

# **Western Australian Department of Health's (WA DoH) provision of free chlamydia and gonorrhoea testing, and condom dispensers around WA.**

## **Author/s**

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## **Background**

The Sexual Health and Blood-borne Virus Program (SHBBVP) at WA DoH are responsible for the state-wide prevention and control of sexually transmissible infections (STIs) and blood-borne viruses (BBVs). Young people a priority population in the *WA Sexually Transmissible Infections (STIs) Strategy 2024-2030* with the majority of chlamydia and gonorrhoea notifications being in people aged 15-29 years.

## **Approach**

WA DoH's comprehensive response to reducing STIs and BBVs involves an intersectional, person-centred approach, with a focus on multisectoral partnerships and digital and data innovations. For some priority populations, experiences with health systems may have been complex from a young age, with health care journeys taking place in urban, rural, or remote settings, resulting in unique challenges. We aim to make STI prevention, testing, and treatment more accessible for all people in WA.

## **Outcome**

SHBBVP coordinate the development of a suite of websites, hardcopy resources, sexual health marketing campaigns and training opportunities to support and educate young people and build capacity in the sector to deliver prevention and education activities across the state. This involves the provision of condom dispensers for installation in health and community organisations across WA, with QR codes linking to our free online chlamydia and gonorrhoea testing service. This STI testing service allows people to download a pathology form, bypassing the need for a clinical appointment that often has costs associated.

## **Innovation**

Having condom dispensers installed in regional and remote areas of WA allows free and discreet access to safer sex hardware, and a QR code linking to our free online testing service. This service has grown in popularity over the past 12 months of having the new condom dispensers installed, and the decrease in availability of bulk billing GP and health clinic services

## **Significance**

Condom dispensers' distribution stats: 126 locations across WA

Online testing stats: 726 tests were completed in 2023 (126% increase from 2022 [320] and an increase of 144% from 5-year average [297 tests]). Number of Aboriginal people utilising the online test increased from 5 in 2022 (1.5% of tests completed) to 119 in 2023 (16.4% of tests completed).

Positivity rate: 76 positive notifications in 2023 an increase from 22. Positivity rate of 10.5% in 2023 compared to positivity rate of 6.8% in 2022. Positivity rate was highest in people under 25 (15.7%).