

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH & HIV STRATEGY 2025-2030

Summary Version



Introduction

Sexual and reproductive health is a fundamental part of overall wellbeing, affecting physical, emotional, and social lives. Due to factors such as stigma, inadequate education and access to services some people experience poorer sexual health than others. Poor sexual health can have far-reaching impacts, including on mental health, physical health and relationships.

This strategy sets out a joint vision and action plan for improving sexual and reproductive health and HIV outcomes across five London boroughs: Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Bexley, and Bromley (LSLBB). It is a response to persistent health inequalities, changing needs, and new opportunities in sexual health, and is built on the principles of equity, inclusivity, and empowerment. The development of the strategy has drawn on a wide range of stakeholder and resident engagement across the five-borough partnership.

The LSLBB partnership oversees services for sexual and reproductive health, HIV prevention, HIV care and support and abortion. By having a joint strategy we aim to deliver integrated, high-quality services while promoting innovation and ensuring cost-effectiveness across the South East London region.

Key achievements 2019 – 2024

We have achieved a lot over the last five years but there is still much to do.

Since the publication of the previous Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham (LSL) strategy (2019–24) there have been many changes and improvements in the sexual health services provided.



An online STI testing and treatment service became available across London through Sexual Health London (SHL)



Innovative and targeted prevention work has been delivered with some communities, such as Black heritage communities and young people



Across LSLBB, over 600 staff from various clinical, community and voluntary sector organisations have been trained to promote sexual health



Community programmes across LSLBB delivered information on STI prevention and how to access sexual health clinics



The London HIV Prevention Programme delivered innovative campaigns, rapid HIV testing, and outreach for GBMSM. See **Do It London** website.

Current landscape

There remain some significant challenges and changes to the sexual health landscape.

Within LSLBB, there are some of the highest rates of HIV and STIs in England.



Over the last 10 years gonorrhoea and syphilis have increased nationally, and rates of gonorrhoea have risen across all LSLBB boroughs.



At the same time, HIV prevention has made significant progress, with new diagnoses falling by almost 40% since 2015 thanks to wider access to testing and the use of PrEP¹



The financial climate for public services has not improved



Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there is now more demand for online services such as contraception and STI testing



Changes in technology and social media have altered the way we access and receive information and have influenced social norms and sexual health behaviours, including exposure to misinformation



Chemsex, which refers to sexual activity whilst under the influence of drugs in the GBMSM community, is increasingly recognised as a public health issue.



There is variation in need across the five boroughs which reflects the differences in our populations. By working together, each borough can will create action plans that reflect their unique circumstances while achieving shared goals and objectives. Figure 1 (below) shows the South East London region with a description of our boroughs' populations.

¹ UKHSA HIV Annual Data Tables – HIV testing, PrEP, new HIV diagnoses and care outcomes for people accessing HIV services: 2025 report. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hiv-annual-data-tables/hiv-testing-prep-new-hiv-diagnoses-and-care-outcomes-for-people-accessing-hiv-services-2025-report>



Figure 1: All data is taken from the 2021 Census.

Realising a joint vision for LSLBB

Our key priorities for maximising sexual and reproductive health for all people in our boroughs remain the same as in the previous LSL strategy.

Throughout the strategy, prioritising those with the greatest need, or who face the biggest barriers, will be fundamental. For each action we will identify the groups with the highest needs and barriers to accessing services across our boroughs and ensure we target interventions towards these groups.

We will do this through holistic, integrated services that join-up care between services, such as mental health, substance misuse, and health inclusion teams.



Theme One: Healthy and fulfilling sexual relationships

VISION: People are empowered to make their sexual relationships healthy and fulfilling.



Theme Two: Improving reproductive health

VISION: People effectively manage their reproductive health, understand what impacts it and have knowledge of and access to contraception.



Theme 3: Reducing the rates of sexually transmitted infections

VISION: The local burden of STIs is reduced, especially amongst those who are disproportionately affected.



Theme Four: Preventing and living well with HIV

VISION: We move towards achievement of 0–0–0: zero HIV-related stigma, zero HIV transmissions and zero HIV-related deaths.

Underpinning each of the four themes that run throughout the strategy are five key principles.



Collaborating with partners across the system.



Listening to residents of all ages to shape services.



Embracing digital and technological innovations.



Developing an evidence-based resilient sexual health system.



A focus on fairness and equity.



