

**Meeting:** Council  
**Date:** 13 September 2023  
**From:** Councillor Virgo  
**To:** Councillor Wright

**Question:**

Question: Our sexual health provision is at crisis point, what urgent action will be taken to make it fit for purpose in our expanding town?

**Answer:**

Data from the Office for Health Improvement (OHID) and the local services do not indicate a crisis in the sexual and reproductive health services. The trend in newly diagnosed sexually transmitted infections (STI) are showing an upward trend in 2022, however the rates are lower than 2019 and lower than the national trends. This trend is similar to local authority areas with similar demographics.

Data from our local services indicate that from April to June 2023 98 per cent of service users calling the service for an appointment during reception's opening times were triaged within 30 minutes, with 97 per cent of service users seen within two days. The services are meeting the standards set for management of STI by the British Association of Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH).

Councillors can be assured that the current evidence does not indicate a crisis in sexual health service provision in Bracknell Forest, but there are always matters that need to be reviewed and addressed to respond to the needs of our population.

The Council is committed to commissioning services that meet the future needs of the growing population and our changing demographics. We are therefore engaged with our local authority partners on an East Berkshire sexual health needs assessment which will inform the future commissioning of Sexual Health services in Bracknell Forest over the next year. As part of this we will be seeking to improve digital access to sexual and reproductive health services which is a priority locally. The Public Health teams have been working with experts in good digital design to understand how we can do this well. It is important so that people access both the testing they may require alongside good quality triage and tailored advice.

Finally if someone is experiencing symptoms they should not wait for a test, but should get to a clinic as soon as possible, to receive the treatment that is required. They can access local services or any clinics outside the area as well. Links on how to access sexual health clinics can be found in my written answer.

For information on accessing sexual health clinics

These are listed here: [Garden Clinic - Safe Sex Berkshire](#)\*

The [All Clinics - Safe Sex Berkshire](#) website shows the location of clinics across Berkshire, which are available to everyone

There are appointment times available throughout the week, including evenings, across the sites available within Berkshire.

Information on sexual health clinics including local clinics can be accessed via on NHS Choices [Find a sexual health clinic - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk).