



HSE SEXUAL HEALTH AND CRISIS PREGNANCY PROGRAMME

ANNUAL REPORT 2016



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Foreword

Following the publication of the *National Sexual Health Strategy 2015–2020*, the work of the HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) expanded in late 2015 to encompass delivery of this strategy. 2016 is the final year of the National Strategy to address Crisis Pregnancy. In future, the crisis pregnancy mandates will be included in a broader sexual health remit.

An Action Plan for 2015–2016 was developed to ensure that work started immediately. This plan represents the first nationally coordinated approach to improving the population's sexual health and wellbeing. All of the actions in this plan have commenced and many have been completed.

A collaborative approach is central to our work and we will continue to create and develop strategic partnerships between related services, both within existing HSE structures and with partners in external agencies. Implementing strategic actions requires a concerted focus on service development, communications, partnership, research and evaluation. We look forward to continuing to work closely with all our partners on each of these areas.

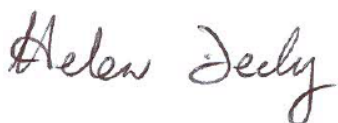
The SHCPP delivered on a significant business plan in 2016 and this report sets out the progress made across its five areas of work; clinical, education, communications, funding and research.

In 2016, the total number of births to teenagers decreased, from 3,087 in 2001 to 1,096 in 2016, a decline of 64% over fifteen years. The teenage birth rate in Ireland has fallen from 20 per 1,000 women aged 15–19 years in 2001 to 7.8 per 1,000 in 2016.

The number of women giving Irish addresses at UK abortion clinics decreased slightly from 3,451 in 2015 to 3,265 in 2016. The abortion rate was stable at 3.2 per 1,000 women aged 15–44 years. Since 2001, the number and rate of women giving Irish addresses at UK abortion clinics has significantly declined, from 6,673 in 2001 (7.5 per 1,000) to 3,265 in 2016 (3.2 per 1,000).

I would like to thank the Sexual Health Strategy Implementation Group, the Sexual Health Communications Working Group, the SHCPP Advisory Group and the Sexual Health Strategy Clinical Advisory Group for their valuable support and guidance to the work of the programme in 2016.

I would also like to thank the staff of the SHCPP for successfully delivering on an ambitious service plan in 2016 and for their continued hard work and dedication to the programme.



Helen Deely, Head of HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme



About the HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme

The Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP) is one of the policy programmes under the Healthy Ireland Framework. It is charged with the implementation of the National Sexual Health Strategy and the National Strategy to Address Crisis Pregnancy in Ireland.

The Head of the SHCPP reports to the Assistant National Director within the Health and Wellbeing Division of the HSE, and is part of the senior management team for Health Promotion and Improvement.

Staff

The SHCPP had eleven members of staff in 2016:

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Ms Helen Deely | Head of Programme |
| Dr Fiona Lyons | Clinical Lead for Sexual Health |
| Ms Janice Donlon | Funding Officer |
| Ms Maeve O'Brien | Research and Policy Officer (on maternity leave May 2015 to March 2016) |
| Ms Orla McGowan | Education and Information Officer |
| Ms Roisin Guiry | Education and Information Officer (left in March 2016) |
| Ms Caroline Hurley | Project Manager for Sexual Health |
| Ms Anita Ghafoor-Butt | Communication and Information Manager (commenced December 2016) |
| Ms Patricia Wallace | Finance and Human Resources Officer (on maternity leave from October 2016) |
| Ms Marsia Wise | Acting Finance and Human Resources Officer (from November 2016) |
| Mr Ray Madden | Clerical Officer |



Background and Governance Structure

The Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme works across five main functions:

- 1 Clinical
- 2 Education and Information
- 3 Communications
- 4 Funding and Crisis Pregnancy Counselling
- 5 Research and Policy.

External partners

The SHCPP established the following groups to help support and implement actions identified in the National Sexual Health Strategy.

Sexual Health Strategy Implementation Group

The SHCPP established an implementation group to support the fulfilment of the actions identified in the National Sexual Health Strategy 2015–2020. Service users and non-statutory service providers are represented in this group, as well as statutory organisations and healthcare professionals (see Appendix 1).

The implementation group, which meets bi-monthly, provides strategic advice and direction to support the implementation of the National Sexual Health Strategy. The group works with the programme to develop and monitor an annual action plan to achieve the strategy's goals, actions and targets.

Sexual Health Communications Working Group

A national working group was established to coordinate sexual health communications activities between HSE and non-statutory organisations and to ensure that joint resources are used in the most effective manner. Membership of the group includes organisations actively carrying out sexual health communications work themselves or in partnership with other organisations (see Appendix 2).

Key actions for the group, which meets bi-monthly, include developing and implementing an annual sexual health communications plan in line with the National Sexual Health Strategy, and providing advice and support for planned communications activities. The group also provides communications responses to STI outbreaks, as required by HSE Public Health, including sharing communications and information with other partners outside the working group.



Sexual Health Promotion Officers Network

HSE sexual health promotion officers work in partnership to address key health promotion, education and information actions in the area of sexual health, as outlined in the National Sexual Health Strategy. Their work involves progressing education and training, in partnership with service providers and other key stakeholders.

