

# PAINTING A PICTURE OF SEXUAL HEALTH IN BRITAIN 2013-2020



## THE HIDDEN COSTS OF CUTS TO THE SYSTEM

Cuts to sexual health services will result in more unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, increasing the UK's future health and welfare expenditure by 8.7%.

Investment in sexual health and contraceptive services could **save more than £5BN**  
= **23,800** sexual health nurses over 7 years

SAVE  
**£5BN**



SAVE  
**£12.50**

Every £1 invested in contraception **saves £12.50**

Cuts to sexual health and contraceptive services could **cost up to £10BN**

COST  
**£10BN**

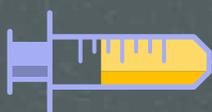


Up to **83,648** additional **live births** resulting from a rise in unplanned pregnancies

**83,648**



By 2020, providing services to support children from unintended pregnancy could account for between **10% & 15%** of the UK's anticipated social welfare spending



**5%**

New sexually transmitted infection (STI) diagnoses **rose 5% in 2012**

The restriction of other sexual health services could lead to an extra **91,620** STIs per year by 2020

### Wider welfare costs

Additional welfare costs from cuts to sexual health services:

Social welfare	<b>£7.2BN</b> extra	Housing	<b>£0.34BN</b> extra
Personalised social services	<b>£0.96BN</b> extra	Post-natal healthcare	<b>£0.17BN</b> extra
Education	<b>£0.74BN</b> extra	Anti-poverty programmes	<b>£0.08BN</b> extra



# UNPROTECTED NATION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## THE FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF RESTRICTED CONTRACEPTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES<sup>1</sup>

### COUNTING THE COSTS OF CUTS: A SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

It is a concrete fact that investment in sexual health education, awareness and treatment saves money. For every £1 spent on contraception, we save £12.50<sup>2</sup>. Our report, Unprotected Nation, took this notion a step further by quantifying the financial risk of further cuts – resulting in a shocking figure. A total of £136.7 billion could be added to government costs by 2020 (NHS and welfare burden) if cuts continue in this vein.

3.2 million women aged between 15 and 44 currently experience restrictions in obtaining sexual health and contraceptive services<sup>3</sup>. This could grow with further cuts. A policy focus in the past on teenage pregnancy, chlamydia screening, sexual health and HIV means we know what to do to improve sexual health in the UK.

With clear evidence that NHS efficiency savings are already undermining the quality of contraceptive services available today, through location and age based restrictions; limited services offered by local authorities and changes to commissioning structures; the report predicts a bleak future, should these cuts continue.

That's why we launched the XES – We Can't Go Backwards campaign to fight cuts and restrictions to services. Here is a short summary of what we are up against currently, and what our research forecasts for the next seven years.

- ▶ **Cost to the NHS:** We would see **£298.6 million** extra spend between 2013 and 2020, resulting from an increasing number of unintended pregnancies.
- ▶ **Cost to welfare provision:** Wider public spending of **up to £124.7bn** by 2020, **equivalent to 10% of all welfare spending**, as increased live birth rates soar and would result in huge spending in areas such as social welfare, personalised services, housing and education.
- ▶ Increased infection rates alone could place an **additional cumulative burden of £314 million on the NHS by 2020** and could see incidences of **chlamydia account for 40%** of NHS treatment costs for STIs between 2013-2020.
- ▶ **Growth in STIs:** New sexually transmitted infection (STI) diagnoses rose 5% in 2012. The restriction of other sexual health services **could lead to an extra 91,620 STIs per year by 2020**, due to increased restrictions, fragmentation of services and reductions in the effectiveness of education and awareness raising programmes. Of these, 76,840 cases are expected to be chlamydia. The cost of reduced services is staggering.
- ▶ **Increase in abortion rates:** The average abortion rate is currently around 9.7% higher in areas where services were restricted, compared with areas with no restrictions.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ In total, that could add up to the terrifying tune of **£136.7 billion** – an 8.7% cost increase on projections based around current versus worsened access.

<sup>1</sup> Stephen Lucas is an economist with 20 years' experience in economic, demographic and social policy and regeneration consulting. His expertise lies in economic impact assessment, economic regeneration, feasibility studies and project appraisal. Stephen is a co-founder and Managing Director of Development Economics Limited, a company that specialises in the economics of regeneration and social development policy. He regularly advises public and private sector clients and partnerships on economic strategy, project feasibility, impact assessment and funding.

<sup>2</sup> Contraception Atlas, Bayer Healthcare 2011 <http://www.swagnet.nhs.uk/Contraception%20Atlas%202011%20v5%20-%20Bayer%20Healthcare.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Sex, lives and commissioning. An audit by the Advisory Group on Contraception of the commissioning of contraceptive and abortion services in England. (April 2012)

