

From the Deputy Chief Medical Officer  
**Dr Anne Kilgallen**

**Circular HSC (SQSD) (NICE NG68) 23/17**

**Subject: NICE Public Health Guideline NG68 - Sexually transmitted infections: condom distribution schemes**

**For action by:**

Chief Executive of HSC Board – **for distribution to:**

All HSC Board Directors – for cascade to relevant staff

Director of Integrated Care, HSC Board – **for cascade to:**

Head of Pharmacy and Medicines Management  
Family Practitioner Services Leads – for cascade to relevant  
Family Practitioner groups

Chief Executive of Public Health Agency – **for distribution to:**

Director of Public Health and Medical Director – for cascade  
to relevant staff  
Director of Nursing and AHPs – for cascade to relevant staff

Chief Executives of HSC Trusts – **for distribution to:**

Medical Directors – for cascade to relevant staff  
Directors of Nursing – for cascade to relevant staff  
Heads of Pharmaceutical Services – for cascade to relevant  
staff  
Directors of Acute Services – for cascade to relevant staff  
HSC Clinical and Social Governance Leads  
Directors of Social Services – for cascade to relevant staff  
Directors of Finance – for cascade to relevant staff  
AHP Leads – for cascade to relevant staff

Chief Executive, Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority – **for cascade to:** relevant independent healthcare establishments

Chief Executives of HSC Special Agencies and NDPBs

**For Information to:**

Chair of HSC Board  
Chair of Public Health Agency  
Chairs of HSC Trusts  
Chair of RQIA  
NICE Implementation Facilitator NI  
Members of NI NICE Managers' Forum

**Summary of Contents:** This guideline covers condom distribution schemes. The aim is to reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). In addition, these schemes can provide a good introduction to broader sexual and reproductive health services, especially for younger people, and help prevent unplanned pregnancies.

**Enquiries:**

Any enquiries about the content of this Circular should be addressed to:

Quality Regulation and Improvement Unit  
Department of Health  
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Stormont Estate  
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BT4 3SQ

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**Circular Reference: HSC (SQSD) (NICE NG68) 23/17**

**Date of Issue: 24 May 2017**

**Related documents:**

HSC (SQSD) 37/15  
HSC (SQSD) (NICE PH51) 10/17  
HSC (SQSD) (NICE NG57) 14/17

**Superseded documents**

None

**Status of Contents:**

Action

**Implementation:**

As per circular HSC (SQSD) 37/15

**Additional copies:**

Available to download from  
<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/safety-and-quality-standards/national-institute-health-and-care-excellence-nice>

**Dear Colleagues**

**NICE Public Health Guideline NG68 - Sexually transmitted infections: condom distribution schemes** <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng68>

The Department has recently reviewed the above NICE guidance and has formally considered it for applicability in Northern Ireland.

**Decision:**

All recommendations in guideline NG68 - Sexually transmitted infections: condom distribution schemes are to be taken into account in designing and delivering services that will help reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and improve sexual and reproductive health.

**Action Required:**

In accordance with the process outlined in circular HSC (SQSD) 37/15, the following initial actions should be taken.

1. HSCB/PHA
  - a. Identify a Professional Lead who will consider the commissioning implications of the Public Health Guideline and co-ordinate with any other relevant commissioning teams.
  - b. The PHA will identify other relevant stakeholders and networks and disseminate as appropriate, typically within two weeks of receipt.
  - c. The HSC Board will ensure that relevant guidance is sent to the appropriate Family Practitioners.
2. HSC Trusts
  - a. Proceed with targeted dissemination, agree a clinical/management lead to coordinate implementation and consider what has to be done to achieve implementation using a risk based assessment and baseline review as appropriate to support planning. These initial actions should be undertaken within a three month period.
3. RQIA
  - a. Disseminate the Guideline to the independent sector as appropriate.
4. HSC Special Agencies and NDPBs
  - a. Take account of this Guideline in training and other developments as appropriate.

To inform the planning process, please find attached details from the Departmental review. You should consider and take account of other relevant policies and strategies in your planning, as well as any legislative / policy caveats identified in the course of the Departmental review.

The detailed arrangements for implementation, monitoring and assurance can be found in circular (<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/safety-quality-and-standards-circulars-2015-2016>).

A full current list of NICE guidance endorsed for application in Northern Ireland can be found on the Department's website (<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/safety-and-quality-standards/national-institute-health-and-care-excellence-nice>).

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light grey background. The signature reads "Anne Kilgallen" with a horizontal line under the name.

**Dr Anne Kilgallen**  
**Deputy Chief Medical Officer**

## Appendix 1

### Endorsed NICE guidance - Details from Departmental review

Reference Number	NICE Public Health Guideline – NG68 <a href="https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng68">https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng68</a>
Title	Sexually transmitted infections: condom distribution schemes
Summary of guidance	<p>This guideline covers condom distribution schemes. The aim is to reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). In addition, these schemes can provide a good introduction to broader sexual and reproductive health services, especially for younger people, and help prevent unplanned pregnancies.</p> <p>It includes recommendations on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• targeting services</li> <li>• multicomponent condom distribution schemes for young people in health, education, youth and outreach settings</li> <li>• single component schemes</li> </ul> <p>NICE has also produced guidelines PH51 - Contraceptive services for under 25s (endorsed by DoH in May 2017) and NG57 - Physical health of people in prison (endorsed by DoH in February 2017) <a href="https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/safety-and-quality-standards/national-institute-health-and-care-excellence-nice">https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/safety-and-quality-standards/national-institute-health-and-care-excellence-nice</a></p>
Related strategically relevant policies	<p>Making Life Better - A Whole System Strategic Framework for Public Health and supporting strategies <a href="https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/public-health-policy-and-advice/making-life-better-whole-system-strategic-framework-public">https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/public-health-policy-and-advice/making-life-better-whole-system-strategic-framework-public</a></p> <p>Regional Child Protection Policy and Procedures <a href="https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dhssps/acpcregionalstrategy.pdf">https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dhssps/acpcregionalstrategy.pdf</a></p> <p>The Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2008/1769/contents">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2008/1769/contents</a></p> <p>The Sexual Offences Act 2003 <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/42/contents</a></p> <p>Pharmacy in the Community Strategy <a href="https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/making-it-better-through-pharmacy-community">https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/making-it-better-through-pharmacy-community</a></p>

<p>Inter-Departmental interest</p>	<p>The Department of Justice (DoJ) have noted that if there is future consideration about the distribution of free condoms (with lubricant) in a prison setting then the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) would need to be consulted in respect of the any assessment of risk and in the planning phase for design and delivery of the service. This would include engagement between the NIPS and South Eastern HSCT as the healthcare delivery partner. Whilst the endorsement of the Guidance is not directly politically contentious, consideration of the introduction of condoms into the prison environment in future may be – dependent upon Ministerial appointments. This would require detailed consultation with the Department of Justice through the Northern Ireland Prison Service.</p>
<p>Legislative / policy caveats</p>	<p>This advice does not override or replace the individual responsibility of health professionals to make appropriate decisions in the circumstances of their individual patients, in consultation with the patient and/or guardian or carer. This would, for example, include situations where individual patients have other conditions or complications that need to be taken into account in determining whether the NICE guidance is fully appropriate in their case.</p> <p>This guidance refers to some NICE Public Health Guidance which pre-dates the introduction of the DoH process for endorsing Public Health guidelines. All Public Health Guidance endorsed by DoH can be found at: <a href="https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/nice-public-health-guidance">https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/nice-public-health-guidance</a></p>