Advisory Group

Membership of the SHCPP's Advisory Group (see Appendix 3) includes organisations that represent the views of specific population groups and non-government organisations (NGOs) working in the areas of sexual health and crisis pregnancy. The SHCPP expanded its Advisory Group in 2016 to include members with a wide range of viewpoints and expertise on sexual health from non-statutory organisations.

The Advisory Group, which meets bi-monthly, provides feedback on any matters related to sexual health and crisis pregnancy that have been referred to it by the SHCPP or the Sexual Health Strategy Implementation Group.

Sexual Health Strategy Clinical Advisory Group (CAG)

The National Sexual Health Programme clinical advisory group was established in 2016. The group examines and makes recommendations on the strategic and operational planning work of the Sexual Health Crisis Pregnancy Programme. The development of clinical guidance documents, clinical pathways, quality improvement indicators and initiatives are key actions of this group. The work is in line with the recommendations and actions of the National Sexual Health Strategy (2015–2020). The clinical advisory group has broad representation from a range of medical specialities (see Appendix 4) and meets 3 to 4 times a year.

Crisis pregnancy mandates

The National Strategy is the mechanism by which the SHCPP achieves the objectives set out in the three mandates specified in the statutory instrument. The three mandates are:

- 1 A reduction in the number of crisis pregnancies by the provision of education, advice and contraceptive services.
- 2 A reduction in the number of women with crisis pregnancies who opt for abortion by offering services and supports which make other options more attractive.
- 3 The provision of counselling services, medical services and such other health services for the purpose of providing support after crisis pregnancy, as may be deemed appropriate by the programme.



National Sexual Health Strategy (NSHS) 2015-2020

The NSHS is Ireland's first national framework for sexual health and wellbeing. Its vision is that everyone in Ireland experiences positive sexual health and wellbeing.

To achieve this vision, this Strategy aims to:

Improve sexual health and wellbeing and reduce negative sexual health outcomes by ensuring that everyone living in Ireland has access to high quality sexual health information, education and services throughout their lives.

This vision will be addressed through three goals.

Goal 1 – Sexual health promotion, education and prevention:

Everyone living in Ireland will receive comprehensive and age-appropriate sexual health education and/or information and will have access to appropriate prevention and promotion services.

Goal 2 – Sexual health services: Equitable, accessible and high quality sexual health services that are targeted and tailored to need, will be available to everyone.

Goal 3 – Sexual health intelligence: Robust and high quality sexual health information will be generated to underpin policy, practice, service planning and strategic monitoring.

The strategy recognises the diversity of sexual identities in Ireland and supports all expressions of sexual identity through positive health and wellbeing outcomes.



Clinical Services

Key actions in 2016 included:

Sexual Health Services mapping and Needs Assessment

Data collection for mapping clinical sexual health services and laboratories was carried out in 2016. The results of the mapping exercise will inform the sexual health needs assessment and findings will be finalised in 2017.

A working group was established and a Public Health trainee identified to lead on the sexual health needs assessment (SHNA). The literature review was undertaken in 2016 and the report drafted. The Needs Assessment report will be completed in 2017. The report will include recommendations, prioritisation of recommendations, an action plan and draft service standards.

HIV testing guidance

A multisectoral HIV testing working group was established early 2016. Members come from a range of clinical services and community organisations, in particular those working with at-risk populations.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) will inform clinical guidance on HIV testing in Ireland. The SHCPP is a member of the ECDC working group and it is expected that updated ECDC HIV Testing Guidelines will be published in December 2017.

HIV Indicator Condition Testing is where HIV testing is recommended for patients with certain medical conditions that may be associated with undiagnosed HIV infection. An assessment of current practice and policy in relation to key haematology/oncology indicator conditions was conducted with Cancer Control; the report will be finalised in 2017. In 2016, SHCPP have linked with the OptTest Project (Optimising testing and linkage to care for HIV across Europe) to adapt their tools for healthcare professionals.

Extension of HPV vaccine to at-risk groups

In October 2016, the HPV vaccine was extended to HIV-positive men and women aged up to 26 years, who are attending public HIV clinics. The HPV vaccine will be extended to MSM (men who have sex with men) aged 16 to 26 years attending public STI clinics from 1 January 2017. The vaccine will help to prevent HPV infection, which can cause genital warts and HPV-associated cancers. Patient information leaflets were developed and are available on the SHCPP website <http://www.crisispregnancy.ie/support-for-services/hpv-patient-information-leaflet/>. The HPV vaccine was secured from the National Immunisation Office (NIO) and work is ongoing to secure funding for nursing support to implement the HPV vaccination programme.



Guidance on the use of antiretroviral therapy in HIV prevention

HIV Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)

A multisectoral PrEP Working Group was established in early 2016. Draft practical guidance and a patient information leaflet were developed for healthcare providers to provide support and guidance to people accessing PrEP informally. Legal opinion was sought on sourcing medicines over the internet and this was incorporated into the practical guidance for healthcare providers. European Medicines Agency (EMA) approval was granted in August for once-daily Truvada as PrEP for sexual exposure.

In 2016, a survey was conducted of HIV/STI healthcare providers in Ireland to determine attitudes to PrEP. The majority of healthcare providers were found to be in favour of PrEP being available to those at high risk of acquiring HIV, and agreed that PrEP should only be implemented as part of a HIV prevention programme.

SHCPP and the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) collaborated on the development of PrEP population estimates and a PrEP cascade for men who have sex with men (MSM). Estimates were determined using data from the Men who have Sex with Men Internet Survey (MISI) 2015. The PrEP Estimates report will be finalised and published early 2017. Work is ongoing to identify a mechanism for the introduction of PrEP in Ireland.

HIV treatment as prevention (TasP)

High quality evidence now supports treating all people living with HIV as soon as possible, regardless of their immune status (CD4 count).

In 2016, a survey was conducted of HIV/STI healthcare providers in Ireland to determine attitudes and practices in relation to TasP. The survey results indicated that healthcare providers were strongly in favour of offering HIV treatment (ART) to all people living with HIV and that a high proportion of those engaged in HIV care were already on HIV treatment.

A HSE recommendation on HIV treatment for all people living with HIV in Ireland has been developed and will be presented to the HSE Leadership team early 2017 with a view to publication in 2017.

HIV Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)

PEP is an important aspect of HIV prevention following potential exposure to HIV. In early 2016, a survey was conducted among key healthcare professionals, to assess knowledge and awareness of HIV PEP resources. Results indicated a high level of awareness and satisfaction with the EMI Toolkit for HIV PEP. Some knowledge deficits were identified and work is ongoing to address these within the relevant services.

In 2016, in conjunction with the HPSC and Scientific Advisory Committee, the



EMI toolkit Guidelines for the Emergency Management of Injuries and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) were reviewed and, where appropriate, revised and updated. The updated EMI Toolkit and PEP availability document went live in September 2016 (<http://www.hpsc.ie/A-Z/EMIToolkit/>) and includes a document on the availability of PEP in Ireland across all public STI services and emergency departments.

Bacterial STI Reference Laboratory

A 2016 draft document outlines the core functions and responsibilities of a bacterial STI reference laboratory. Requirements for the designation of an existing lab as a bacterial STI reference lab were identified and it is hoped to secure funding in 2017 to appropriately resource an existing lab to provide the required STI reference lab function.

Improve behavioural data

The Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting System (CIDR) is Ireland's national secure web-based electronic surveillance system for notifiable infectious diseases. An STI/HIV module is being developed and integrated into CIDR, which will improve the quality of the information available for monitoring sexual ill-health, provide a better understanding of trends in STIs/HIV by risk group, and improve the capacity to assess the effectiveness of interventions to prevent and control STIs and HIV.

Phase 1 was completed in 2016, outlining functional requirements, specifications and feasibility. Phase 2, design and development, will commence in 2017.

National HIV Reporting

Ireland has an obligation to report on the national response to the HIV epidemic to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the UN General Assembly via UNAIDS/WHO. In 2016, the SHCPP coordinated reporting on the national HIV response through liaison with HIV government services and HIV community stakeholders.

National MSM response group

In January 2016, the Health Protection Surveillance Centre established a multi-disciplinary, multisectoral group to respond to the increase in HIV and STIs among MSM in Ireland. This includes representation from SHCPP.

The response involves three main strands of work covering epidemiology, interventions, and communications. An evidence-based action plan has been drafted that includes condom distribution and monitoring.

Funding was secured to facilitate an additional clinic at the Gay Men's Health Service and to support Peer Outreach work on a pilot basis. Both of these initiatives have been successful with 14% of attendees at the additional clinic being diagnosed with an STI.



Education: Supporting Parents, Teachers and Youth Workers

Key actions in 2016 included:

Guidelines and advice to parents of children aged 2–12 on sexuality, sexual development and growing up

Health Promotion Officers worked with colleagues in public health to develop web-based content for parents on sexuality and sexual development education. The content includes age-appropriate responses to questions that parents are frequently asked by young children. The information will form a significant section on the new SHCPP website (under construction), sexualwellbeing.ie.

Sexual Health Training Review

In 2016, the programme undertook a review of the funding provided for sexual health training, with a view to establishing a more strategic and co-ordinated approach. As a result of this review, the programme discontinued funding to a range of programmes that were delivered directly to young people. This funding was re-allocated to the support the delivery of the Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion.

HSE Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion

Since its inception, the Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion (FPSHP) has been delivered to participants from a range of professional backgrounds, including social care, social work and clinical services. In 2016, the programme continued to be delivered nationally to 188 participants in total. Locations include Athlone, Castlebar, Cork, Donegal, Dublin Mid-Leinster, Dublin North East (Louth), Kerry, Kilkenny, Limerick and Waterford.

RSE Research in Post-Primary Schools

The programme worked in partnership with the Department of Education and Skills on commissioning a piece of qualitative research on the Relationships and Sexuality Education Programme in Primary Schools. The researchers will interview students, teachers, parents and principals on their perspectives and attitudes to the RSE Programme in their school. Dublin City University were awarded the contract for this research.

