

Section A: NICE to complete	
Name:	Rob Cookson
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Guidance title:	Sexually Transmitted Infections: condom distribution schemes
Committee:	PHAC A
Subject of expert testimony:	LGBT Foundation Condom & Lube Distribution Scheme
Evidence gaps or uncertainties:	See below
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>Is there UK based work that might be of interest to committee but may be unpublished?</p> <p>A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF EVIDENCE TO INFORM HIV PREVENTION INTERVENTIONS AMONG MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN IN EUROPE</p> <p>A systematic search was performed individually for 24 interventions. Data were extracted from studies including efficacy or implementation data from European settings, appraised for efficacy, implementation and plausibility, and assigned a grade (1-4) according to the Highest Attainable Standard of Evidence (HASTE) framework. Four interventions (condom use, peer outreach, peer-led groups, and using universal coverage of antiretroviral treatment and treatment as prevention) were assigned the highest HASTE grade, 1. Consistent condom use found to reduce HIV transmission by 64%</p> <p>F Hickson², A Pharris³, M Sabido⁴, S Baral^{1,5}, A Thorson (2015) http://www.eurosurveillance.org/ViewArticle.aspx?ArticleId=21096</p> <p>It is also useful to consider the motivations and barriers to condom use. Sigma Research (2011) The Sigma Panel Insight Blast Month 3: Alternatives to Bareback. London: Sigma Research. Version 1, April 2011.</p> <p>http://sigmaresearch.org.uk/files/Sigma_Panel_INSIGHT_BLAST_3_Alternatives_to_bareback.pdf</p> <p>Sigma Research, Vital Statistics (2010) The UK Gay Men's Sex Survey (part of EMIS – The European Internet MSM Sex Survey) http://sigmaresearch.org.uk/files/local/All_England_2010.pdf</p> <p>What activities are being commissioned (or re-commissioned). What do you expect to be commissioned in the future? What would you like to be commissioned in the future?</p> <p>Whilst prevention services are being commissioned (or re-commissioned) across the country, financial levels and what is being commissioned varies. A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF EVIDENCE TO INFORM HIV PREVENTION INTERVENTIONS AMONG MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN IN EUROPE (2015) identified condom use as grade 1 HASTE. Strong evidence therefore exists of the critical importance of condom use in tackling HIV and other STIs. Whilst other forms of HIV prevention, are also very important and much needed it should be noted that condoms play an important role in tackling not just HIV but other forms of STIs. An agreed package of</p> 	

prevention services should be commissioned across the country, with condoms and lubricant a critical component of this.

Free condoms and lube within locations (including gay bars, clubs and saunas) should be maintained. It is appropriate to provide free condoms and lubricant targeted at gay, bisexual and other MSM due to them shouldering a disproportionate burden of HIV and other STIs. Furthermore, condoms and lube available within bars, clubs, saunas and other settings provide important visibility, helping to increase social norms of condom and lube usage.

Ensuring that they are free reduces one of the barriers for people accessing condoms and lube, cost. This is particularly important given the fact that addressing social determinants is an important aspect of HIV prevention.

- **What trends/patterns/changes in commissioning practice have you observed in recent years?**

Commissioning is currently taking place within the context of challenging economic climate. Local Authority budgets in particular are reducing, which results in less funding available for prevention work. There is therefore a trend of reduction in funding for condom and lube schemes.

Across Greater Manchester, commissioners continue to work collaboratively and understand the need to commission services for communities of identity, not just geographical communities.

- **Which individuals, services or organisations are best placed to intervene, where are the statutory requirements and where do responsibilities lie (impact of change to LA from NHS)?**

Service provision and what population groups condoms and lube are targeted at should be determined by evidence of need. Gay, Bisexual and other MSM remain disproportionately affected by HIV and other STIs and prioritisation of service provision should reflect this.

In order to ensure that condoms and lube schemes are effectively targeted, it is important that gay, bisexual and other MSM are involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of provision. As such, it is important that LGBT organisations play a role in the provision of dedicated condom and lube schemes for gay, bisexual and other MSM.

- **Who should (or most likely to be in a position to) take action / pick up any recommendations that NICE may make?**

Local Authorities (LA)s are best placed to pick up any actions requiring explicit requirements for LAs to provide schemes targeted at gay, bisexual and MSM.

NHS England could potentially play a role in working with LGBT and other organisations to create a minimum standard of prevention provision for gay, bisexual and MSM, which should include condoms and lube.

