1. Title
Standards for Sexual Health.

2. Healthcare Improvement Scotland standards and indicators
Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) is the national health and social care improvement organisation for Scotland and part of NHSScotland. It provides the expertise and resources to co-produce health and social care standards which are developed, informed and shaped by with those who commission, deliver and use services.

The role of standards is to:

- provide a statement(s) of an expected level of service which demonstrates delivery of person-centred, safe and effective healthcare
- promote understanding, comparison and improvement of care, and
- support national consistency and/or local improvement.

3. Background
Sexual health has an important role to play in an individual’s physical and mental health, and emotional and social wellbeing. Poor sexual health can have a significant impact on people’s lives. Sexual health may encompass relationships, sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancies and termination of pregnancy. Services that take a positive and respectful approach can enable people to achieve good sexual health and wellbeing.

The second iteration of the Scottish Government’s Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus Framework is due to be updated in 2020. The overall aim of this framework is to
continue to make progress towards a sexually healthy and more inclusive Scotland where sexually transmitted and life affecting infections are prevented, and where no one is stigmatised for their sexual health status, life choices or lifestyle.

Standards for Sexual Health Services were originally published in 2008. Following robust engagement and feedback from stakeholders working within sexual health, the standards were accepted onto the HIS work programme in October 2019.

4. The scope of the standards

4.1 Population that will be covered

- All young people and adults in Scotland requiring sexual health care. *The project team would particularly welcome feedback around the definition of young people in respect of sexual health care.*

4.2 Areas for standards development

a. Areas that will be covered:

- Education and training
- Information and support
- Leadership and governance
- Preventing sexually transmitted infections
- Preventing unintended pregnancy
- Services for men who have sex with men (MSM)
- Services for young people
- Sexual wellbeing

The importance of audit, quality assurance and inequalities will be woven throughout the standards.

b. Areas that will not be covered:

- counselling, fertility, gender identity and menopause services.
- development of HIS quality indicators or key performance indicators.
- implementation of the standards - this is for local determination.

5. Related development sources: Key publications related to sexual health

a. Key sources (not exhaustive):

- British Association for Sexual Health and HIV. *Standards for the management of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).* 2019
- Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Health. *Service Standards for Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare.* 2016
b. Related Healthcare Improvement Scotland standards or indicators:

- Quality Improvement Scotland (now Healthcare Improvement Scotland), Standards for Sexual Health Services. 2008 (document has been retracted from website).

6. Timelines

The sexual health standards will begin development in January 2020, with completion expected in Autumn 2020.

7. Proposed development group specialists

The proposed specialists to be represented during the sexual health standards development process are:

- Clinical Lead
- Consultant Epidemiologist
- Consultant involved in Abortion Care Services
- Consultants in Genitourinary and HIV medicine
- Consultants in Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Consultant in Public Health Medicine
- Executive Lead, Sexual Health and BBV
- General Practitioner (strategic/operational)
- Health Improvement Manager
- Pharmacist
- Practice Nurse
- Principal Healthcare Scientist
- People with lived experience
- Quality Assurance
- Scottish Government
- Senior Lead Nurses
• Third sector representatives

8. **Contact us**

For any enquiries please contact:

• Fiona Wardell, Standards and Indicators Team Lead, fiona.wardell@nhs.net
• Kelly Macdonald, Programme Manager, kelly.macdonald2@nhs.net
• Wendy McDougall, Project Officer, wendy.mcdougall@nhs.net
• Paula O’Brien, Administrative Officer, paula.obrien@nhs.net

Email: hcis.standardsandindicators@nhs.net

For more information about HIS, visit our website:

www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org
Phases of standards development

**Scoping**
During this phase, we...

- Identify the key areas for standards development
- Recruit the standards development group
- Reach out to stakeholders and gather feedback
- Decide the population, outcomes and setting that standards will cover
- Produce a scoping report

**Development**
During this phase, we...

- Write standard statements
- Research and write a rationale for each statement
- Describe what meeting the standard might look like
- Identify what each standard might mean for staff or people using a service
- Produce a set of draft standards

**Consultation**
During this phase, we...

- Gather feedback from people with lived experience, policy-makers, carers, and staff
- Distribute the draft standards widely
- Engage with stakeholders across all of our networks
- Run focus groups and events
- Produce surveys and use engagement tools

**Finalisation**
During this phase, we...

- Re-draft the standards
- Agree the final standard statement and rationale
- Review the consultation comments and respond individually to every one
- Produce a final set of standards
- Produce a consultation report