Lifeskills Survey

The programme worked in partnership with the Department of Education and Skills on the Lifeskills Survey in 2016. The survey found that teachers find RSE (Relationships and Sexuality Education) quite challenging to teach. The majority of schools reported teaching RSE to Junior Cycle classes. According to the survey, two-thirds of schools are using B4uDecide.ie to support their teaching of RSE and 70% of schools are using the TRUST Resource (Talking Relationships, Understanding Sexuality Teaching).



Relationships and Sexuality Education Resources

In 2016, work commenced on the redesign of the B4uDecide lessons to reflect the learning outcomes of the new Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) short course, developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. RSE is one of the four main strands of the new short course. The lessons will be included in an overall SPHE Resource to support the new curriculum.

The B4uDecide website had 82,190 visits in 2016 and the outreach team rolled out our street art events in five locations: Longford, Darndale, Blanchardstown, Finglas and Cork. Street Art is an interactive RSE programme funded by the SHCPP.



B4uDecide.ie – a website for young people, teachers and youth workers

Supporting parent/child conversations about relationships and sexuality

A range of materials to support parents in talking to their children about relationships and sex were disseminated through HealthPromotion.ie, the SHCPP's free text service, and at events in 2016. These information resources included:

- 2,449 *You Can Talk To Me* DVDs and booklets
- 31,436 *Busy Bodies* DVDs and booklets
- 1,811 *The Facts* DVDs and booklets.

A range of training initiatives for parents on relationships and sexual health continued to receive funding from the SHCPP in 2016:

The National Parents Council Primary received funding to deliver 'Parenting: Supporting your child to build healthy friendships and relationships' training for parents; 576 parents attended the information and training sessions in 2016.

The Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA) received funding to deliver 'Speakeasy' training for parents; 90 parents completed the eight-week intensive training programme. This training commenced in November 2015 and was completed in late 2016.



Communications and Information

Key actions in 2016 included:

SexualWellbeing.ie

Work commenced in 2016 on a new website, sexualwellbeing.ie. This site will provide comprehensive information on sexual health and wellbeing for the general public. The website will also provide guidance for professionals working in the area of sexual health.

Coordinating sexual health communications work of the HSE and non-statutory organisations

A national working group was established to coordinate sexual health communications activities between HSE and non-statutory organisations and to ensure that joint resources are used to promote sexual health when possible. Membership of the group includes organisations actively carrying out sexual health communications work themselves or in partnership with other organisations (see Appendix 2 for group members). In 2016, the group developed and implemented national campaigns for World Aids Day and Sexual Health Awareness Guidance Week.

Johnny's Got You Covered Campaign

Johnny's Got You Covered is a national advertising campaign promoting condom use. According to independent market research, there was 71% awareness among the target audience of the new 'Johnny's got you covered' campaign in 2016. Johnny's Twitter account (@thinkjohnny) and Facebook page ('Johnny's got you covered') were very popular in 2016, with over 61,250 people 'liking' the Facebook page. Johnny appeared at a number of public and student events and festivals throughout the summer and autumn of 2016.

There were 190,226 visits to www.thinkcontraception.ie in 2016 (a 28,374 increase on the previous year) and 121,668 Think Contraception booklets were disseminated, an increase of 22% on 2015.

Johnny's Got You Covered Promotional Campaign

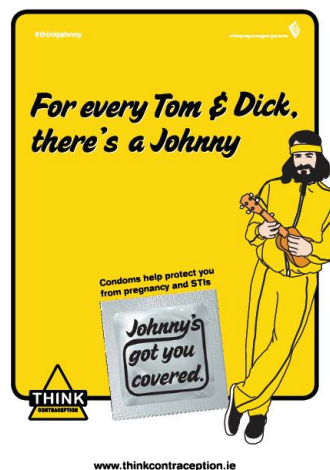
The outreach team distributed over 90,650 condoms to people attending Student Races days; Cork Jazz Festival; Longitude, Dublin; Forbidden Fruit Festival; Kodaline at Marlay Park; Disclosure at Kilmainham; Electric Picnic; Sea Sessions, Donegal; Knockanstockan, Wicklow; and the Life Festival, Westmeath.

Over 14,000 condoms were distributed over 16 days in pubs and clubs in Galway, Cork and Dublin during busy bank holiday weekends in 2016.

The SHCPP continued to roll out the 'Johnny's got you covered' branded booth, where people can dress up like the character Johnny, engage with the safer sex message in a fun environment and take home 'Johnny's got you covered'

branded photos. This initiative directs people to www.thinkcontraception.ie for further sexual health and safer sex information.

A key aspect of activity at festivals and concerts was the JohnnyMobile, a 'Johnny's got you covered' branded multi-person pedal cycle. It engages the target audience with the Think Contraception key message but can also be used to provide short spins around the area, bridging transport gaps at events or taking festival goers from place to place on-site. This activity further promotes the message that 'Johnny's got you covered'. In 2016, 'Johnny's got you covered' headbands continued to be hugely popular at festivals/events.



