

The Haringey C-Card and Medi+Vend Schemes

Background

Too many people in Haringey contract sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or get pregnant unintentionally when they are teenagers. Yet both of these can be prevented by the correct use of condoms.

In a bid to improve this situation, Haringey has now been selected to pilot a new scheme, the pan-London 'C-card Scheme' and 'medi+vend machines'. This is designed to encourage a sense of responsibility among those aged 25 years and under and provide coordinated condom distribution services across Haringey.

The C-card

The C-card is a registration and condom distribution scheme for young people. The scheme encourages correct, responsible condom use. When a young person registers for the scheme, they will be given sexual health messages, information on contraception and on sexual health and youth services in Haringey. This will also include information which promotes the delay/RU Ready messages specifically targeted at young people under 18. They will then be given a plastic key fob which can be used to obtain free condoms from any collaborating site across Haringey and London. As part of the scheme, the number of condoms available to each participant is monitored and referrals can be made to a clinic/sexual health professional.

Staff will be trained to ensure that young people are signposted to relevant clinical or support services and child protection procedures are adhered to at all times.

Medi+vend Machine

The medi+vend is a dispensing machine that supports the C-card scheme. It does not require staffing and can dispense a range of resources. As part of the pilot the machine will provide access to sexual health information, condoms and Chlamydia screening kits. At a later date, this is expected to include the dispensing of pregnancy testing kits. The first machine will be sited in CONEL to support the on site contraception and sexual health nurse outreach service which started earlier this year. The intention is to purchase a further two machines in due course.

The Pan-London C-card and medi+vend pilots

The pan-London pilot links together all the collaborating boroughs into a London-wide Data Warehouse which will enable each borough to better understand the pattern and uptake of condoms and allow users to access condoms in other boroughs. A number of boroughs already have similar schemes in place.

The medi+vend pilot will run for one year and the C-card pilot will last four months and is funded by the Department of Health. The first phase of the pilot will include: the 4YP Haringey Services, CONEL and the contraception and sexual health clinics. The second phase will roll out the scheme to additional youth and health services such as community pharmacies and Connexions.

By being part of the pan-London pilot, the scheme will be subject to rigorous evaluation, initially through continuous consultation with young people, uptake and access data. In the longer term it will be evaluated against STI and unplanned pregnancy rates.

For more information on the pilot, please contact Teresa Edmans, mob 07747712304 or Patrick Dollard, mob 07951272728