

Women's Thursday Drop In Clinic

4-6pm



Confidential & anonymous

- **HIV & Syphilis Testing**
- **Hepatitis B & C Testing**
- **Keep well checks (general health)**
- **Vaccination for Hepatitis A & B**
- **Sexual Health Advice**
- **Women only needle exchange**
- **Free condoms**

Harm Reduction Team
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Dear Colleague,

I have recently been appointed as Blood Borne Virus Nurse Specialist with the Harm Reduction Team at the Spittal Street Centre, Edinburgh. My main remit is to improve the health of female sex workers in Edinburgh by increasing uptake of testing for Blood borne viruses and vaccination against hepatitis A and B, as appropriate.

With my female colleagues from the Needle Exchange Outreach Service (NEON) and Jane Taubman, a keep well nurse working with the Willow project (working with women involved in the criminal justice system) at SACRO, we are offering a service aimed at women vulnerable to sex work through, for example, drug/alcohol misuse, domestic and or sexual abuse, social isolation, contact with the criminal justice system and those who already work in the sex industry.

I shall be offering testing for HIV, Syphilis and Hepatitis B&C with vaccination for hepatitis A and B as required. In addition to this I shall be offering advice and specialist referral for sexually transmitted infections, contraception and pregnancy issues.

As a Keep Well Nurse with the Willow project Jane shall be offering a more general health assessment and referral to other health services, as appropriate. Many women working in the sex industry do not access mainstream services and are often not registered with a GP therefore we hope to offer a more holistic service through Jane's input.

Female staff from the NEON team shall provide a comprehensive women only needle exchange service for women attending this service who are currently injecting drugs. This will include discussion of harm reduction measures and referral for assessment to the Low Threshold Methadone programme, which runs from the Spittal Street Centre.

Patient notes will be kept confidential and information will not be routinely shared with other health professionals unless the patient requests this.

Women accessing this service need not give their real name in order that they can remain anonymous. No appointment is necessary and women can refer themselves to the clinic; they do not need a letter of referral.

I have attached a flyer for this new **Women only drop in clinic** which we will be offering at the **Spittal Street Centre 4-6pm from Thursday January 14th 2010** and would very much appreciate it if you could print off a copy and display this in your reception area or any other area women have access to. Depending on the needs of the women attending the clinic we may need to alter the services we offer and welcome any feedback you can give us from the women you refer. I will keep you up to date as changes happen.

Kindest regards,

Karen Matthews
Blood Borne Virus Nurse Specialist
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