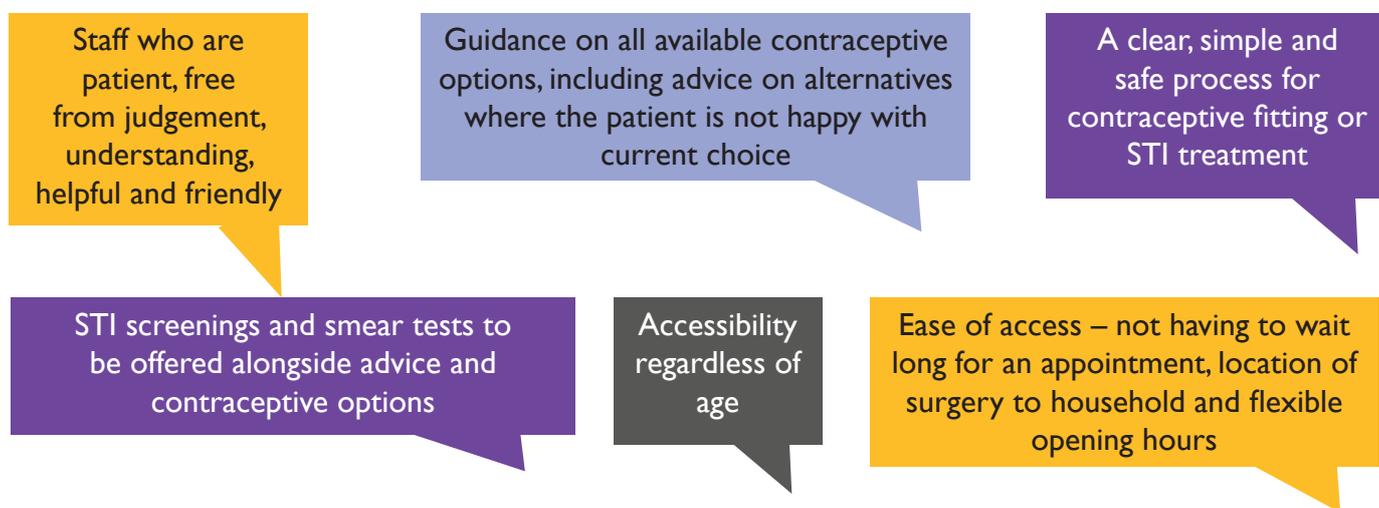
<sup>4</sup> Public Health England, 5 June 2013 <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nearly-half-a-million-new-sexual-infections-in-2012>

# PRIORITISING WHAT PATIENTS VALUE MOST IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Against a backdrop of huge funding changes, budget reductions and increasing demands to justify spend at all levels, Directors of Public Health face a series of challenges when deciding on how to spend their ring-fenced public health budgets.

Since we launched XES – We Can't Go Backwards, Brook and FPA have gathered insights from users of sexual health provisions; on average, men and women aged between 16 and 44. We collated what they had to say about which elements of sexual health services they value and can't bear to lose. We have also charted where provisions have already started to show gaping holes, and in doing so, run the risk of slowing down progress in such a vital health provision.

## WHAT DO PATIENTS VALUE MOST IN SEXUAL HEALTH PROVISION?



## WHICH EXPERIENCES OF PROVISION WOULD DISAPPOINT USERS OR PUT THEM OFF USING IN THE FUTURE?



## ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Further cuts have a direct causal impact on the quantity and quality of sexual health services. It is a person's right to have access to the services that will improve their health. For further advice when dealing with challenges in commissioning, we recommend downloading the following materials:

- ▶ Sexual Health Commissioning: Frequently Asked Questions (Local Government Association, Public Health England)  
[http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=4905f0d4-8fad-4c3a-b53c-b49478b42a49&groupId=10171](http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=4905f0d4-8fad-4c3a-b53c-b49478b42a49&groupId=10171)
- ▶ Relationships and Sex Education: A Briefing for Councillors (Local Government Association, RSE Hub and Sex Education Forum)  
[http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=cfa9e6fe-6038-480d-8df4-df415cef5f54&groupId=10171](http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=cfa9e6fe-6038-480d-8df4-df415cef5f54&groupId=10171)
- ▶ Tackling teenage pregnancy (Local Government Association)  
[http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=ac6c02ec-3864-4772-85ec-80d4ed790900&groupId=10171](http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=ac6c02ec-3864-4772-85ec-80d4ed790900&groupId=10171)
- ▶ Sexual Health Needs Assessments: A 'How to Guide' (NHS, Design Options)  
[http://www.londonsexualhealth.org/uploads/SH\\_needs\\_assessment\\_toolkit.pdf](http://www.londonsexualhealth.org/uploads/SH_needs_assessment_toolkit.pdf)

To engage us with your sexual health service provision challenges, please visit our campaign website at [www.wecantgobackwards.org.uk](http://www.wecantgobackwards.org.uk). To engage with Brook or FPA directly, and for further information, please contact **Simon Blake OBE CEO, Brook** [simon.blake@brook.org.uk](mailto:simon.blake@brook.org.uk) and **Dr Audrey Simpson OBE Acting CEO, FPA** [audreys@fpa.org.uk](mailto:audreys@fpa.org.uk)

## ABOUT BROOK

Brook helps young people to make informed, active choices about their personal and sexual relationships so they can enjoy their sexuality without harm. Brook is the UK's leading provider of sexual health services and advice for young people under 25. The charity has nearly 50 years of experience working with young people and currently has services in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Jersey. Brook services provide free and confidential sexual health information, contraception, pregnancy testing, advice and counselling, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections and outreach and education work, reaching over 280,000 young people every year. Visit [www.brook.org.uk](http://www.brook.org.uk)

Brook charity number 703015 (England and Wales) SC042132 (Scotland).

## ABOUT FPA

The sexual health charity FPA gives straightforward information, advice and support on all aspects of sexual health, sex and relationships to everyone in the UK. We've been talking sense about sex for more than 80 years and we support and champion the rights of everyone to good sexual health. We educate, inform and support thousands of people each year through our helpline and enquiry service, our counselling service in Northern Ireland, projects in the community and public awareness campaigns. We also offer training and a wealth of resources to support sexual health professionals. Visit [www.fpa.org.uk](http://www.fpa.org.uk)

FPA charity number 250187.



Funded by and developed in partnership with Reckitt Benckiser Healthcare (UK) Ltd.

We would like to thank BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company), for their kind donation to print and distribute the Executive Summary of Unprotected Nation, The Financial and Economic Impacts of Restricted Contraceptive and Sexual Health Services.