

Florey Clinic ACE Report March 2025



Florey Clinic, Sexual Health and
Contraception services in Reading, Wokingham and West
Berkshire.

Report to:

Reading Adult Social Care, Children's and Education
(ACE) Committee meeting

March 2025

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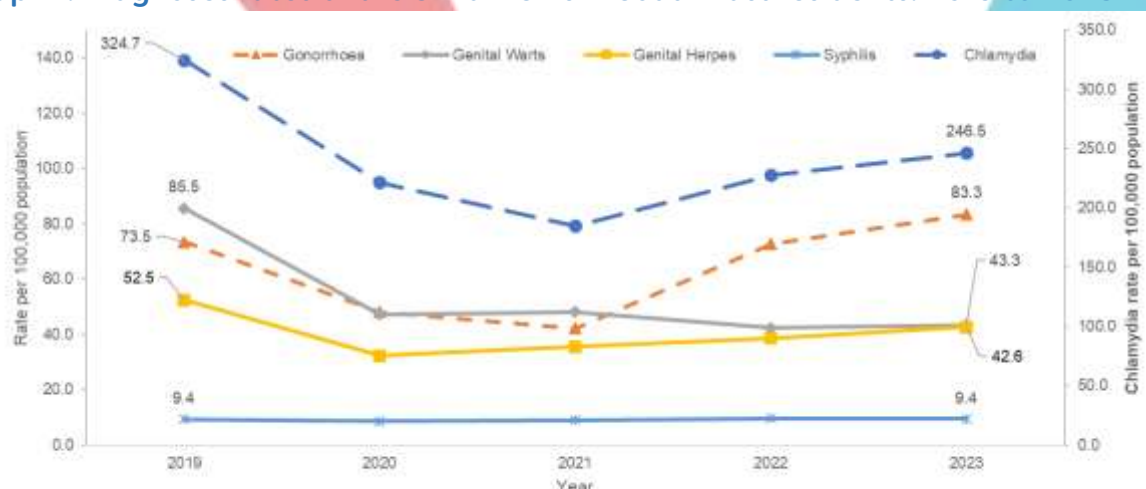
Florey Clinic Overview

The Florey Clinic, part of the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust, offers comprehensive Contraception and Sexual Health (CaSH) services. These services include sexual health, contraception, psychosexual counselling, and care for individuals living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). The clinic is commissioned by the local authorities to deliver sexual health services across Reading, West Berkshire, and Wokingham. Additionally, the contraception service is specifically commissioned to provide all forms of contraception including long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) for individuals aged 25 and under, emergency contraception for all, and specialist contraception and LARC services via referral. CaSH services are designed to be open access, ensuring that anyone can attend the service, thereby reducing health inequities for individuals who may face barriers accessing other healthcare services. The Florey Clinic offers a variety of options for service users, including face-to-face appointments, walk in clinics, telephone consultations, online booking, home testing and specialist outreach services where appropriate. This diverse range of options provides users with the flexibility to choose how they would like to attend that best suits their needs.

National and Regional Sexually Transmitted Infection Data

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) 2023 report showed that there was a 5% increase of diagnoses of sexually transmitted infections (STI) in England since 2022. Gonorrhoea diagnoses reached a record high, in England, in 2023. Although there has been an increase in STI diagnoses in England, the diagnoses rates of STIs in the south east has not returned to pre COVID levels, shown in Graph 2. Another notable point from the UKHSA 2023 report is among heterosexuals attending sexual health services, most chlamydia and gonorrhoea diagnoses were in people aged 15 to 24 years. With diagnosis rates in the south east not returning to pre pandemic levels and diagnosis high in young people the reports highlights the need for sexual health services to improve access and testing in young people.

Graph 1: Diagnoses rates of the 5 main STIs in South East residents: 2019 to 2023



Graph 1: [Sexually transmitted infections \(STIs\): annual data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sexually-transmitted-infections-stis-annual-data)

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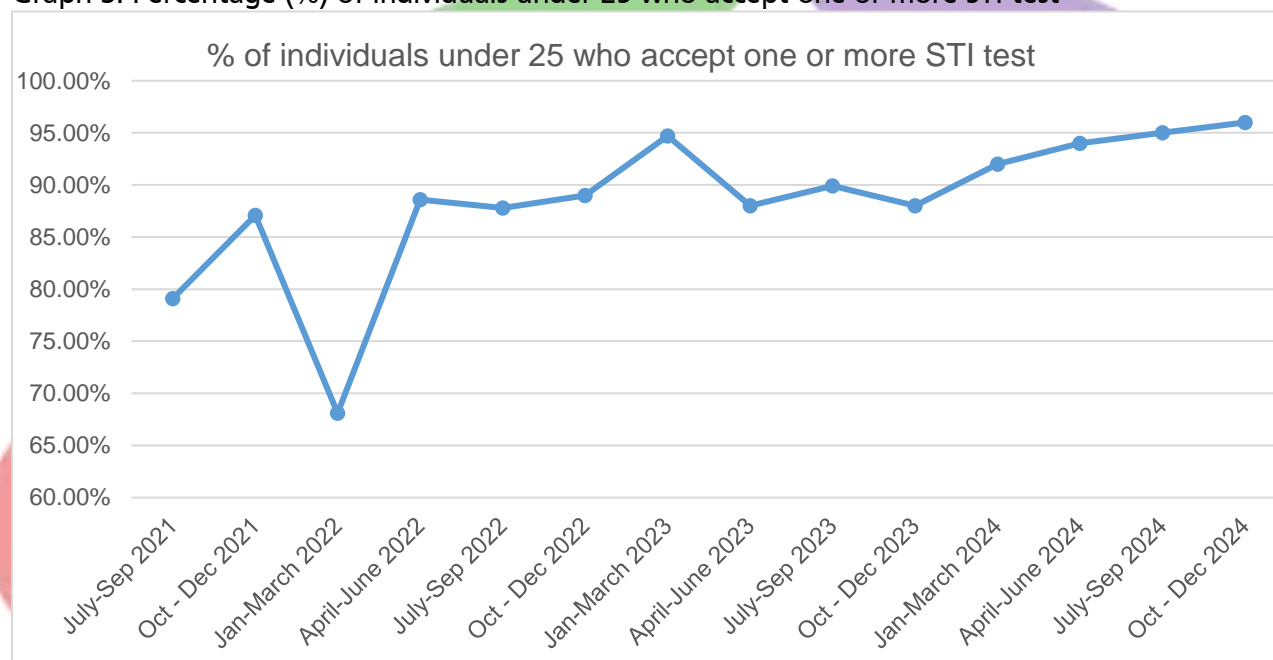
Young People Testing at Florey Clinic

The Florey clinic has been committed to the testing of STIs amongst young people. Working on improved access and alternative ways to access, which may be more appealing for young people, such as improved online booking and online testing services. Looking at the period from July 2021 to December 2024 analysis focuses on two key metrics: the percentage of individuals under 25 who accept one or more STI test, Graph 3, and the total number of under 25s tested for Chlamydia, Graph 4. By examining these trends, we can gain insights into the effectiveness of Florey's outreach and testing initiatives.

The percentage of individuals under 25 who accept one or more STI test, Graph 3, shows a general upward trend in the percentage of people who accept a test for STIs. The percentage dipped in the first quarter of 2022 but recovered significantly in the following quarters. The highest percentage recorded was 96.0% in the last quarter of 2024 showing the significant improvements made in young people accepting testing.

The total number of under 25s tested for Chlamydia, Graph 4, the number of tests conducted shows a significant increase since 2021. There was a notable spike in the number of tests from April-June 2023 onwards with the numbers remaining relatively high through to the end of 2024, indicating sustained efforts in testing.

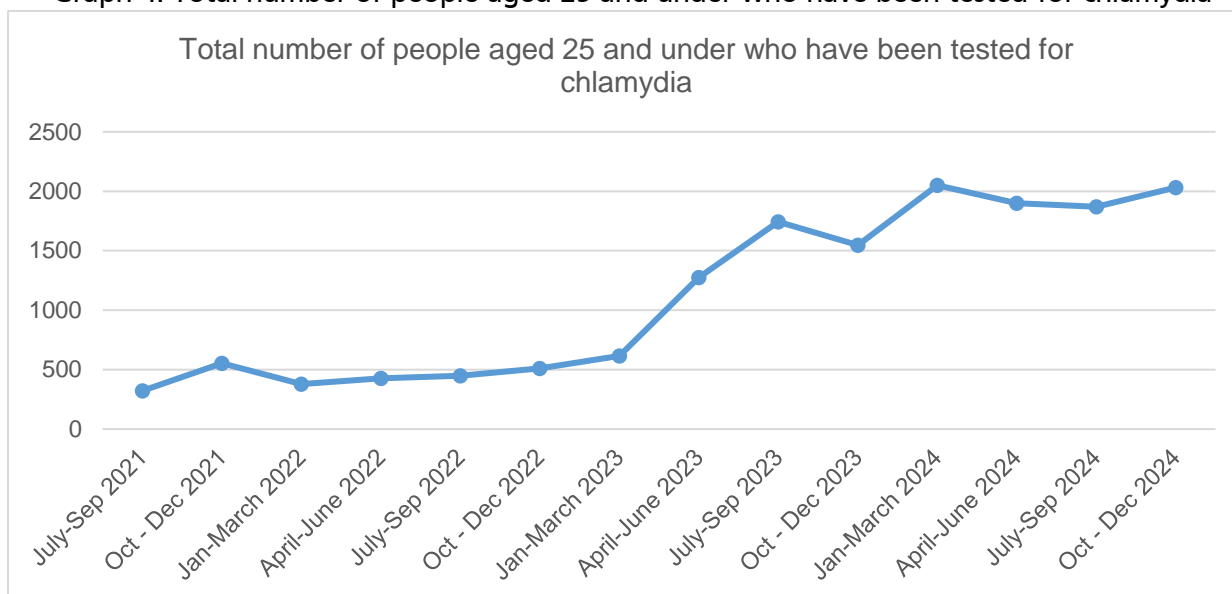
Graph 3: Percentage (%) of individuals under 25 who accept one or more STI test