'Johnny's got you covered' poster displayed in college washrooms

Condom distribution

In 2016, the programme continued to distribute condoms to statutory agencies/services and non-government organisations (NGOs) through HealthPromotion.ie. This new service aims to support statutory agencies/services and NGOs in their promotion of condom usage in order to prevent both crisis pregnancies and STIs, and to support safer, positive sexual health experiences for adults. The distribution service supports the programme's outreach work as part of its national work, and the HSE-funded Man2Man.ie outreach programme that targets men who have sex with men. Since the inception of the service a total of 208,012 condoms and 48,905 lubricant sachets have been disseminated.



Annual Union of Students of Ireland (USI) training week

The SHCPP developed and facilitated training on the topic of sexual health for incoming student welfare officers at all colleges affiliated with the USI. The training aimed to open up discussion in relation to holistic sexual health and to provide a practical opportunity for welfare officers to brainstorm ideas about developing a sexual health initiative in their own colleges. This initiative was part of an integrated, capacity-building approach to working with USI in 2016.

Contraception 35+

The Contraception 35+ leaflet covers a broad range of topics relevant to women who are in their 30s, 40s and 50s, including contraception options, fertility after childbirth, breastfeeding and contraception, perimenopause and menopause, pregnancy, emergency contraception and STIs. The leaflet is mainly ordered by maternity hospitals, GPs and pharmacists through the HealthPromotion.ie website. 24,848 Contraception 35+ leaflets were distributed in 2016.

Public and media relations

The SHCPP issued press releases in 2016 relating to service provision, education outreach, RSE and key statistics, and responded to regular media enquiries in conjunction with the HSE press office. The SHCPP regularly submitted articles to health-related publications such as the HSE's *Health Matters* magazine.

Sexual Health News

The SHCPP issued two editions of *Sexual Health News (SHN)* and distributed 500 copies to 182 health professionals and 62 health services nationally. This marked yet another step in the promotion and sharing of sexual health as an integral component of our overall health. The SHN allows the programme to share knowledge of new resources being developed, what (and where) sexual health services are delivering and what is happening in the area of research.



Funding and Crisis Pregnancy Services

Key actions in 2016 included:

Crisis pregnancy and post-abortion counselling


Support for the availability of free and accessible crisis pregnancy and post-abortion counselling and medical services remained a priority in 2016. The SHCPP funds a range of service delivery models across a number of settings and locations. Sixteen service providers were funded to provide counselling services in over 50 locations nationwide. Eight of these services also provided access to free post-termination medical check-ups. These service providers were:

- Ballinasloe Crisis Pregnancy Support Service
- Bray Women's Health Centre*
- CURA
- Femplus Clinic, Dublin*
- Here2Help, Dublin and Cavan
- Irish Family Planning Association*
- Kerry Crisis Pregnancy Counselling Service*
- Anew Support Services
- Limerick Family Planning Clinic (free post-abortion medical check-ups only)
- Mayo Crisis Pregnancy Support Service
- Midlands Crisis Pregnancy Counselling Service*
- One Family, Dublin
- Sexual Health Centre, Cork*
- The Well Woman Centre, Dublin*
- West Cork Crisis Pregnancy Counselling Service
- Youth Health Service, Cork*

* These services received grant funding to provide free post-abortion medical check-ups.

Positive Options

The Positive Options campaign highlights the fact that there is always a supportive listener available to help during a crisis pregnancy and promotes the message that 'talking to a counsellor can help'. Positive Options posters and leaflets are displayed in GP surgeries nationwide. In 2016, 40% of the target audience was aware of the 'Positive Options' campaign and its message.



Approximately 4,276 Positive Options leaflets and 5,185 wallet cards were distributed in 2016. The leaflets and the wallet cards were distributed through HealthPromotion.ie.

There were 21,533 visits to www.positiveoptions.ie in 2016.



Positive Options poster displayed in washrooms and GP surgeries nationwide

Abortion Aftercare

The Abortion Aftercare campaign promotes the availability of free post-abortion medical and counselling services to women in Ireland. The website abortionaftercare.ie received approximately 10,249 visits in 2016. The SHCPP distributed approximately 1,341 Abortion Aftercare leaflets, primarily through HealthPromotion.ie, HealthBrochures.ie, GPs and UK abortion clinics.

Supervision and training

The SHCPP works with all service providers to maintain the highest possible level of service quality. This support was demonstrated in 2016 through funding provided directly to service providers to assist with ongoing training, continuing professional development (CPD) and supervision (internal and external) for those providing crisis pregnancy counselling and related services.

Certificate course

The Certificate in Crisis Pregnancy Counselling Skills is delivered by the Department of Adult and Community Education at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM), and is funded by the SHCPP. The course aims to enhance counselling and support skills and to set standards of good practice in this unique field of counselling. Its structure facilitates networking and sharing of learning, which in turn enhances service delivery. Sixteen HSE staff and crisis



pregnancy counsellors completed the year-long, skills-based programme in May 2016. A new course commenced in October 2016.

