

Market Position Statement

Specialist Sexual & Relationship Health

May 2023

Introduction and background

- Newham Council is the commissioning lead for sexual health services across north east London. The 'Sexual Health Shared Service' covers Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Redbridge, Barking & Dagenham and Havering.
- Newham's lead provider for specialist sexual health services is currently Barts Health NHS Trust. They offer a range of services, including: STI screening, STI treatment, contraception, vaccination / preventive medicine (e.g. PrEP for HIV) and psycho-sexual support.
- In 2017, all commissioners and providers across London agreed a standardised, activity-based 'Integrated Sexual Health Tariff' (ISHT) that covered all sexual health services, underpinned by a shared database for the purpose of performance monitoring and cross-charging. A [London-wide 'e-service'](#) for STI screening was also developed as part of this regional transformation project.
- The Covid pandemic significantly impacted sexual health provision, with large numbers of residents across the capital 'shifting' away from traditional clinics and towards the ['Sexual Health London' e-service](#). The financial sustainability of specialist providers is therefore a crucial factor when considering the direction of travel for specialist sexual health services.
- Spend and budget: The spend for specialist sexual health services (including SHL) varies year-on-year because it is activity-based. The budget envelope is currently around **£6.5m per annum**.

Current provision: Specialist sexual health

- The current five-year Barts Health contract is due to expire 30 November 2023. There are options to extend for up to two additional years on a 1+1 basis.
- The London-wide sexual health 'e-service' contract for SHL has recently been extended for three additional years (expiry 15 August 2025), with the option to extend for one additional year thereafter.

Current provision: Sexual health in primary care

- Additional sexual health services provided through GPs and community pharmacies in Newham are commissioned to help improve access for residents that would prefer to visit a local GP or pharmacist rather than using an online service or a specialist sexual health clinic.
- Contract dates for primary care are outlined in a separate MPS.

Service	Provider
Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC)	GPs
HIV screening for new patient registrations	GPs
Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea screening	GPs and Community Pharmacies
Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC)	Community Pharmacies
Condom provision	Community Pharmacies
STI / HIV screening and simple treatment	'SHL' e-service

Demand / Need: Data from Office for Health Improvement & Disparities (OHID)



- Good sexual health is important to individuals and communities. Poor sexual health can lead to sexually transmitted infections (STI's), health or fertility problems and unplanned pregnancies.
- Newham is a borough with a high prevalence of HIV (5.4 cases per 1,000 residents compared to a London average of 4.9 per 1,000). Prevalence is highest among Black African residents and men who have sex with men (MSM). The Council and our partners are committed to helping deliver the outcomes set out in the national strategy '*Towards Zero: the HIV Action Plan for England - 2022 to 2025*'.
- Positivity rates for Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea among young people aged 15-24 are rising across London, and this pattern is slightly more pronounced in Newham over the past three years compared to the London average.
- Under 18's conception rate per 1,000 residents in Newham was 10.3 in 2020, slightly higher than the London average of 9.8.

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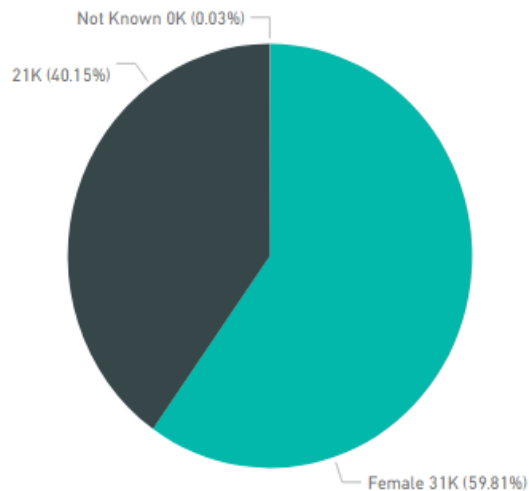
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Demographic Intelligence – Summary

- Activity for Newham residents against all currency types is presented below, broken down by sex for Barts Health and for all London providers.