- **Where do you think the key evidence gaps are?**

It is important to be clear that there is a range of evidence available which highlights the importance of condom and lube provision. Despite welcomed advances in other forms of prevention, such as improved treatment of HIV

and recently emerged evidence of the effectiveness of pre-exposure HIV prophylaxis, correct usage of condoms and lube remain a critical prevention tool for reducing incidence of HIV and other STIs.

More evidence of condom and lube usage for different population groups would be beneficial; exploring levels of condom and lube usage, and barriers and motivations of usage, would be beneficial. Communities to focus upon could include Asian MSM and Trans people.

Section B: Expert to complete

Summary testimony:

Established in 1994, LGBT Foundation free Condom & Lube Safer Sex Packs are part of its combined prevention approach to tackling HIV and other STIs. Each and every year 600,000 condoms and 600,000 sachets of lube are distributed to gay, bisexual and other Men who have sex with Men (MSM) across Greater Manchester. It is a multi-component scheme, supported by an array of activities to increase and maintain condom and lube use including; peer education, outreach work, printed and online resources. Venues help to promote the scheme is a range of ways, including displaying stickers saying they are 'Home to the Safer Sex Packs.'

The Safer Sex Scheme has grown so that it distributes to over 100 venues per year. These include gay bars and clubs, community settings and saunas. Loose condoms and lube are provided within Saunas. In other settings, the Safer Sex Packs (containing two condoms, two sachets of lube and sexual health information) are provided. As part of the combined prevention approach, the Safer Sex Packs incorporate wider sexual health messages; previous messages have included 'Know Your HIV Status,' (encouraging people to test regularly for HIV and contribution to the PHE Outcomes Indicator of reducing late HIV diagnosis). The current Safer Sex Packs includes the message of 'Talk First, Take Protection, Test Regularly.'

Evidence of Effectiveness

The aims of the scheme are as follows:

- To reduce the new incidences of STIs including HIV amongst gay, bisexual and other MSM.
- To reduce the rates of undiagnosed HIV amongst gay, bisexual and other MSM.
- To improve and promote good sexual health and wellbeing of gay, bisexual and other MSM.
- To address the impact homophobia and discrimination plays on the sexual health of gay and bisexual men.

In 2010, a community based review of the Safer Sex Scheme was conducted. Entitled 'Proud to be Safer,' the review aimed to capture the views and experiences of gay, bisexual and other MSM using the scheme. 618 people responded to the survey, of which 366 were residents of Greater Manchester.

- 93% of gay, bisexual and other MSM from Greater Manchester new Lesbian & Gay Foundation (previous name for LGBT Foundation) provided free Safer Sex Packs.
- 98% of gay, bisexual and other MSM from Greater Manchester reported increasing or maintaining condom use.
- 82% of gay, bisexual and other MSM from Greater Manchester reported being more likely to use condoms for anal sex because of the provision of free

condoms and lube.

- 10.4% of those who access the scheme identify as Black or Minority Ethnic.

Evidence of Cost Effectiveness

In 2014, Greater Manchester Building Health Partnerships (BHP) produced a report, focused upon; 'A partnership approach to identify and overcome health inequalities and barriers to accessing healthcare services for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people across Greater Manchester.' This report was a collaboration between a range of partners; LGBT Foundation, Institute for Voluntary Action Research, NAVCA local focus national voice, NHS North, Central and South Manchester Clinical Commissioning Groups, Social Enterprise Uk, NHS England.

As part of the BHP project, New Economy was commissioned to undertake Cost Benefit Analysis of four key LGBT Foundation services, one of which was sexual health. New Economy have developed a HM Treasury endorsed approach to CBA of local programmes. The approach involves balancing the costs associated with programme delivery against the benefits that programme delivers for clients, organisations and society.

A key aspect of LGBT Foundations sexual health services is the Safer Sex Scheme. The CBA identified significant levels of fiscal benefits to LGBT Foundation sexual health programme, demonstrating that for every £1 invested in LGBT Foundation's sexual health service, £6 of potential savings as a result of fewer HIV and other STI infections are generated within the budgets of public agencies.

References (if applicable):

Proud to be Safer, LGBT Foundation (formerly Lesbian & Gay Foundation), (2010)

Greater Manchester Building Health Partnerships Summary Report, LGBT Foundation, (2014).