

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PARTNERSHIP

1.	Meeting:	Children, Young People and Families Partnership
2.	Date:	17th July 2013
3.	Title:	Arrangements for the provision of Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) for young girls aged 14-16
4.	Directorate:	Public Health

5. Summary:

The current Public Health Services contract in relation to Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) with Pharmacists operating in Rotherham specifies that they provide the service, free of charge, to females over the age of 16 years. This is an alternative choice of provision within the community to that which is offered by General Practitioners, outreach Nurses, Rotherham Contraception and Sexual Health service and Rotherham Genito-Urinary service. The contract is designed to provide greater access and choice for women/young women in Rotherham and aims to reduce unintended pregnancy and termination of pregnancy.

Females under 16 years are not able to obtain EHC at pharmacies under this contract at present (due to the lack of a robust care pathway in relation to safeguarding issues) denying this vulnerable group of young people a valuable service choice based in the community. However, it is acknowledged that by extending this service to this age group the service providers need to be especially vigilant in relation to any safeguarding issues which may arise. It is proposed, therefore, that the contract be renegotiated to allow for an extended service to females over the age of 14 years and that a care pathway be introduced for females between 14 and 16 years to address any safeguarding issues which may arise.

6. Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Public Health Services Pharmacy contract (originally held by NHS Rotherham) in relation to EHC provision be reviewed and an agreement be sought through the Local Pharmaceutical Committee (LPC) in order to extend the provision to females over the age of 14 years. It is further recommended that a care pathway be developed to enable Pharmacists to automatically refer all young women between the ages of 14 and 16 years to Rotherham Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS).

7. Proposals and Details:

It is proposed that the Public Health Service Pharmacy Contract be reviewed following the transfer from Primary Care Trust to Local Authority contract management. It is acknowledged that an extension of the contract to provide for females aged between 14 and 16 years could provide a valuable service which is, at present lacking. When the service was first introduced in Rotherham EHC was offered to young girls but it was subsequently

reviewed in the light of a need to develop robust protocols. During the 2009/2010 period a total of 811 woman accessed EHC under this scheme. 27% of the women were under 18 and 6% were young women under the age of 16. The service should also contribute to the decline in young teenage pregnancies. It is, however, acknowledged that there are potential safeguarding issues related with the extension of this service. It is, proposed, therefore, that Public Health works closely with members of the LPC and Rotherham IYSS to develop a comprehensive care pathway for any young woman under 16 years accessing EHC provision in a Pharmacy setting. It is envisaged that any Pharmacist supplying EHC to a young woman aged between 14 and 16 years would then automatically refer through to the appropriate contact within Rotherham IYSS.

8.Finance:

There are no additional financial concerns as the overall contractual value for the Pharmacy EHC contract in Rotherham takes into account an estimated level of activity across all ages.

9.Risks and Uncertainties:

Rotherham has made good progress in relation to tackling unintended teenage pregnancy, the numbers having fallen in recent years. The lack of community based EHC provision for younger, vulnerable young women could lead to an upward trend in unintended pregnancy, reversing the progress that has been made in the borough. It has been acknowledged, however, that there are safeguarding issues to be taken into consideration with sexual activity below the age of 16 years and, therefore, an automatic referral system between Community Pharmacists and IYSS is being developed.

10.Policy and Performance Agenda Implications:

This recommendation has implications for performance in relation to the Public Health Outcomes Framework (Teenage pregnancy). The introduction of the safeguarding measures should also be seen as contribution to measures designed to identify and prevent sexual exploitation.

11.Background Papers and Consultation:

Public Health Outcome Framework for England, 2013 - 2016

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