

Market Position Statement

Specialist Sexual and Relationship Health

May 2024

Overview (1)

- Newham Council is the commissioning lead for sexual health services across north east London. The 'Sexual Health Shared Service' covers Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Redbridge, Barking & Dagenham and Havering.
- Newham's lead provider for specialist sexual health services is currently Barts Health NHS Trust. They offer a range of services, including: STI screening, STI treatment, contraception, vaccination / preventive medicine (e.g. PrEP for HIV) and psycho-sexual support.
- In 2017, all commissioners and providers across London agreed a standardised, activity-based 'Integrated Sexual Health Tariff' (ISHT) that covered all sexual health services, underpinned by a shared database for the purpose of performance monitoring and cross-charging. A [London-wide 'e-service'](#) for STI screening was also developed as part of this regional transformation project.
- The Covid pandemic significantly impacted sexual health provision, with large numbers of residents across the capital 'shifting' away from traditional clinics and towards the ['Sexual Health London' e-service](#). The financial sustainability of specialist providers is therefore a crucial factor when considering the direction of travel for specialist sexual health services.
- Spend and budget: The spend for specialist sexual health services (including SHL) varies year-on-year because it is activity-based. The budget envelope is currently around **£6.5m per annum**.

Demand

Good sexual health is important to individuals and communities. Poor sexual health can lead to sexually transmitted infections (STI's), health or fertility problems and unplanned pregnancies.

Newham is a borough with a high prevalence of HIV (5.4 cases per 1,000 residents compared to a London average of 4.9 per 1,000). Prevalence is highest among Black African residents and men who have sex with men (MSM). The Council and our partners are committed to helping deliver the outcomes set out in the national strategy 'Towards Zero: the HIV Action Plan for England - 2022 to 2025'.

Positivity rates for Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea among young people aged 15-24 are rising across London, and this pattern is slightly more pronounced in Newham over the past three years compared to the London average.

Under 18's conception rate per 1,000 residents in Newham was 10.3 in 2020, slightly higher than the London average of 9.8.

Commissioned Activity: Specialist sexual health

- The five-year Barts Health contract expired on 30 November 2023 and Newham Council is currently in the second year of three optional 'plus one' year contract extensions (5+1+1+1).
- At the time of writing (May 2024) the intention is to activate the third and final 'plus one' during the autumn of 2024 – meaning the contract will expire on 30 November 2025.
- The London-wide sexual health 'e-service' contract for SHL expires 15 August 2025, with the option to extend for one additional year thereafter. Plans for the London-wide e-service are currently being discussed with commissioners across London, with no firm plan confirmed at the time of writing (May 2024).

Commissioned Activity: Sexual health in primary care

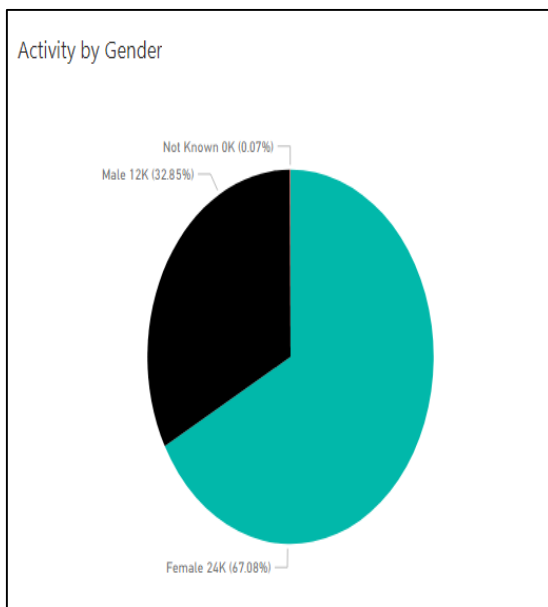
- Additional sexual health services provided through GPs and community pharmacies in Newham are commissioned to help improve access for residents that would prefer to visit a local GP or pharmacist rather than using an online service or a specialist sexual health clinic.
- Contract dates for primary care are outlined in a separate MPS.