Masterclasses

Masterclasses for 'Supporting an Unplanned Pregnancy' create an opportunity for professionals to gain more in-depth knowledge and skills to help them manage the challenges they face in supporting women, their partners and families in relation to an unplanned pregnancy. The masterclasses provide a supportive and informative space for dialogue and reflection. They are particularly relevant for health professionals, GPs, teachers, youth workers and others who, in the course of their work, encounter people who are experiencing or have experienced an unplanned pregnancy. The masterclasses further support the work of the SHCPP in the area of quality and standards development.

Masterclasses were held in Cork, Dublin and Maynooth in 2016. The topics covered were:

- 1 Termination: Dealing with Complex Issues (NUIM)
- 2 Understanding Fatal Fetal Abnormality as a Crisis Pregnancy (Cork city)
- 3 Young Migrants and Ethnic Minority Women in Ireland – Sexual Wellbeing and Unplanned Pregnancy (NUIM)
- 4 Ethics and Supervision (NUIM)
- 5 Understanding Fatal Fetal Abnormality as a Crisis Pregnancy (NUIM)
- 6 Law and Crisis Pregnancy Counselling (Royal College of Physicians in Ireland)

Over 120 places were taken up by health professionals at these masterclasses in 2016. Further masterclasses of relevance to health professionals working in this area will be run in 2017.

Self-Assessment Framework

The implementation phase of the Self-Assessment Framework continued within all funded crisis pregnancy counselling services in 2016. The SHCPP facilitated a number of workshops to support service providers with their implementation. Quality Improvement Plans have been developed and are being used by the service providers as an impetus to effect change within their services. The implementation and monitoring phase will continue in 2017.



Services for parents

The SHCPP continued to support One Family's and Treoir's national information services for one-parent families and unmarried parents. These services handled over 4,500 queries to their information channels in 2016, in addition to providing face-to-face and outreach information supports. Both services reported an increase in clients with queries related to financial hardships, in particular housing provision and changes in legislation affecting one-parent and unmarried families. The SHCPP also supports One Family's adult education training service, which provides, among other services, training and parent mentoring programmes.

One-to-one parenting supports

The SHCPP continued to support CURA's national support service for new mothers and fathers. This follow-on service provides new mothers and fathers with personal and emotional support, as well as practical help and information. The service is also open to grandparents and guardians.

The SHCPP also provided funding to a number of crisis pregnancy counselling services for the provision of additional supports to those who have experienced a crisis pregnancy and are parenting.

Information resources

The SHCPP funded the development and updating of a number of resources in 2016, including Treoir's 'Information Pack for Unmarried Parents', which is disseminated to healthcare professionals and unmarried parents. The pack contains helpful information on issues such as the rights and obligations of cohabiting parents, guardianship, access, custody and shared parenting. It also includes information on other legal and financial matters of relevance to unmarried parents, in addition to sections on education and training opportunities and 'Useful Contacts' for individuals and health professionals who may need additional support or information.

Ongoing services supporting the continuation of pregnancy

In addition to the examples of services outlined, the SHCPP continued to fund a broad range of projects that provided support, training and information to expectant or new parents throughout the country in 2016, including:

- Limerick City Slickers Programme – a parenting support group for young parents residing in Limerick City and its immediate environment that are socially excluded or at risk of social exclusion, targeting those at risk of a second or subsequent crisis pregnancy. This programme is delivered by Limerick Social Service Council in conjunction with the Teen Parents Support Programme, Limerick.



- Parents First – a parenting education programme in Co. Kerry for both first-time parents and parents who feel unsupported due to geographic or social disadvantage. It provides group work, workshops and one-to-one information and support sessions. The programme is delivered through the South West Counselling Centre.
- A student–parent coordinator in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, who provides support and information for student/expectant parents.
- Sexual health and parenting supports for families through the residential services provided by The Bessborough Centre, Cork.
- The production of a range of helpful resources and related research by Treoir, the National Federation of Services for Unmarried Parents and their Children.

Contraceptive services

The SHCPP continued to work with a number of specialised contraceptive support services and information providers in 2016, including:

- Donegal Women’s Centre, Letterkenny, for the ‘iLASH’ women’s health clinic.
- Youth Health Service (YHS), for the provision of family planning services for young people under the age of 23 years.
- Sexual Health Centre, Cork, for drop-in sexual health information and support, as part of a wider health promotion project.
- Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP), for the provision of contraception workshops to GP trainers, particularly on the use of long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARC).

Youth health cafés

The SHCPP continued to provide funding to support the delivery of two youth health cafés in 2016:

- Zone Youth Health Café, Blanchardstown
- Exit Youth Health Café, Tallaght.

In addition to providing a welcoming space for young people, these projects were designed to engage with teenagers who are at risk of crisis pregnancy and to provide opportunities for them to receive relationships and sexual health education. The target age group for the youth cafés is 14–19 years. Almost 1,000 young people regularly used these services in 2016.

Research and Policy

In 2016 the SHCPP continued to build on the evidence base and implement knowledge-transfer activities.

