

**About Sexual Health:** Sexual health is an important public health issue with health, social and economic impacts that can affect the population across the life course and is a fundamental aspect of human identity and life experience. As seen in many areas, some of the key indicators that we use to measure sexual health are not decreasing as fast as we would like, some are even getting worse. Furthermore, sexual ill health disproportionately affects some population groups more than others and these inequalities in health will be further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. We need to act fast and together to reverse this trend.

In Richmond and Wandsworth we have seen increases in the rates of some sexually transmitted infections such as gonorrhoea and trends in the rates of syphilis, chlamydia and HIV have levelled off. While there has been some good news in the reductions of teenage pregnancy in Wandsworth rates have ceased to decline in Richmond. Evidence tells us that increasing trends are not inevitable, but can be reduced through education, safer sex practices such as the use of condoms, regular testing and increasing access to sexual health and reproductive services<sup>1</sup>. For more information on sexual health in Richmond and Wandsworth please see the respective sexual health strategies for Richmond and Wandsworth.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Health (2001) The national strategy for sexual health and HIV.