



The Association of Directors of Public Health

ADPH response to PHE annual report on STI diagnoses and sexual health service provision

ADPH calls on the Government to reverse the cuts to the public health budget.

The data published today, shows that demand for sexual health services is continuing to grow (attendances at sexual health services have increased by three percent in the last year and by 13% over the last five years). At the same time public health funding in England will have been cut by £531 million by 2020/21.

Directors of Public Health are striving to manage the increasing demand and budget reductions so that they don't impact on patient care. It is essential that the system works together to deliver strong services with ease of access and joined up care pathways and sexual health services must embrace the introduction of evidence based technologies and digital services.

Outcomes are still good, for example, rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) have remained stable, but if budgets continue to reduce while demand increases, it will not be possible to maintain the same level of service. We are calling on the Government to urgently reverse the cuts to the public health budget and increase investment in public health.

ADPH Vice President, Professor Jim McManus said:

"The figures published by PHE today demonstrate the continuing strain that sexual health services are under.

At this time of rising demand, public health funding is being cut substantially. Directors of Public Health are currently trying to manage this through modernising services and introducing innovative online services for people who don't need to attend face to face consultations but we have reached the limit. Cuts to the public health budget must be reversed to enable us to protect and improve the health of our residents.

While it's good to see overall STI rates continuing to fall, the continued increases in rates of syphilis and gonorrhoea are concerning and the persistent inequalities in sexual health outcomes, particularly among young people, black ethnic minorities and gay men, are unacceptable. We need to see whole system action to urgently address these inequalities.

We are continuing to monitor chlamydia screening activity and, while overall screening rates have fallen, positivity remains high suggesting that the more targeted approach is working.

Ultimately sexual health is about wellbeing not just services: education, personal capacity and resilience, good relationships and preventative actions are just as important as the provision of high quality sexual health services."

ENDS



Further information

The [Association of Directors of Public Health](http://www.adph.org.uk) (ADPH) is the representative body for Directors of Public Health (DPH) in the UK. It seeks to improve and protect the health of the population through collating and presenting the views of DsPH; advising on public health policy and legislation at a local, regional, national and international level; facilitating a support network for DsPH; and providing opportunities for DsPH to develop professional practice.

The Association has a rich heritage, its origins dating back 160 years. It is a collaborative organisation working in partnership with others to maximize the voice for public health.

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June 2018