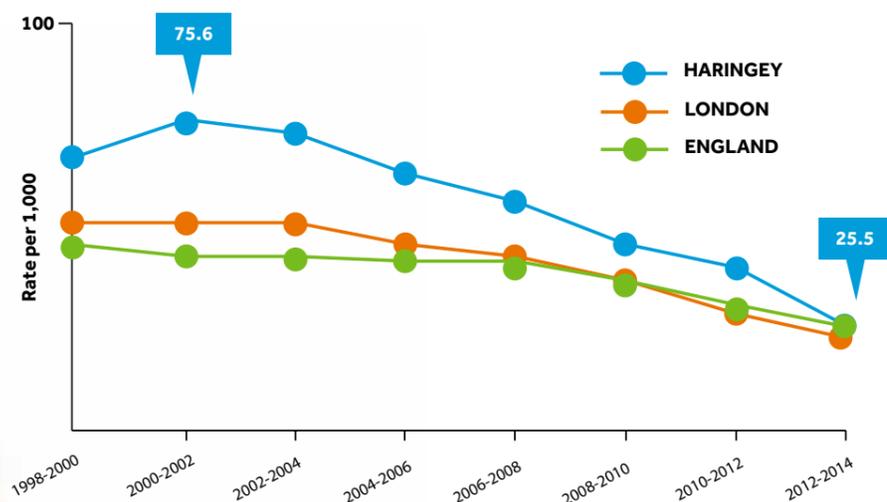
Our sexual and reproductive health is a key element in our health and wellbeing. Sexual behaviour is fluid and, in the UK, has changed in surprising ways over the last few decades. A key national survey of sexual attitudes and lifestyles<sup>1</sup> conducted every 10 years shows on average over the past two decades there has been a decrease in how often people say they have sex. There was an increase in the number of opposite-sex partners, women now report almost the same number of sexual partners as men. And more people report same sex experience, whereas one in 25 women reported a same sex experience in 1990/1, one in six now do (16%); the proportion of men remained roughly the same at 7%.

Most young people today are having their first sexual intercourse just before 17 years – the same as young people ten years ago. Overall there has been a drop in 'risky' behaviours such as drinking, drug use, smoking and youth crime.

The decrease in teenage pregnancy in the UK and Haringey is really great news, as we know that teenage pregnancy results in poorer outcomes for both mother and baby. We believe a change in girls' life ambitions, along with better sex education, shifts in young people's sexual and risk-taking behaviour and improved access to sexual health services (with condoms, long acting methods of contraception (LARC), and free over the counter emergency contraception) have all contributed.



### Trend in teenage pregnancy: England, London and Haringey (1998-2014).



Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework, 2016

### Sexual ill health remains a challenge

Unfortunately Haringey continues to have high levels of sexual ill health. As the graph on this report's cover shows, our rate of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is higher than both London and England. There is more information and infographics about this in our JSNA<sup>2</sup>.

Although the proportion of men having sex with men has not changed over time, we know that there has been an increase in risky behaviour over the last few years resulting in a rise in sexually transmitted infections. Locally, the risk of HIV infection in men who have sex with men, as well as in the Black African community, remains higher than the general population.

Young people in Haringey have an overall rate of STIs which is considerably higher than England's. Of those young people diagnosed with an STI, 15% go on to be reinfected within 12 months. For a number of years there has been a national focus on raising awareness of chlamydia among young people and promoting testing. One in four 15-24 year olds in Haringey were screened for chlamydia in 2015, the results of which showed that we have a higher infection rate than the England average.

### Supporting young people's sexual and reproductive lives

Sexual health means more than avoiding pregnancy or infections. It means respecting each other and taking responsibility for your sexual health as well as your partner's. It means having the confidence and skills to ask for the sex that makes you feel good.

The national survey of sexual attitudes and lifestyles highlighted that 70% of young people do not feel that they know enough about sex and want better information. Despite wanting more input from parents – with boys wanting to talk to their fathers and girls to their mothers – only 3% of boys got information from their father and 14% of girls from their mother. Many young people remain reliant on friends and their first sexual partner to guide them.

In our local school survey, young people said they found sex and relationship lessons useful. However they did not appear to know very basic information regarding sexually transmitted infections.

Age-appropriate education and support to build people's knowledge and resilience is vitally important. Education and support helps young people to have healthy relationships, enables them to make informed decisions and to protect themselves, and provides information on how to access services when they need them.

<sup>1</sup> [www.natsal.ac.uk/media/2102/natsal-infographic.pdf](http://www.natsal.ac.uk/media/2102/natsal-infographic.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.haringey.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/joint-strategic-needs-assessment-jsna>