

## **News Release**

Wednesday 3 December 2008

### **Pharmacies support NHS Leicester City campaign of better sexual health for all**

NHS Leicester City has teamed up with pharmacies across the city as part of a health campaign to raise awareness of the importance of looking after sexual health.

The campaign is designed to help tackle issues such as unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases (STIs) such as Chlamydia.

NHS Leicester city has sent out information packs to all 76 city pharmacies to support people in making the right decisions about their sexual health. The packs contain display posters, information on Chlamydia and emergency hormonal contraception (EHC), sometimes known as the morning after pill.

Two thirds of Leicester pharmacies are trained to offer EHC, which is free of charge to under-25s. All pharmacies – including those which don't currently offer EHC – have a list of contact details and addresses of all trained pharmacies and will be able to direct people to the most appropriate one.

Young people are more likely to take risks with their sexual behaviour, and there are around 350 unplanned teenage pregnancies in Leicester every year - among the highest in England. One in ten young people aged between 15 and 24 who are sexually active have Chlamydia, which can cause infertility if left untreated.

All city pharmacists are able to offer advice on STIs, including where to go to pick up a chlamydia self-testing kit. They also now have leaflets to hand out to customers and posters to display in their pharmacies.

Ebrahim Vorajee, health promotion specialist for NHS Leicester City, said: “If you are having sex, it’s so important to practise safer sex – always use a condom. However nothing is 100% effective and so if you are worried, or if something’s gone wrong, go to your local pharmacy and ask about emergency hormonal contraception and advice on testing for STIs.

“EHC is more effective against pregnancy the sooner it’s taken, although it can be taken up to 72 hours after unprotected sex. Treating Chlamydia is also easy, it can be cured with just one dose of antibiotics.”

For emergency advice over the festive bank holidays, be aware that most pharmacies and clinics will have limited opening hours. However NHS Direct is available to offer advice 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Patel’s pharmacy at 115 Narborough Road, Leicester is open from 9am to 8.30pm seven days a week, including Christmas Day and New Year’s Day.

This campaign is just one of a number of public health campaigns from NHS Leicester City which aims to educate and inform people about their health.

**For interviews or more information please contact press officer Joanna Petersen on 0116 295 4123 or [joanna.petersen@leicestercity.nhs.uk](mailto:joanna.petersen@leicestercity.nhs.uk)**

### **Notes to editors**

Most pharmacies and clinics will have seasonal opening hours, however NHS Direct is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 0845 4647.

Patel’s pharmacy at 115 Narborough Road, Leicester is open from 9am to 8.30pm seven days a week, including Christmas Day and New Year’s Day.

Chlamydia can only be detected by taking a test. Self tests are available for free across the city at various places including GUM (genito-urinary medicine), contraceptive services, some GP practices and some youth centres. Treatment is also free and usually involves a short course of antibiotics. If left untreated Chlamydia can lead to infertility in both women and men, and can lead to a discharge from the penis and painful urination.

**GU Medicine:** Leicester Royal Infirmary, Jarvis Building, Leicester 0116 258 5208

**Chlamydia Screening office:** St Peter's Health Centre, Sparkenhoe Street, Leicester 0116 295 7822.

**NHS Direct:** 0845 4647