

Chlamydia screening and provision of sexual health services

The Enhanced services subgroup of the GPC's Commissioning and service development subcommittee has been asked on a few occasions to provide LMCs with clarification on whether or not screening for Chlamydia is an enhanced service. The scope of the *More specialised sexual health services* national enhanced service (NES) includes 'STI screening and treatment'¹; furthermore, screening activity is different to investigating for an illness. Therefore, Chlamydia screening cannot be argued to be part of essential or additional services and GPs should be commissioned under the NES or a local enhanced service (LES) if the PCO wishes practices to provide this service.

The subgroup has also set out in general terms what aspects of a sexual health service would be defined as 'essential' and those that would be defined as 'enhanced'.

As part of essential services GPs should:

- keep themselves up to date;
- provide emergency or immediately necessary treatment to comply with ethical responsibilities;
- provide simple sexual health advice when appropriate (e.g. during contraception consultations);
- carry out pelvic/urethral swabs for investigations of symptoms, or refer to GUM clinics, depending on facilities/patient choice and treat or refer depending on results; and
- refer for contact tracing.

Enhanced services would include:

- all services included under the *More specialised sexual health services* NES;
- the scope of the *Intra-uterine contraceptive device fittings* NES² as well as all other contraceptive implants and injections;
- screening of asymptomatic patients at their request or as part of a programme;
- screening at the time of cervical cytology;
- HIV screening/testing (as included in the *More specialised sexual health services* NES);
- testing of high risk/specialist groups (e.g. workers in the sex industry, rectal swabs after receptive anal intercourse);
- teenage sexual health drop-in clinics (as included in the *More specialised sexual health services* NES);
- contact tracing; and
- compilation of statistics/reports.

*The Enhanced services subgroup
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¹ To see the *More specialised sexual health services* NES specification, visit:
www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/NESmorespecialised

² To see the *Intra-uterine contraceptive device fittings* NES specification, visit:
www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/NEscontraceptive