

SU1: C-Card/RU Ready? Condom distribution scheme

Area: Liverpool

Lead: Karen Wakefield

Click here to
Rate this "Tweak"

Brief Overview: Liverpool C-card/ R U Ready? is a condom distribution scheme that aims to support young people, including identified targeted groups to increase the availability, accessibility and acceptability of condoms and information on sexual health issues. This enables them to make better-informed choices about their sexual health. Liverpool C-Card is heavily involved in promoting the Department of Health's 'R U Ready? /let's Leave it Till Later' initiative, aiming to support young people to make positive choices about sex and relationships and to delay early sex until they feel ready.

Click here to
Submit a "Tweak"

Target Group: 16-19 year olds, however in Liverpool the scheme is open to 13-25 year olds where necessary to enable contact with the most vulnerable agencies and young people.

Outcomes:

- To support young people to make informed choices about their sexual health.
 - To promote Department of Health's 'R U Ready?/Let's Leave it Till Later' initiative.
 - To increase the availability, accessibility and acceptability of condoms.
 - To raise awareness of STIs, the local Chlamydia screening programme and local sexual health services.
 - Multi agency working and to increase the confidence of agency staff in promoting positive sexual health messages with their young people.
- Evaluation:
- At point of registration, young people will provide comments on how the C-Card will benefit their sexual health.
 - Young people signed up to the scheme will evaluate the scheme after their tenth visit of picking up new supplies.
 - Participating agencies complete a service evaluation form each year to assess issues such as training, resources, venues and on-going support.
 - Evaluation of the resources is completed every 6 months via the monitoring forms to make sure that young people are happy with what they are receiving.
 - During regional c-card meetings, we share good practice and discuss issues arising from the different schemes.

Sustainability: For the scheme to continue to run efficiently and safely the annual cost would have to stay at the current level. Without coordination and resource costs the current agencies could run for a further 3 to 6 months. If resource costs were covered but coordination costs were not, the agencies would be able to continue to provide a service so long as their current staffs remain in place. However if staffing at the agency changed and the new staff were not trained, that agency would have to withdraw the service. This would also mean that the information provided for young people regarding where to register and to pick up condoms would not be updated and would quickly become out of

date. Also with regards to Safeguarding issues, there would be no central organisation for agencies to consult with or refer back to.

What made it work?

- On-going support for participating agencies in terms of general advice, face to face site visits and training when needed.
- Training that is accessible in terms of it being concise.
- Having a coordinating organisation that can oversee the supply of resources, the promotion and development of the scheme.
- The flexibility of involvement for each individual agency.
- Making up resources centrally in order to ensure consistency for young people and saving time for participating agencies.
- Experienced workers visiting agencies new to the scheme to offer support and to demonstrate the scheme in action.
- The scheme is not target driven so there is no pressures for the agency staff to offer the scheme to young people who do not want to be involved.
- So To Speak's level one sexual health training.
- The registration packs are specific to the needs of the young people and the curious educational booklet that the young people receive is heavily used by both staff and the young people.
- Consulting with young people at each stage of the scheme.

What could make it work better?

- Funding for publicity or an event to raise the awareness of the scheme.
- Brook and Abacus being involved in the scheme.
- Regionalisation so that young people can use the same card across a larger geographical footprint.
- Long term funding for long term planning.

Further information:

Agencies have reported that the relationship between the staff and young people has improved due to C-Card. This is because it offers an opportunity for a structured conversation/intervention relating to sexual health and relationships. Young people have also reported feeling supported and more confident in communicating with their family members about sexual health issues after being made aware of Fraser guidelines.