Service	Provider
Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC)	GPs
HIV screening for new patient registrations	GPs
Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea screening	GPs and Community Pharmacies
Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC)	Community Pharmacies
Condom provision	Community Pharmacies
STI / HIV screening and simple treatment	'SHL' e-service

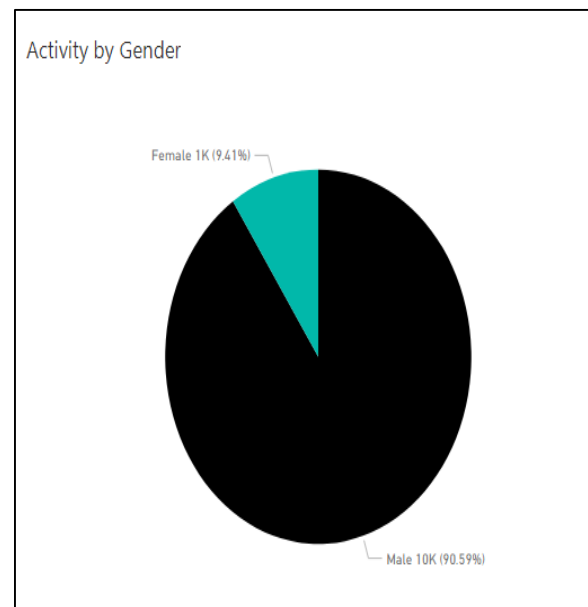
Equity / Demographic intelligence (1)

- Activity for Newham residents against all currency types is presented below, broken down by sex for Barts Health and the other three main London providers.