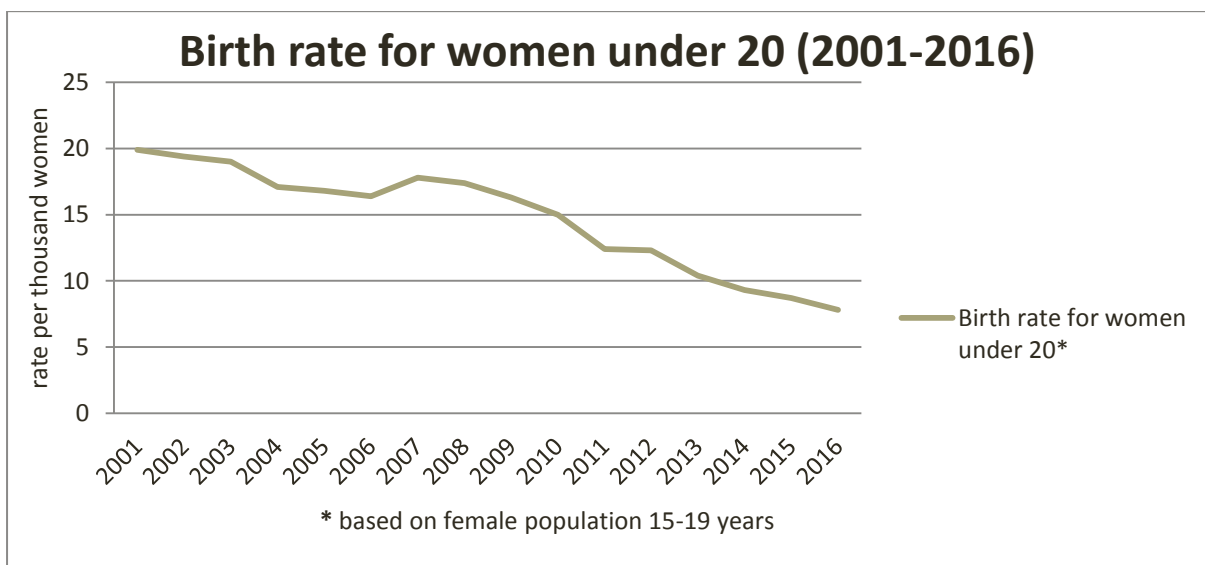
A core role of the SHCPP is to monitor behavioural trends of direct relevance to its mandates, using a range of measurement tools and indicators. Key trends monitored in 2016 include:

Abortion

- The rate of women travelling to the UK for an abortion decreased from 3.8 per 1,000 in 2014 to 3.2 per 1,000 in 2016.
- Since 2001, the number of women giving Irish addresses at UK abortion clinics has decreased from 6,673 to 3,265 in 2016. This represents a 51% decrease over the time period.
- The abortion rate per 1,000 women has reduced from 7.5 in 2001 to 3.2 in 2016.
- There has been a 62% increase in the number of women from Ireland contacting one online abortion pill provider over a five-year period, from 548 in 2010 to 1,438 in 2015.

Teenage births

- Ireland experienced another decrease in the rate of births to teenage mothers, from 9.3 per 1,000 in 2014 to 7.8 per 1,000 in 2016.
- Teenage births have decreased by 64% since 2001.
- The number of teenage women travelling to the UK for an abortion has declined by 72% since 2001.





Building on the evidence base

The SHCPP commissions research that directly relates to its mandates and strategic goals. In 2016 the SHCPP worked collaboratively with research teams and associated partners on the following projects:

- **Sexual Health and Sexuality Education Needs Assessment of Young People in Care in Ireland (SENYPIC)**

The SENYPIC study was launched in March 2016. The research captures the views of service providers, foster carers, birth parents and young care leavers with regard to the sexual health and sexuality education needs of young people in care. This was commissioned to inform the development of practical supports in this area. The research was led by Professor Abbey Hyde, School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems, University College Dublin (UCD).

- **Exploring the factors that inhibit and enable communication between parents and children aged 4–9 years about relationships, sexuality and growing up**

The SHCPP continued to work with Dr Catherine Conlon and Professor Virpi Timonen from the School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College, Dublin (TCD) on research exploring the factors that inhibit and enable communication between parents and children aged 4–9 years about relationships, sexuality and growing up. The research involves focus groups with approximately 100 parents of 4–9 year olds. The outputs from the project will inform the SHCPP and its partners on how best to further support parents in the delivery of relationships and sexuality education in the home.

- **Evaluation of 'If I were Jack'**

In 2016, as part of the Queen's University Belfast PhD programme, the SHCPP continued to support the School of Nursing and Midwifery in carrying out an evaluation of the 'If I were Jack' educational resource. The resource was developed from SHCPP-funded research that explored young men's attitudes to teenage pregnancy and parenthood. The evaluation is being carried out in a number of post-primary schools in Ireland.

- **MSM Internet Survey Ireland 2015 (MISI 2015)**

In June 2016, the MISI survey was launched. The SHCPP supported the Health Protection Surveillance Centre, the Gay Men's Health Service and the Gay Health Network in an advisory capacity to roll out an internet survey on the sexual health and HIV prevention needs of men who have sex with men (MSM) in Ireland (MISI 2015).