Graph 3: taken from internal data

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Graph 4: Total number of people aged 25 and under who have been tested for chlamydia



Graph 4: taken from internal data

“Let’s Get to Zero” – Florey Clinic Bus Project

To enhance HIV and STI knowledge amongst young people, the Florey Clinic sought additional funding to support with the government's ambitious goal of achieving zero HIV transmissions by 2030. This initiative, known as the "Let's Get to Zero" project, aimed to improve education on the tools and methods available to reach this target, with a particular focus on individuals under 25. The project recognised the importance of targeted outreach and community engagement in addressing the gaps in awareness and testing uptake among young people.

The "Let's Get to Zero" project employed the following strategies:

1. **Pop-up Clinics via the Florey Bus:** The health bus was used as a resource in high-traffic areas to engage directly with the public, providing information, materials, and testing services. Branded materials and banners to enhance visibility.
2. **Social Media Campaigns:** Targeted younger audiences on platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook. QR codes on promotional materials enabled access to home testing kits and HIV prevention information.
3. **Community Collaborations:** Partnered with local HIV charities, drug and alcohol services, and youth groups to promote the project and extend its reach.
4. **Engagement with Educational Institutions:** Outreach at universities and colleges, including Freshers' Fairs, to engage directly with students and promote testing and awareness.
5. **Participation in Public Events:** Actively participated in events such as Pride and the Black History Conference to engage diverse audiences and demonstrate inclusivity.

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Outcomes and Analysis of the "Let's Get to Zero" Project

1. Increasing Knowledge and Awareness of the 2030 Target

Awareness Campaign: Raised awareness about the government's goal to end HIV transmission by 2030, initially known by only 20% of survey respondents. Social media campaign played a crucial role in engaging younger audiences. Throughout the campaign, 76,368 users were reached, and the content was viewed a total of 268,690 times, with each user seeing the content an average of 3.52 times. Link clicks totalled 2,753, demonstrating a strong level of engagement.

Outreach Efforts: Distributed leaflets with key messages about the 2030 target, HIV prevention methods, and clinic information. The distribution of branded condoms and HIV prevention materials helped attract attention. Many individuals requested condoms, and the visibility of this material encouraged participation and increased awareness about HIV prevention.

Visibility and Media Coverage: Enhanced visibility through the health bus, social media, and collaborations. Media coverage, including a segment on BBC South Today, helped to amplify the message.

2. Increasing Uptake of HIV and STI Testing

Health Bus Initiative: Made testing more accessible and convenient, with 77% of those tested being new to the Florey clinic.

Testing Events: 175 individuals tested across 24 events, with strong engagement in key areas such as Reading town centre.

Online Testing: Distributed leaflets with QR codes for online testing, with 51 people opting for this method of testing.

Community Engagement: Normalised testing through visibility at local events, facilitating conversations about sexual health.

3. Improvement in public health outcomes

Testing and Referrals: While no individuals tested positive for HIV throughout the project the health bus testing allowed for the identification of other STIs and participants were contacted and linked into relevant services for timely care. The bus contributed to re-engagement into HIV care. One individual living with HIV who had been lost to follow-up back into the service.

Conclusion

The data trend shows an increase in STI testing among under 25s at the Florey Clinic. Both the percentage of individuals tested and the total number of tests conducted have shown significant increases over the observed period. This suggests successful outreach and testing initiatives by the clinic. The six month "Let's Get to Zero" project at the Florey Clinic successfully enhanced HIV and STI knowledge among young people, aligning with the

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government goal of zero HIV transmissions by 2030. Continued efforts in this direction are likely to further improve public health outcomes.

Future Plans

Given the success and positive feedback of the "Let's Get to Zero" bus project, the Florey Clinic is currently in discussions with local authorities to secure continued funding for a testing bus which can be used within Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham. In addition to seeking further support for the bus project, the clinic is developing a new media campaign aimed at improving knowledge and awareness of available services for Reading residents. This campaign will be inclusive, targeting all community groups to ensure broader access to sexual health services and to reduce stigma. The Florey Clinic also has plans to engage with young people through consultations to better understand their needs and to enhance access and testing for young residents in Reading.