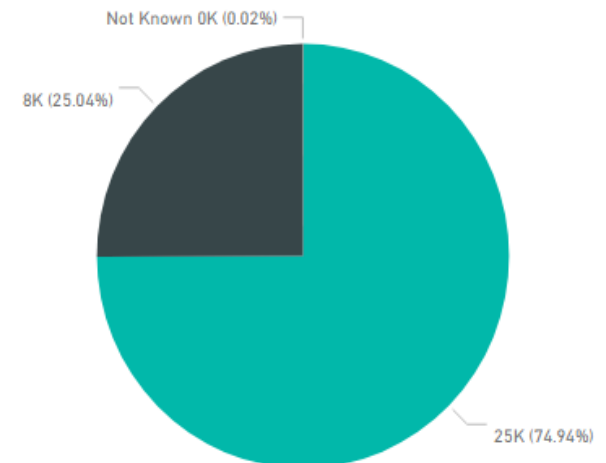
All London providers

Activity by Gender



Barts Health

Activity by Gender



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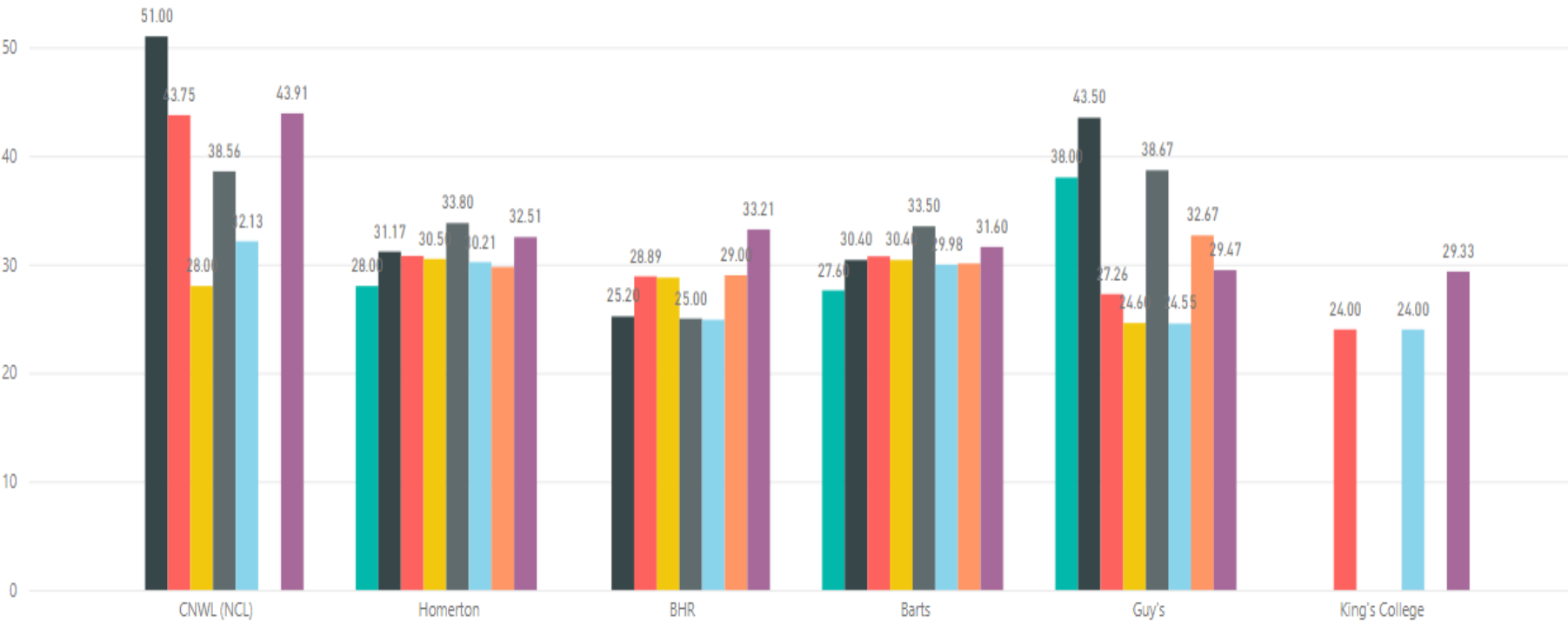
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Demographic Intelligence – Summary



Average Age by Provider

Currency Type Counselling Hep Vacc Intervention LARC PrEP SRH SRH Advice Testing



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Sexual Health Strategy for NEL



- A Sexual Health Strategy for northeast London (NEL) is currently in development. The specific approach to optimisation and transformation of sexual health services will be outlined as part of a borough-based annual Action Plan that will sit underneath the strategy.
- At the time of writing (March 2023) the core elements of the strategy have been agreed (vision, principles, aims, objectives) but publication date for the final document is TBC. A selection of high level aims and some key objectives are outlined below.

Aims	Key objectives
Healthy and fulfilling sexual relationships	People are empowered to make their sexual relationships healthy and fulfilling: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health• People in unhealthy or risky sexual relationships are supported appropriately
Good reproductive health across the life course	People effectively manage their fertility and reproductive health, understand what impacts on it and have knowledge of and access to contraceptives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reproductive health inequalities are reduced• Unwanted pregnancies are reduced• Knowledge and understanding of reproductive health and fertility are increased
High quality and innovative STI testing and treatment	The local burden of STIs is reduced, in particular among those who are disproportionately affected: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is equitable, accessible, high-quality testing and treatment that is appropriate to need• Transmission of STIs and repeat infections are reduced
Living well with HIV	We move towards achievement of 0–0–0: zero HIV-related stigma, zero HIV transmissions and zero HIV-related deaths: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People living with HIV know their status and are undetectable (= untransmittable)• People living with HIV are enabled to live and age well

Commissioning Priority 1: Improving resident outcomes through increased alignment and/or integration across the system



- The Sexual Health Strategy for NEL and supporting borough-based Action Plans will identify gaps and areas for improvement. However, some of the main development areas for service provision that have been previously identified through analysis of local data and engagement with residents / service are:
 - A more integrated approach to sexual health, with services provided at times and locations that make sense for the patient, reducing the need for multiple patient contacts and improving the efficiency of scarce resources.
 - For example, an ambition would be to work towards a model that seamlessly integrates gynaecology, maternity and Termination of Pregnancy Services (ToPS), with a consistent standard operating procedure (SOP) across the NEL region.

Commissioning Priority 2: Improving equity of uptake and outcomes



- Specific areas of improvement identified through analysis of local data include:
 - Increasing uptake of LARC, especially among women of colour.
 - Increasing uptake of PrEP, especially for Black African residents.
 - Optimised pathways across the wider system for 'high risk' residents, including those with substance misuse problems related to sexual behaviour (i.e. Chemsex).
 - Increasing uptake of Hep A and Hep B vaccine among high-risk residents (e.g. injecting drug users and MSM).
 - Improved test/re-test recall in line with NICE guidance for residents at highest risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).