Theme One: Healthy and Fulfilling Sexual Relationships

Empower individuals to build safe, informed, and consensual relationships.

What works

- Good quality RSHE delivered through schools
- High-quality and evidence-based education on sexual and reproductive health
- Community interventions and outreach services targeted at certain groups
- Use of multi-media and online platforms to enhance sexual health promotion
- Training professionals to identify those at risk of abuse and violence

Aims and outcomes

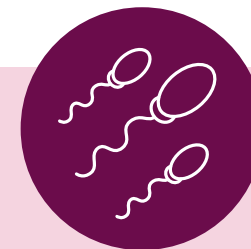
Our aim is to empower and enable individuals and communities to build safe, informed, healthy, consensual, and fulfilling sexual relationships. We want to:

- increase confidence, skills and ability to build healthy sexual relationships in LSLBB residents
- make sure people in unhealthy or risky sexual relationships are supported appropriately
- increase knowledge and understanding of healthy sexual behaviours and SRH services in LSLBB residents
- deliver positively framed and inclusive sexual health education and information, ensuring services are trauma informed and access to services are considerate of diverse experiences, and needs
- reduce stigma and discrimination related to sexual health and sexual relationships

What are we going to do?

Our SRH services will aim to promote respect, reduce stigma, enhance communication skills, support informed decision-making and foster positive attitudes towards sexual health. We will:

- work with other services to provide holistic support to people in unhealthy or risky sexual relationships.
- increase knowledge, awareness and confidence around building healthy relationships in our community.
- work with partners to improve the delivery, reach and quality of RSHE and aim to collect data on its coverage and effectiveness.



Theme Two: Improving Reproductive Health

Enable informed reproductive choices and improve access to contraception.

What works

- access to contraceptive services through multiple settings
- equitable access to information on contraception
- Increased access to abortion care as early as possible
- working in partnership with maternity, abortion and other women's health providers to enable quick and easy access to a range of contraception
- inclusive access to contraception for LGBTQ+ communities, with tailored advice and support

Aims and outcomes

Our aim is to ensure LSLBB residents can make informed reproductive health decisions, that they understand what impacts their reproductive health and have knowledge of and access to contraceptives. This will lead to healthier outcomes and improved well-being for all. We want to:

- increase knowledge and understanding of reproductive health and how to access services in LSLBB residents
- ensure that all LSLBB residents have access to visible, accessible, comprehensive contraceptive services including services for young people and LGBTQ+ people
- increase collection of reproductive health data to support evidence-based decision making
- reduce unintended pregnancies and subsequent abortions

What are we going to do?

Our SRH services will:

- increase access to the full range of contraception, including LARC and emergency contraception, in both primary care and SRH services.
- increase the types of settings and availability of appointments for accessing contraception.
- strengthen the offer of contraception post-pregnancy including easy booking of LARC.
- improve access to contraception and sexual health advice post-abortion.
- proactively offer ongoing contraception through existing services, including online, wherever emergency contraception is available.
- improve access to comprehensive information about contraception that is easy to understand.
- provide free condoms where appropriate, such as in sexual health clinics.



Theme Three: Reducing the Rate of Sexually Transmitted Infections

Reduce STI transmission and address inequalities.

What works

- Focusing activities which prioritise reducing poor health outcomes and inequalities
- Correct and consistent use of condoms
- Quick and easy access to treatment for infection
- Partner notification
- Vaccinations and preventative medicines
- Access to online testing

Aims and outcomes

Our aim is to focus our STI prevention efforts on reducing adverse health outcomes and addressing inequalities.

We want to:

- ensure poor sexual health is reduced in LSLBB residents who are disproportionately affected by poor sexual health
- reduce transmission of STIs and repeat infections
- reduce stigma associated with testing
- promote prompt, equitable, accessible and high-quality
 - testing
 - treatment
 - vaccination
 - partner notification

What are we going to do?

With our SRH services, we will:

- work with our partners to reduce HIV stigma across different settings, including primary care, community settings and sexual health clinics.
- work with partners to reduce inequalities by increasing HIV testing and improving knowledge and access of PrEP amongst groups with a higher risk of HIV.
- work with our residents at a higher risk of HIV to deliver targeted HIV testing and prevention services.
- gain a better understanding of barriers to testing to reduce late HIV diagnosis.
- improve HIV knowledge and increase training for health care professionals.
- continue to support PLHIV to live well.