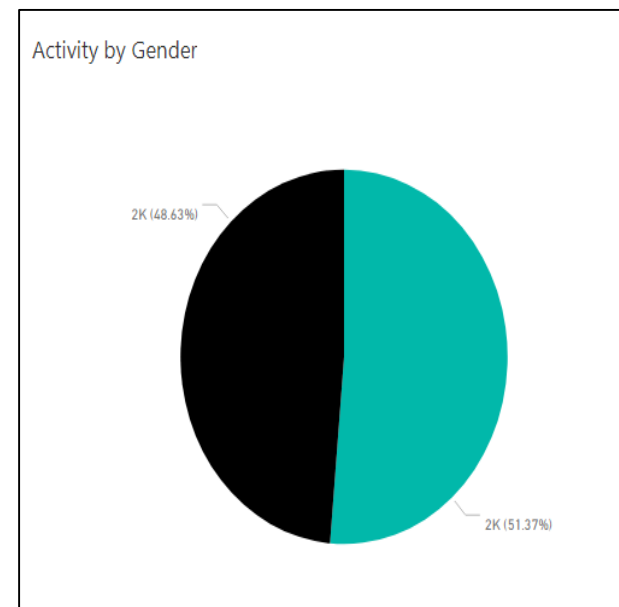
Barts Health



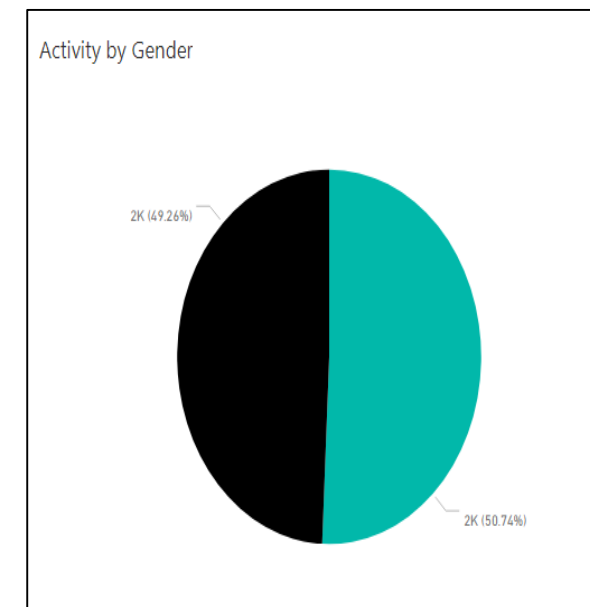
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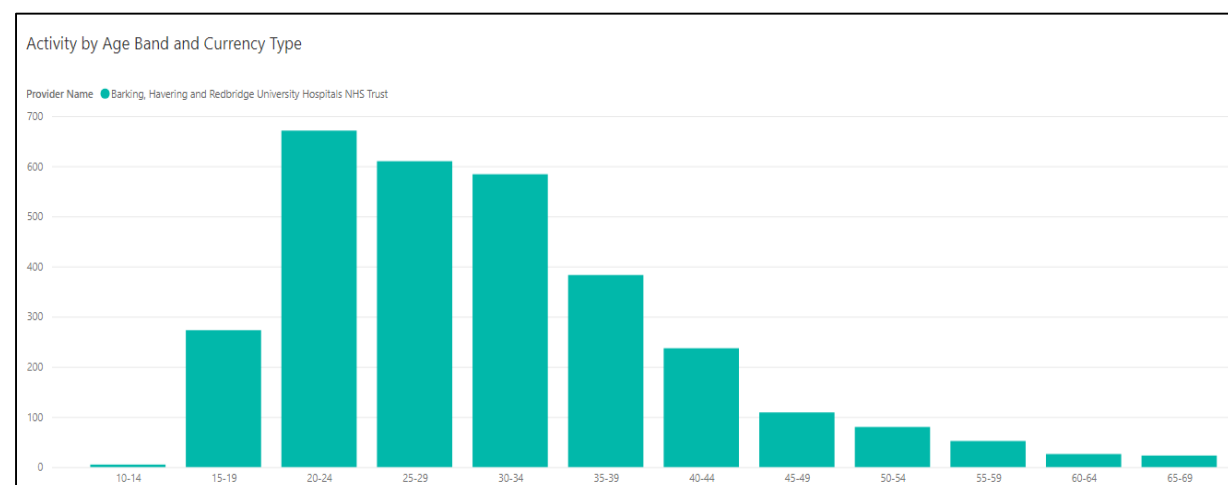
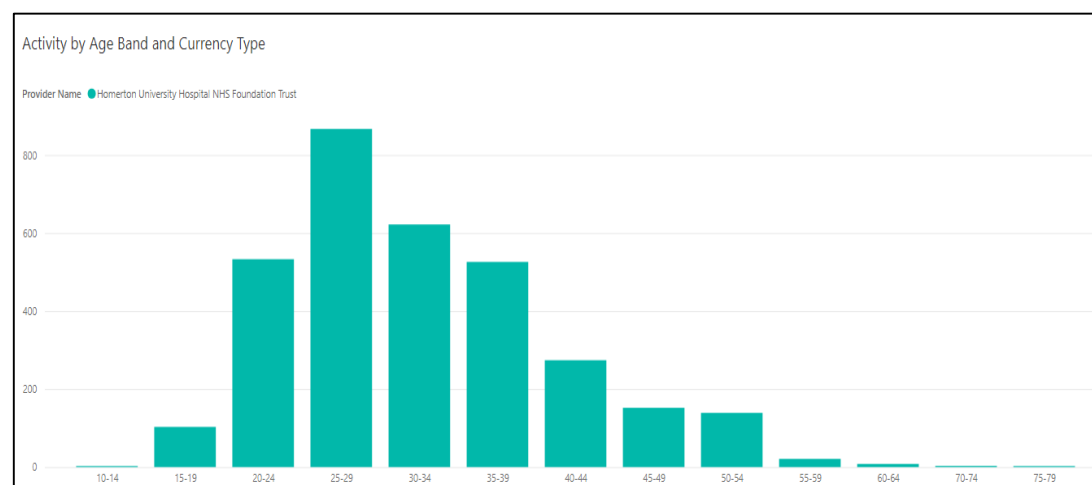
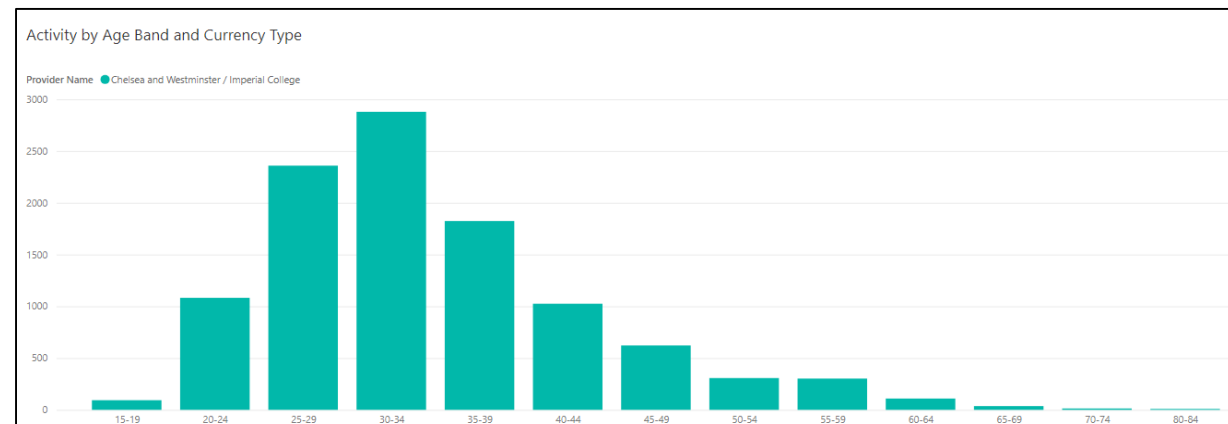
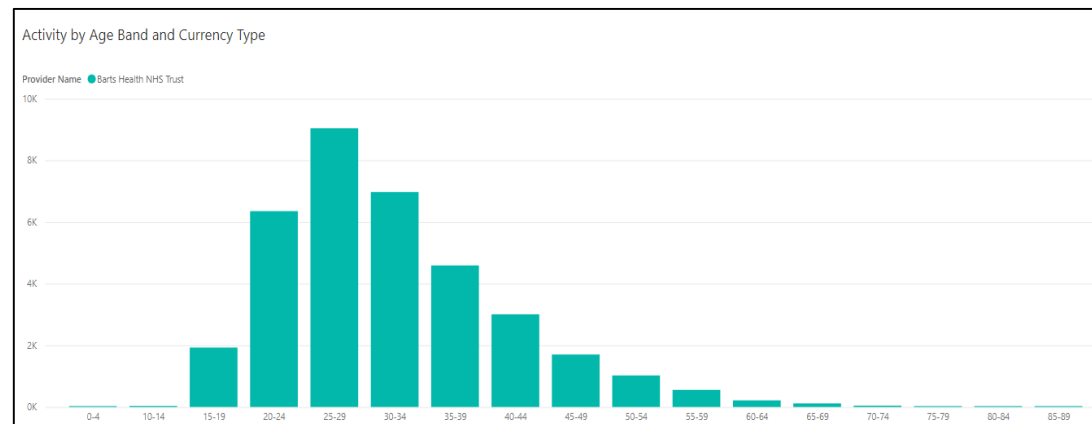