Research for Policy and Society Award 2015

The SHCPP worked with the Irish Research Council to establish a crisis pregnancy and sexual health strand in the council's Research for Policy and Society Award 2016. Dr Caroline Kelleher, RCSI, has been awarded the 2016–2017 Irish Research Council/Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme 'research for policy' award for 'STIs and HIV in Ireland: Towards developing a national second generation surveillance system' which is in line with the requirements of the National Sexual Health Strategy 2015–2020.

Healthy Ireland Survey

The SHCPP continued to participate in the Steering Group of the Healthy Ireland Survey, chaired by the Department of Health. The work in 2016 focused on reviewing outputs and planning for future rounds of data collection for this nationally representative general population survey and ensuring key sexual health indicators were included.



Appendix 1

Members of the Sexual Health Strategy Implementation Group

Ms Helen Deely, Head, Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme

Dr Fiona Lyons, Clinical Lead for Sexual Health

Ms Caroline Hurley, Programme Manager, Sexual Health

Dr Fionnuala Cooney, Specialist in Public Health Medicine

Dr Derval Igoe, Specialist in Public Health Medicine

Dr David Hanlon, National Clinical Advisory Primary Care

Ms Diane Nurse, National Lead, Social Inclusion

Ms Carmel Beirne, General Manager, Hospital Group

Dr William Flannery, Consultant Psychiatrist, Mental Health

Mr Niall Mulligan, Director, HIV Ireland

Dr Miriam Daly, Irish College of General Practitioners

Ms Olive O'Connor, Service User

Appendix 2

Members of the Sexual Health Communications Working Group

Ms Helen Deely, Head, Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme

Ms Anita Ghafoor-Butt, Communication and Information Manager (SHCPP)

Ms Grace Cassidy, HSE National Communications Unit

Ms Emma Coughlan, Sexual Health Centre, Cork

Ms Susan Donlon, HIV Ireland

Mr Sean Frayne, BeLongTo

Ms Aoife Ní Shúilleabháin, Union of Students in Ireland

Ms Denise Ryan, Irish Family Planning Association


Mr Adam Shanley, Gay Health Network

Dr Fionnuala Cooney, Specialist in Public Health Medicine

Mr Joe McDonagh, Aids West

Mr Alysander Preston, Positive Now

Ms Grainne Wolfe, GOSHH



Ms Patricia Purcell, Spun Out
Ms Sharon Parkinson, Health Promotion Officer
Ms Siobhan O’Dea, Manager, Gay Men’s Health Service

Appendix 3

Members of the Advisory Group

Dr Anne Marie McGauran (Chair), Senior Analyst, National Economic and Social Council

Ms Helen Deely, Head, Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme

Ms Brenda Forde, representative, Treoir, the National Federation of Services for Unmarried Parents and their Children

Ms Alison Begas, Chief Executive and representative, Dublin Well Woman

Ms Sherie de Burgh, Director of Counselling and representative, One Family

Ms Louise Graham, National Coordinator and representative, CURA

Ms Deirdre Seery, Director, Sexual Health Centre, Cork

Mr Niall Mulligan, Director, HIV Ireland

Ms Ailish O’Neill, representative, National Youth Council of Ireland

Ms Deirdre Sullivan, representative, National Parents Council Primary

Ms Tonya Myles, representative, CAIRDE, Challenging Ethnic Minority Health Inequalities

Ms Moninne Griffith, Director, BeLongTo

Ms Bronagh Conlon, representative, Foróige

Ms Broden Giambrone, representative, TENI, Transgender Equality Network Ireland

Mr Niall Behan, Chief Executive Officer, Irish Family Planning Association

Mr Noel Sutton, Director, Gay Health Network



Appendix 4

Members of the Clinical Advisory Group

Representatives from Public Health (RCPI faculty of Public Health Medicine)

HPSC – Dr Derval Igoe, HPSC, Dublin, Chair CAG

Public Health – Dr Sarah Doyle, Consultant in Public Health Medicine

Representative from O&G (RCPI institute of obstetricians and gynaecologists)

Dr Maeve Eogan, Rotunda, Dublin

Representative from Genitourinary Medicine (SSSTDI)

Dr Aisling Loy, GUIDE, Dublin

Representative from Infectious Diseases (IDSI)

Dr Catherine Fleming (NUIG)

Prof. Colm Bergin (GUIDE, Dublin)

Representative from General Practice (ICGP)

Dr Miriam Daly, Dublin

Representative from Clinical Microbiology (Faculty of Pathology)

Dr Cillian De Gascun, NVRL

Representative from Paediatrics (Faculty of Paediatrics)

Dr Joanne Nelson, Galway

Emergency Medicine (Irish Association of Emergency Medicine)

Dr Una Kennedy, SJH, Dublin

Urology (Irish Society of Urology)

Mr Ivor Cullen, Waterford

Faculty of Occupational Medicine

Dr Noirin Noonan, SJH, Dublin

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland

Ms Sinead Cleary, Coombe, Dublin

Irish Pharmacy Union

Ms Pamela Logan, Dublin



RCPI Collegiate Members Committee

Dr Sorca O'Brien, Specialist Registrar

Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine of Ireland

Mr Pat Mulhare, Chief Medical Scientist, Microbiology Dept, Waterford University Hospital