

Glynis Collins, Choices Centre Sexual Health Nurse, has recently received the fpa 2007 Pamela Sheridan Award on behalf of Huddersfield Technical College. For communication please email: [GCollins@huddcoll.ac.uk](mailto:GCollins@huddcoll.ac.uk) This article is reprinted, with permission, from fpa.

# Huddersfield Technical College: Excellence in sex and relationships education

In July, fpa announced that the winner of the 2007 Pamela Sheridan Award for excellence in sex and relationships education (SRE) was the Choices Centre Project at Huddersfield Technical College.

The Choices Centre provides SRE to Huddersfield Technical College students including a sexual health service and a support and advice service. The project will receive £1,000 and five years membership with fpa.

Since it started in January 2005 the Choices Centre Project has worked closely with the college to integrate specially tailored RASHE (Relationships and Sexual Health Education) sessions into tutorials. These sessions have made students feel more comfortable seeking advice at the on-site clinic.

The Choices Centre works with students from a range of backgrounds and ethnicities. It has achieved particular success with young Asian men who were concerned about their lack of sexual health awareness. The Choices Centre worked closely with this group which has led not only to an improvement in their knowledge and skills, but some now want to work with fellow students and educate them in sexual health.

## Main aim

One of the project's main aims is to stop students leaving education because of an unplanned pregnancy. As a direct result of the work of the Choices Centre the number of female students leaving the college due to pregnancy has been dramatically reduced.

The Choices Centre has also developed a number of excellent working relationships with other agencies. It has built strong links with specialist sexual health providers in the

area as well as the Drugs Action Team, specialist mental health services and HIV services.

Its success looks set to continue with more innovative ideas planned for the future. For example, extra drop-in sessions for students doing engineering, construction and motor vehicle courses who attend college one day a week are in the pipeline.

Terri Ryland, Director of Practice Development, fpa said: "The Choices Centre Project identified gaps in the SRE programme and worked with Huddersfield Technical College to fill them. What started out as a simple condom distribution scheme has developed through hard work and constant innovation into an excellent sexual health service. They have targeted particular groups of students and communities to great effect, improved access to services and built good partnerships with other service providers in the area."

## Vision and passion

Glynis Collins, Choices Centre Sexual Health Nurse, commented: "When I came to the college just over two years ago, myself and Meg Kierek-Bell, the Occupational Health Advisor, shared a vision and a passion to make this service work and become a reality. We have succeeded after a lot of hard work and determination and the service is still evolving and improving. The college and the local PCT recognise how important this work is by continuing to fund it. It is brilliant to be recognised nationally and I hope other colleges will be encouraged to adopt a similar approach to providing college-based sexual health services for their students."