

YOUTH WORKER FACTSHEET



Supporting young people to get a **sexual health check**



Youth workers can be the first point of contact for young people who have questions about sexual health and sexual health checks.

As a youth worker, you can follow these steps to support a young person to access a sexual health service, a youth health clinic, Aboriginal Medical Service, or a GP for a sexual health check.

A GP is often the best initial point of contact and encouraging a young person to build a relationship with a GP may help them look after their general health and wellbeing.

Talking with the young person

Sexual health is an important part of young people's development and wellbeing. You can:

- Normalise talking about sexually transmissible infections (STIs), pregnancy prevention, healthy relationships and other aspects of sexuality.
- Show that you are a safe and trustworthy resource by being clear about confidentiality and your mandatory reporting obligations.
- Be non-judgmental about young people's sexual preferences and sexuality and listen to them openly and constructively.
- Get familiar with local referral pathways to ensure young people have access to the care they need.

It is important that you know your professional scope of work, which should include supporting young people to access sexual health services and providing them with accurate information. The [Talking About Sexual Health](#) tool can help guide you in these conversations.

Medicare card

Does your young person have access to their own Medicare card? If not, most people can [sign up](#) for their own Medicare card from the age of 15.

If a young person does not have their own Medicare card and does not know the number from their parents' card, the receptionist at the service can look this up for them. Health services are also available for young people who don't have Medicare, including international students.

Booking the appointment

You can support a young person to book their appointment by booking the appointment together. A young person can attend a GP or other service for a sexual health check. If you're going to a GP, check that they bulk bill. If the GP or health service doesn't bulk bill you can ask them to give you the name of a practice that does.

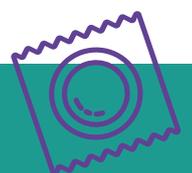
You can call the NSW Sexual Health Infolink on 1800 451 624 for and referral on where to book an appointment. You can also find your nearest service [here](#).

When booking, you might be asked what the appointment is for so the correct time can be allotted. You may want to find a service that caters for your young person's specific needs. Sexual health clinics, youth clinics, LGBTQIA+ services, refugee health services, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services are some of the specialist services that may be available in your area.

Programs

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Stronger workforce.
Healthier communities.**



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About the appointment

A first sexual health check can be a daunting experience for a young person. A young person can always take a support person with them, like a friend, sibling, youth worker, or other trusted adult.

If they know what to expect at an appointment, it can make the experience a bit easier for them. Some information that you can provide to help is:

Confidentiality

The appointment is confidential. What a young person discusses with the doctor or nurse will stay between them. The only time when this may not happen is in circumstances where they may be at risk of harm.

To find out more about confidentiality, view this [resource](#). The resource may also be shared with the young person, or posters put up around your service.

Questions during the appointment

The doctor or nurse will ask a series of questions about who the young person has sex with, if they use contraception and other health questions. This helps the doctor or nurse identify what tests are required. Reassure the young person that you can help them understand any terminology used by the doctor or nurse.

You can also let the young person know that they don't have to answer a question if they feel uncomfortable.

Testing

The most common way to test for an STI is by providing a urine sample. Sometimes a blood test, vaginal, anal or throat swab is recommended. For patients without symptoms, these are self collected.

If the young person has any symptoms, the doctor or nurse may ask to examine them or take the swab. Reassure the young person that this will only happen with their permission.

Results

During the appointment the doctor or nurse will say how they will contact the young person to provide their results. Results can take a couple of days. If treatment is required the doctor or nurse will contact the young person to organise a prescription and any further treatment needed.

The young person may need to go to a pharmacy to fill out their prescription. You can support them to find a local pharmacy.

Contact tracing

If the young person has tested positive to an STI they may be encouraged to let their recent sexual partners know they should go and get a test as well.

You can support them to let their previous partners know. Often, this is done via a private message or using the [Let Them Know](#) website.

Other ways to get resources for young people

You can contact your HIV and Related Programs (HARP) Team or view these websites for more information:

- [Sexual Health Infolink](#)
- [International Student Health Hub](#)
- [Play Safe](#)
- [Play Safe Pro](#)
- [Family Planning NSW](#)
- [Body Talk](#)
- [ACON](#)
- [Twenty10](#)
- [The Gender Center](#)
- [TransHub](#)