BHRUT



Equity / Demographic intelligence (2)

- Activity for Newham residents against the main currency types is broken down below by age.



Commissioning Priority 1: Improving resident outcomes through increased alignment and/or integration across the system

- The Sexual Health Strategy for NEL and supporting Action Plans have identified gaps and areas for improvement. These will be published online by September 2024. Some of the main development areas for service provision that have been identified through analysis of local data and engagement with residents and partners are:
 - A more integrated approach to sexual health, with services provided at times and locations that make sense for the patient, reducing the need for multiple patient contacts and improving the efficiency of scarce resources.
 - For example, an ambition would be to work towards a model that seamlessly integrates gynaecology, maternity and Termination of Pregnancy Services (ToPS), with a consistent Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) across the NEL region.

Commissioning Priority 2: Improving equity of uptake and outcomes

- Specific areas of improvement identified through analysis of local data include:
 - Increasing uptake of LARC, especially among women of colour.
 - Increasing uptake of PrEP, especially for Black African residents.
 - Optimised pathways across the wider system for ‘high risk’ residents, including those with substance misuse problems related to sexual behaviour (i.e. Chemsex).
 - Increasing uptake of Hep A and Hep B vaccine among high-risk residents (e.g. injecting drug users and MSM).
 - Improved test/re-test recall in line with NICE guidance for residents at highest risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs).