
Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	5 September 2023
Report By:	Ruth Binks, Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/43/23/RB
Contact Officer:	Tony McEwan, Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources.	Contact No:	01475 712761
Subject:	Pilot Provision of Condoms in Libraries		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 For Decision For Information/Noting

1.2 This report seeks approval by the Education and Communities Committee for a pilot to have condoms available in Inverclyde Libraries.

1.3 This pilot is just one part of a response to a rise in the diagnosis of Sexually Transmitted Infections in recent years, especially in young people. Public Health Scotland, in collaboration with NHS Boards, NHS24 and third sector partners, has developed an insight-driven, prevention focused, digitally led campaign.

1.4 The multi-agency Sexual Health Local Implementation Group in Inverclyde is aware of the GCC Free Condoms Service and recommends that Inverclyde libraries services becomes a distribution point for free condoms.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Education and Communities Committee is asked to:

- approve that Inverclyde Libraries will become a distribution point for free condoms

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director
Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 Pre-pandemic, a steadily increasing trend in the number of Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) diagnoses, in particular gonorrhoea, had been reported. This was interrupted in 2020 and 2021 due to a decrease in testing because of the COVID restrictions in place, before resuming and reaching a historical high in 2022.
- 3.2 At this time, NHS condom distribution services, which purchase and distribute free condoms to the public, observed a decrease in demand for uptake of free condoms dating back to 2015. This change in demand was most notable in the younger age groups where services record such data.
- 3.3 In August 2022, Public Health Scotland cascaded a Health Protection Alert to local Health Protection Teams, Sexual Health Leads and Health Promotion Specialists, and laboratory colleagues. One of the recommendations made to address the increase in STI diagnoses, in particular gonorrhoea, was to consider targeted communications around prevention (including condoms and lubricant), partner notification and testing.
- 3.4 NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (GCC) has developed a Free Condoms Service that is discreet, simple to use with no requirement to register or ask questions. Guidance and ongoing support is available to participating outlets.
- 3.5 The Free Condoms service supplies condoms alongside a range of resources for outlets to distribute at no cost. Following registration, participating outlets are included in the NHS GCC condom distribution outlet finder – an online tool which is used by individuals directly, or as a signposting tool by other organisations/health care professionals.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 In response to this recommendation, Public Health Scotland, in collaboration with NHS Boards, NHS24 and third sector partners, has developed an insight-driven, prevention focused, digitally led campaign. The campaign will raise awareness of the increase in STIs (in particular, gonorrhoea) in people, aged 18-24. It is part of a phased approach. The first phase, launched in July 2023, with a focus on condom use and a second phase, in late Autumn, will focus on STI testing (when testing capacity recovers). The latter phase will also re-emphasise the importance of using condoms.
- 4.2 The multi- agency Sexual Health Local Implementation Group in Inverclyde is aware of the NHS GCC Free Condoms Service and recommends that Inverclyde libraries services becomes a participating outlet for free condoms. Participation will be delivered in line with the established Free Condoms Service Values, which encompass sensitivity to users' needs, including privacy and confidentiality; non-judgemental provision; easy access; and participation in ongoing service development/review.
- 4.3 Once registered as a Condom Distribution Outlet, it is straightforward to order products and resources. Colleagues within the library service will be provided with appropriate training, and condoms will be available to service users on request. Free Condoms Service posters and window stickers will be displayed in library branches. Condoms will initially be available on request, and to support sensitivity 'Choice Cards' will be freely available in-branch. Services users need only tick the card in line with their preference and hand to staff.

To ensure safe management of products, initially it is not recommended that condoms are distributed in the same manner as free sanitary products (ie. freely available for collection in public toilets). The process of distribution will remain under review, taking cognisance of uptake and/or learning from colleagues in other local authorities implementing similar policies.

- 4.4 The Free Condoms initiative complements ongoing activity across Inverclyde's Library Service to respond to the health and wellbeing priorities of the area by promoting health literacy. Through its participation in the Collective Force for Health and Wellbeing, Inverclyde Libraries Service is already an established source for trusted health information and literature. In this wider context, the libraries service will seek to liaise with colleagues in the HSCP to ensure that appropriate sexual health literature is included in its existing offer.
- 4.5 Before launching the Free Condoms Service, up-to-date Child Protection Training will be provided to all libraries colleagues, and participation in the service will be underpinned by organisational child protection policies and guidelines.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

5.2 Finance

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (if Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

5.3 Legal/Risk

N/A

5.4 Human Resources

N/A

5.5 Strategic

This pilot project supports keeping residents of Inverclyde Safe.

5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

X	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children's rights.

5.7 Environmental/Sustainability

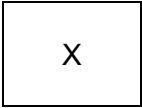
Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
X	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

5.8 Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
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NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 N/A

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 N/A