Theme Four: Preventing and Living Well with HIV

Achieve zero new HIV diagnoses, zero stigma, and zero deaths.

What works

- Training for healthcare professionals
- Targeted community-based interventions for people who are at risk of HIV infection
- Peer support services for people living with HIV
- Increasing HIV testing in multiple locations, including online and in community settings
- Correct and consistent use of condoms
- Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)
- Social marketing campaigns

Aims and outcomes

Our aim is to achieve zero new diagnoses, zero HIV-related stigma and zero deaths related to HIV. This means focusing on preventing HIV transmission, achieving early HIV diagnosis and ensuring that people living with HIV (PLHIV) can access local support to enable them to live healthy and fulfilling lives.

- increase the number of people taking PrEP to reduce HIV transmissions
- increase the number of people using condoms to reduce HIV transmission
- improve people's knowledge of HIV so they can manage their HIV risk
- increase the number of people being regularly tested for HIV in a range of settings to identify people living with HIV, reduce late diagnosis and prevent HIV transmission
- ensure PLHIV are supported to access prompt HIV treatment

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- work with our residents at a higher risk of HIV to deliver targeted HIV testing and prevention services.
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- improve HIV knowledge and increase training for health care professionals.
- continue to support PLHIV to live well.

Governance and accountability

How the strategy will be managed

The South East London **Sexual Health Improvement and Innovation Steering Group (SHIISG)** will oversee the delivery of this strategy. This group includes representatives from the five local councils, sexual health service providers, primary care and community organisations.

The **SHIISG** will track progress, identify risks and challenges and report to the **LSLBB Commissioning Board**. The Board includes commissioners and public health team members from the five councils, a representative from the South East London Integrated Care Board (ICB) and a finance manager.

Action plan and local adoption

A clear action plan will guide the delivery of the strategy. Each borough will have its own version to reflect local needs, ensuring tailored approaches where necessary.

The **SHIISG** will regularly review progress using agreed measures and work with existing groups like the **Clinical Advisory Group**. When needed, smaller **task and finish groups** will be set up to focus on specific areas of the strategy.

Monitoring and accountability

We will use several different measures to understand our progress. Examples of indicators we will look at to measure progress against each of the four themes are outlined below. The monitoring and accountability for the strategy will follow each borough’s governance processes. This structure ensures clear oversight, local flexibility and transparency in delivering high-quality sexual health services across South East London.

Healthy relationships	Good reproductive health	Reducing the rate of sexually transmitted infections	Preventing and living well with HIV
Awareness of local sexual health services	Rate of prescribed LARC	Rates of gonorrhoea and other sexually transmitted infections	Uptake of PrEP
Number of referrals to support services	Percentage of subsequent abortions in under 25s	STI testing rates	HIV testing rates in non-typical settings

Glossary

ART | Antiretroviral therapy

BASHH | British Association for Sexual Health and HIV

Chemsex | Sex that occurs under the influence of particular drugs and specifically within the GBMSM community

EHC/EC | Emergency hormonal contraception / emergency contraception

FTC | HIV Fast-Track Cities initiative

GBMSM | Gay and bisexual men, and other men who have sex with men

GP | General practice

HIV | Human immunodeficiency virus

HPV | Human papillomavirus

HSV | Herpes simplex virus

LARC | Long-acting reversible contraception

LGBTQ+ | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning people

LSL | Lambeth, Southwark and Lewisham

LSLBB | Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Bromley and Bexley

NHS | National Health Service

OC | Oral contraception

PID | Pelvic inflammatory disease

PEP | Post-exposure prophylaxis (for HIV)

PLHIV | People living with HIV

PrEP | Pre-exposure prophylaxis (for HIV)

PSHE | Personal, social, health and economic education

RSHE | Relationships, sex and health education

Sexual health | used interchangeably with sexual and reproductive health

SHISG | Sexual Health Improvement and Innovation Steering Group

SHL | London's sexual health e-service, 'Sexual Health London'

SRH | Sexual and reproductive health

STI | Sexually transmitted infection

TOP | Termination of pregnancy; abortion

UDM | User-dependent method (of contraception)

UK | United Kingdom

UKHSA | UK Health Security Agency

UNAIDS | Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS

U=U | Undetectable = untransmittable

VAWG | Violence Against Women and Girls

Women | In this strategy, the term 'women' encompasses both cis women and other people with uteri (e.g. trans men) that have sex with men.