

Association of Directors of
Education (ADES)

Date: 23 May 2023
Your ref
Our ref: GNIMT/SA
Enquiries to:
Extension
Direct line
Email

Dear Directors of Education

Gonorrhoea National Incident Management Team

I am writing to you on behalf of the National Incident Management Team established by Public Health Scotland to respond to the significant increase in diagnoses of sexually transmitted infections, especially [Gonorrhoea](#), observed in young people across Scotland.

Cases of gonorrhoea were steadily increasing prior to the COVID-19 pandemic but have increased rapidly since the end of 2021. There has been an 80% increase in infections among young men and women aged under 20 between 2018 and 2022.

Table – Gonorrhoea diagnoses in males and females aged under 20 in Scotland 2018 – 2022

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Females	278	264	166	112	468
Males	355	488	278	169	671
Total	633	752	444	281	1,139

It has also been noted that in the [Health and Wellbeing Census](#) conducted in 2021/22, of those senior level pupils that reported they had experience of penetrative sex, 49.8% reported they had not used a condom the last time they had sex, thereby placing them at increased risk of acquiring sexually transmitted infections.

There is a plan for a national campaign led by Public Health Scotland aimed specifically at young people to draw their attention to the increases in sexually transmitted infections, and to advise them on how to protect themselves if they are sexually active. This is due to commence by the end of June.

To complement this activity it would be advantageous if you would consider requesting secondary schools in your area to forefront learning about sexually transmitted infections

for third and fourth level learners as part of the delivery of Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) education, early in the next session.

This would assist learners to meet the following experiences and outcomes within Curriculum for Excellence:

Using what I have learned I am able to make informed decisions and choices that promote and protect my own and others' sexual health and wellbeing.

HWB 3-47b / HWB 4-47b

I know how to access services, information and support if my sexual health and wellbeing is at risk. I am aware of my rights in relation to sexual health including my right to confidentiality, and my responsibilities, including those under the law.

HWB 3-48a / HWB 4-48a

I know how to manage situations concerning my sexual health and wellbeing and am learning to understand what is appropriate sexual behaviour.

HWB 3-49a / HWB 4-49a

The online resource for learning in RSHP education, rshp.scot, contains up to date activities which can be used to support delivery for this learning and includes suggested wording for communicating with parents and carers about the learning intentions.

<https://rshp.scot/third-fourth-level/#aboutstis>

For teaching staff who would benefit from additional training or support in this delivery local contacts for accessing this support are available at

<https://rshp.scot/about-the-resource/#localcontacts>

Can you please disseminate this advice to your members as soon as possible, asking they, in turn, disseminate to their teaching staff.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Kind regards

Dr Shazia Ahmed
Chair of Gonorrhoea National Incident Management Team